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Moneyball: The Art of Winning an Unfair Game

Michael Lewis

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Michael Lewis : Moneyball: The Art of Winning an Unfair Game before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Moneyball: The Art of Winning an Unfair Game:

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Michael Lewis is a great author, and this book is another solid piece ...By The GunnMichael Lewis is a great author, and this book is another solid piece by him. Eye-opening look at the sport, and if you're a fan things will make more sense to you when you start screaming at your team about drafting some fat washed up guy.0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Great background for a film fanBy tspiaHave watched the movie several times, wanted more information. This was more than I needed, but satisfied my curiosity about the underlying facts and the reality of the story. Baseball fans would probably love the book more than

I did! 2 of 2 people found the following review helpful. Interesting, but disjointed. By max I thought the premise of this book was fascinating. And it would have made an excellent long-form magazine article. But there really isn't enough substance to make a book out of it. "Billy Beane was a really good baseball player, with great stats. Billy Beane choked in the majors. Billy Beane made a team out of players who were but statistically valuable but conventionally unimpressive." Ad nauseam. Additionally, the narrative is extremely disjointed. It jumps around between the time when Beane was playing, and different periods of his coaching career, with little reference. If you aren't a big enough baseball fan to know who got drafted in what year, you have little chance of connecting the chapters of this book.

"This delightfully written, lesson-laden book deserves a place of its own in the Baseball Hall of Fame."
—Forbes
Moneyball is a quest for the secret of success in baseball. In a narrative full of fabulous characters and brilliant excursions into the unexpected, Michael Lewis follows the low-budget Oakland A's, visionary general manager Billy Beane, and the strange brotherhood of amateur baseball theorists. They are all in search of new baseball knowledge—insights that will give the little guy who is willing to discard old wisdom the edge over big money.

.com Billy Beane, general manager of MLB's Oakland A's and protagonist of Michael Lewis's Moneyball, had a problem: how to win in the Major Leagues with a budget that's smaller than that of nearly every other team. Conventional wisdom long held that big name, highly athletic hitters and young pitchers with rocket arms were the ticket to success. But Beane and his staff, buoyed by massive amounts of carefully interpreted statistical data, believed that wins could be had by more affordable methods such as hitters with high on-base percentage and pitchers who get lots of ground outs. Given this information and a tight budget, Beane defied tradition and his own scouting department to build winning teams of young affordable players and inexpensive castoff veterans. Lewis was in the room with the A's top management as they spent the summer of 2002 adding and subtracting players and he provides outstanding play-by-play. In the June player draft, Beane acquired nearly every prospect he coveted (few of whom were coveted by other teams) and at the July trading deadline he engaged in a tense battle of nerves to acquire a lefty reliever. Besides being one of the most insider accounts ever written about baseball, Moneyball is populated with fascinating characters. We meet Jeremy Brown, an overweight college catcher who most teams project to be a 15th round draft pick (Beane takes him in the first). Sidearm pitcher Chad Bradford is plucked from the White Sox triple-A club to be a key set-up man and catcher Scott Hatteberg is rebuilt as a first baseman. But the most interesting character is Beane himself. A speedy athletic can't-miss prospect who somehow missed, Beane reinvents himself as a front-office guru, relying on players completely unlike, say, Billy Beane. Lewis, one of the top nonfiction writers of his era (Liar's Poker, The New New Thing), offers highly accessible explanations of baseball stats and his roadmap of Beane's economic approach makes Moneyball an appealing reading experience for business people and sports fans alike. -- John Moe
From Publishers Weekly
Lewis (Liar's Poker; The New New Thing) examines how in 2002 the Oakland Athletics achieved a spectacular winning record while having the smallest player payroll of any major league baseball team. Given the heavily publicized salaries of players for teams like the Boston Red Sox or New York Yankees, baseball insiders and fans assume that the biggest talents deserve and get the biggest salaries. However, argues Lewis, little-known numbers and statistics matter more. Lewis discusses Bill James and his annual stats newsletter, Baseball Abstract, along with other mathematical analysis of the game. Surprisingly, though, most managers have not paid attention to this research, except for Billy Beane, general manager of the A's and a former player; according to Lewis, "[B]y the beginning of the 2002 season, the Oakland A's, by winning so much with so little, had become something of an embarrassment to Bud Selig and, by extension, Major League Baseball." The team's success is actually a shrewd combination of luck, careful player choices and Beane's first-rate negotiating skills. Beane knows which players are likely to be traded by other teams, and he manages to involve himself even when the trade is unconnected to the A's. " 'Trawling' is what he called this activity," writes Lewis. "His constant chatter was a way of keeping tabs on the body of information critical to his trading success." Lewis chronicles Beane's life, focusing on his uncanny ability to find and sign the right players. His descriptive writing allows Beane and the others in the lively cast of baseball characters to come alive.
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From The New Yorker
The Oakland Athletics have reached the post-season playoffs three years in a row, even though they spend just one dollar for every three that the New York Yankees spend. Their secret, as Lewis's lively account demonstrates, is not on the field but in the front office, in the shape of the general manager, Billy Beane. Unable to afford the star hires of his big-spending rivals, Beane disdains the received wisdom about what makes a player valuable, and has a passion for neglected statistics that reveal how runs are really scored. Beane's ideas are beginning to attract disciples, most notably at the Boston Red Sox, who nearly lured him away from Oakland over the winter. At the last moment, Beane's loyalty got the better of him; besides, moving to a team with a much larger payroll would have diminished the challenge. Copyright copy; 2005 The New Yorker