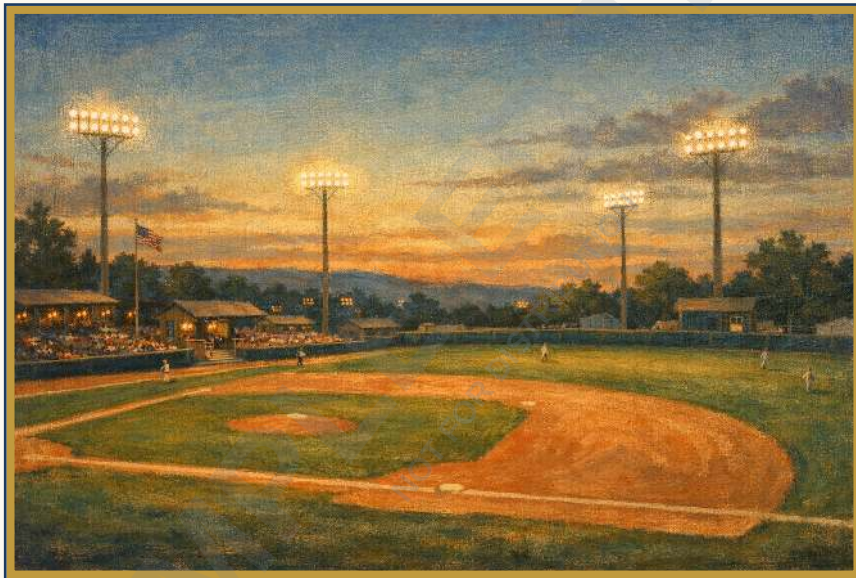


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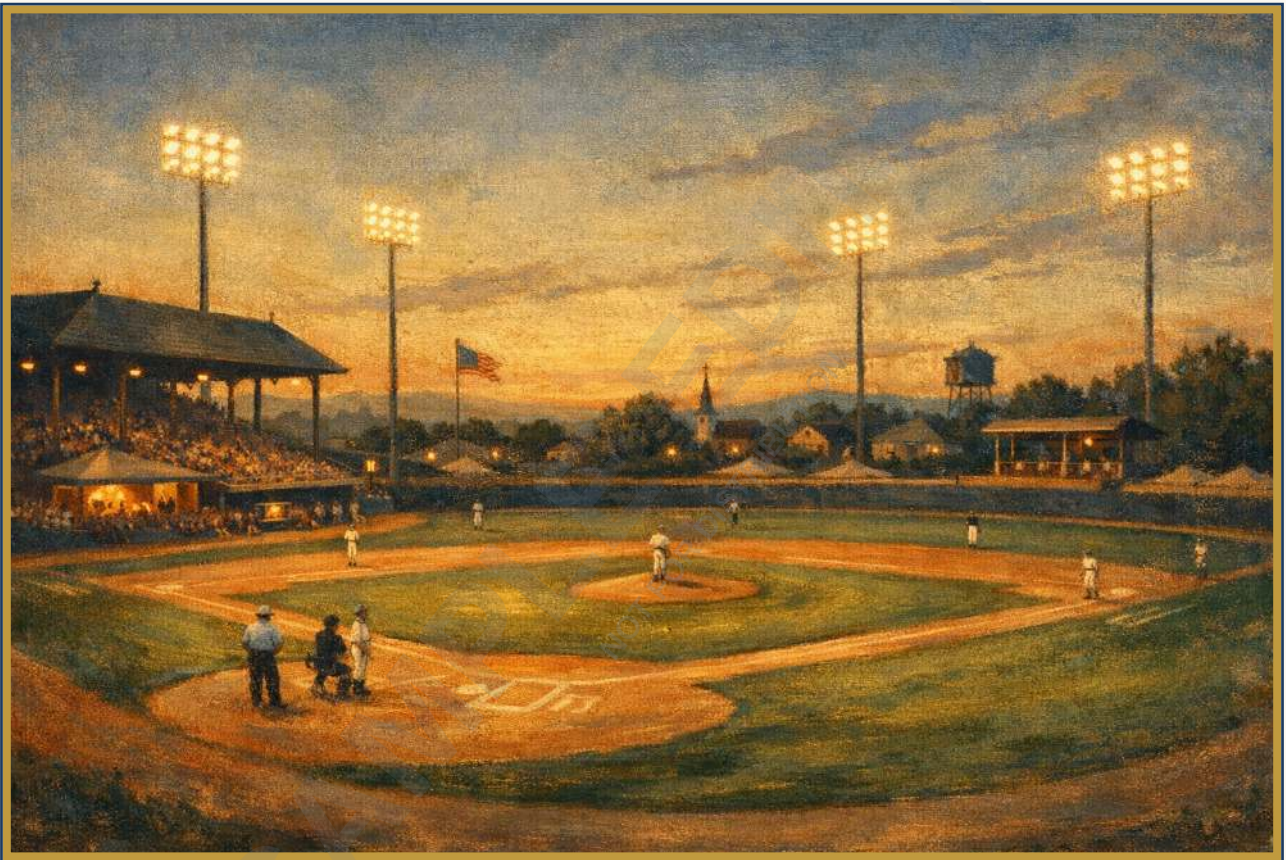
The Ballpark Members' Club



The Wisdom of Baseball — The Baseball of Life and the Life of Baseball

PRESENTED BY SPORTSMART4LIFE

A word from the organisers



The Ballpark Members' Club

A word from the organisers

Dear Sample Reader,

This copy is yours. Your name is on the cover, and it is inside on the pages too, because it was made for you and for nobody else. No two copies of this book are the same.

We wanted to give you something that outlasts a fixture list. Kit wears out. Medals go in a drawer. But a season is long enough to teach patience whether you want it or not, and that is worth writing down somewhere you will find it again.

What follows are the real voices of this sport — players, coaches and writers, most of them talking about the parts nobody puts on a highlight reel. There is a section on pressure, and what the people who handle it best actually do differently. One on trust, and why a group that trusts each other beats a group that is merely talented. One on losing, which is the section we would ask you to read twice, because everyone in this sport has lost and everyone worth knowing came back. There is a section on joy, which is the reason any of us started. One on mastery, and the unglamorous patience it asks for. One on rivalry, and the respect that runs underneath it. And one on belonging — on being part of something whether or not you are the one on the field.

You do not have to read it in order. Keep it in the kit bag. Open it the night before a hard one. Let it fall open at whichever page finds you, and if a line is worth keeping, keep it.

The game has taught you things already — about nerve, about other people, about getting up. These pages are simply the same lessons in other people's words, gathered in one place so they are there when you need them.

Thank you for everything you give to this. It is noticed, and it matters more than the results ever say.

— **The Committee, The Ballpark Members' Club**

Foreword

Baseball is an honest game. It keeps a written record of everything, forgets nothing — and is somehow the most merciful of sports, a game where failing seven times in ten is excellence and there is always a game tomorrow. From great city ballparks to small-town diamonds mowed into summer fields, it teaches the same things: hold your nerve in the box, move the runner along, play tomorrow after today's loss, protect your joy, put in the repetitions, tip your cap to your rival, belong to something.

This collection gathers the voices of the game — the players, the managers, the great watchers and writers who loved it best — arranged around seven themes that belong as much to life as to baseball. Each chapter opens with an image and an idea, then hands the floor to the voices themselves.

Read it the way you would follow a season: sometimes for the drama of the race, sometimes for one perfect play you will remember for years.

Ways to Walk with This Book

A collection like this is not meant to be read once and shelved. It is meant to be lived with — kept close, opened often, and put to work. Seven ways to begin:

- **The daily voice**
open anywhere each morning and take one voice with you into the day.
- **The reflection pause**
choose the theme your week is testing, read its essay slowly, and write one honest line of your own in response.
- **Match-day ritual**
before the big broadcast, read the theme the fixture will examine — rivalry before the derby, pressure before the final.
- **The team talk**
captains, coaches, teachers, parents: one voice a week is enough to open a changing room, a classroom or a dinner table.
- **The hard-week medicine**
when life tackles you, the defeat chapter is waiting. It was written for exactly that week.
- **The gift of a voice**
photograph the quote a friend needs today and send it with their name on the message.
- **The long read**
one theme per Sunday evening — a handful of weeks, properly kept.

However you use it, let it stay within reach of wherever you watch.

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THEME 1 OF 7

Watching & Belonging

The porch radio, the pencil scorecard, the summer-long companionship — why we gather, keep score and stay.



Nobody keeps score with a pencil because they must — attention is a form of love.

Watching & Belonging — in the game, in life

Baseball fandom is the slowest and most faithful in sport, because the game gives it time. A season is an entire summer — game after game, evening after evening — and to follow a team is not to attend an event but to keep a companion: the broadcast murmuring on a porch radio, the standings checked with the morning coffee, the ballpark visited the way other families visit relatives. The radio is the game's old miracle. Baseball is the sport best told aloud — slow enough to describe, rich enough to fill the pauses — and generations have fallen asleep to it, the voice of a summer night carrying the game into kitchens and cars and childhood bedrooms. Then there is the scorecard: a pencil, a grid, and a devoted watcher keeping the game's own handwriting, recording every out in a code passed down like a family recipe. Nobody keeps score because they must. They keep score because attention is a form of love. Nobody remembers the score of the first game they were taken to; everybody remembers whose hand they were holding — the relative who explained the strange rules, the friend with the standing seats, the stranger in the next row who embraced you in the ninth. Fandom looks like it is about the team; it is mostly about each other, and about time faithfully spent. Supporters keep the old medicine: loyalty through losing decades, hope every spring without embarrassment, devotion handed down like a worn glove. So find your ballpark, in sport and beyond it — the choir, the parkrun, the book club, the porch with the radio on. Then keep turning up, all season long. You do not feel your way into belonging. You keep the appointments, and the feeling follows the faithfulness.

“Whoever wants to know the heart and mind of America had better learn baseball, the rules and realities of the game — and do it by watching first some high-school or small-town teams.”

— Jacques Barzun

Watching & Belonging

Sit with the voice that speaks to you today.

“This must be the only job in America that everybody knows how to do better than the guy who's doing it.”

— Nestor Chylak

“The land that I was born in, thank you! Thank you to your people, who accepted me like one of their favorite kids, and for your support, step by step, throughout my career.”

— David Ortiz

“He was a presence in our lives — a fragile hero to whom we had an emotional attachment so strong and lasting that it defied logic.”

— Bob Costas

“I have said enough for a lifetime. And for the last time, I wish you all a very pleasant good afternoon.”

— Vin Scully

“When I was six, my father gave me a bright-red scorebook that opened my heart to the game of baseball.”

— Doris Kearns Goodwin

“Everybody quiet now here at Fenway Park after they gave him a standing ovation of two minutes, knowing that this is probably his last time at bat.”

— Curt Gowdy

“There is always some kid who may be seeing me for the first or last time. I owe him my best.”

— Joe DiMaggio

“I knew how far a little boy or girl could run with 50 words of reassurance.”

— Jim Abbott

Watching & Belonging

Sit with the voice that speaks to you today.

“At first they came to see the girls. But we won them over with good baseball.”

— Dottie Kamenshek

“A woman has her dreams too.”

— Toni Stone

“Baseball is President Eisenhower tossing out the first ball of the season; and a pudgy schoolboy playing catch with his dad on a Mississippi farm.”

— Ernie Harwell

“I want you to carry in your hearts the hope that I attained... when you look at me, you see a signal of hope, of faith, of determination, of strength.”

— Pedro Martínez

“I'm hoping someday that some kid, black or white, will hit more home runs than myself. Whoever it is, I'd be pulling for him.”

— Hank Aaron

“Time begins on Opening Day.”

— Thomas Boswell

“Take me out to the ball game, take me out with the crowd; buy me some peanuts and Cracker Jack, I don't care if I never get back.”

— Jack Norworth

“The greatest thing in all of my life is loving you.”

— Buck O'Neil

Watching & Belonging

Sit with the voice that speaks to you today.

"I must be in the front row!"

— Bob Uecker

"Babe Ruth made a baseball fan of me. I used to go to Yankee Stadium just to see him come to bat."

— Effa Manley

"Here stands baseball's perfect warrior. Here stands baseball's perfect knight."

— Ford C. Frick

"When I put on my uniform, I feel I am the proudest man on earth."

— Roberto Clemente

"Baseball is drama with an endless run and an ever-changing cast."

— Joe Garagiola

"Baseball, it is said, is only a game. True. And the Grand Canyon is only a hole in Arizona. Not all holes, or games, are created equal."

— George F. Will

"Baseball is more than a game to me, it's a religion."

— Bill Klem

"This is our f***ing city. And nobody's going to dictate our freedom. Stay strong."

— David Ortiz

THE BALLPARK MEMBERS' CLUB

More from Watching & Belonging



Belonging, in the stands.

“It wasn't just what was said, it was how they said it that gave the game a melody.”

— Bob Costas

This copy belongs to: Sample Reader

The Ballpark Members' Club · Watching & Belonging

A few more from Watching & Belonging



The people who turn up.

“Hello there, everybody!”

— Mel Allen

“Fernandomania was something extraordinary. What he did for baseball, you can't just ignore that. What he did, nobody else has done.”

— Jaime Jarrín

“What is left out of this calculation, it seems to me, is the business of caring — caring deeply and passionately, really caring — which is a capacity or an emotion that has almost gone out of our lives.”

— Roger Angell

THEME 2 OF 7

Pressure & Nerve

The batter's box with the bases loaded — what the biggest moments ask, and how the brave answer.



One pitcher, one batter, and a whole summer leaning in to watch a single pitch.

Pressure & Nerve — in the game, in life

Baseball isolates its moments like no other game. The bases are loaded, the evening has gone quiet in that peculiar ballpark way, and one batter steps into the box to face one pitcher — everybody else on the field reduced, for a few seconds, to witnesses. The game is a chain of these duels, and it has built a whole culture of nerve around them. Watch the rituals. The batter's glove-tightening and toe-tap, identical every at-bat since youth ball; the pitcher walking a slow circle behind the mound, working the rosin bag, taking the cap off and setting it back on. These are not superstitions. They are portable pieces of calm — a sequence the body knows so well it can carry a shaking person into the box and set their feet for them. And underneath the ritual sits baseball's great mercy, the secret every hitter leans on: this is a game where failing seven times out of ten is excellence. The batter who treats each at-bat as a fresh argument — not a continuation of the last strikeout — is the one still dangerous in the ninth. The pitcher who can throw the same pitch with the bases empty and the bases loaded is the one trusted when the season tightens. Life loads the bases on everyone: the interview, the diagnosis, the conversation rehearsed in the car. Take the baseball answer with you. Build a routine and let it walk you in. Play this pitch, not the last one and not the next inning. Swing at your pitch when it comes, fully, without negotiating with the miss. Nerve is not the absence of fear — it is a ritual that holds when fear arrives.

“I can't speak for 15 million people any more than any other one person can, but I know that I've got too much invested for my wife and child and myself in the future of this country, and I and other Americans of many races and faiths have too much invested in our country's welfare, for any of us to throw it away because of a siren song sung in bass.”

— Jackie Robinson

Pressure & Nerve

Sit with the voice that speaks to you today.

"There was never any decision to make, because there was never any possibility that I would pitch. Yom Kippur is the holiest day of the Jewish religion."

— Sandy Koufax

"It's a privilege to be at the front of something. And you know, there's a lot of pressure. There's a lot of other things that come with that that aren't really desirable. But I signed up for it, and I'm not going to shy away."

— Rachel Balkovec

"I think it's still unfortunately a man's world... and women have to be bigger, better, faster and smarter to get the same job that a man would be considered for."

— Jean Afterman

"I told myself when I stepped out onto the field that the ovation and the environment would be outstanding and I wouldn't hurt anymore, and it was true."

— Kirk Gibson

"In 1983, I made an error and then I made another one, and pretty soon I let doubt and fear creep into my psyche... I just lost my confidence, it's that simple."

— Steve Sax

"And there's 29,000 people in the ballpark and a million butterflies."

— Vin Scully

"I just barely hung in there, and fortunately, he put one just close enough to the plate where I could slap it down the line."

— Ben Zobrist

"I had to do it. That's all I was thinking. There were so many times that I had a chance to do it but didn't hit in those opportunities."

— Munetaka Murakami

Pressure & Nerve

Sit with the voice that speaks to you today.

"I'll tell you what, we're having an earth—"

— Al Michaels

"There's no crying in baseball. You cried in your room at night after shutting off the lights and laying your head on the pillow."

— Lavonne 'Pepper' Paire Davis

"Something obviously went wrong, but I have no idea what it was. I couldn't overcome it. I got to thinking too much and I couldn't shut it off."

— Chuck Knoblauch

"Like I was standing on someone else's legs. Throwing with someone else's arm. Thinking with someone else's brain. The ball would do what it wanted, not what I wanted."

— Rick Ankiel

"I don't feel pressure that much. I feel more excited."

— Shohei Ohtani

"I want to play it out. I want to play it all the way."

— Ted Williams

"The way I see it, an umpire must be perfect on the first day of the season and then get better every day."

— Nestor Chylak

"And with two out, you talk about a roll of the dice, this is it."

— Vin Scully

Pressure & Nerve

Sit with the voice that speaks to you today.

“Every great batter works on the theory that the pitcher is more afraid of him than he is of the pitcher.”

— Ty Cobb

“We had something really magical going on here in '88. I just knew it. It was my calling. It was like someone was telling me, 'C'mon, let's go. It's time to do your thing.' I believed in it.”

— Kirk Gibson

“The naked pinch hitter takes only one thing to the plate: his raw, and somewhat irrational, confidence in himself. That this confidence is so unreasonable adds to its dignity.”

— Thomas Boswell

“Jackie got all the publicity for putting up with it, but it was the same thing I had to deal with. He was first, but the crap I took was just as bad.”

— Larry Doby

“The only reason I'm the first black manager is because I was born black.”

— Frank Robinson

“Don't ever permit the pressure to exceed the pleasure.”

— Joe Maddon

“There's got to be a first in everything. Maybe it will be me.”

— Toni Stone

“The best pitchers have a short-term memory and a bulletproof confidence.”

— R.A. Dickey

THE BALLPARK MEMBERS' CLUB

More from Pressure & Nerve



The moment before it starts.

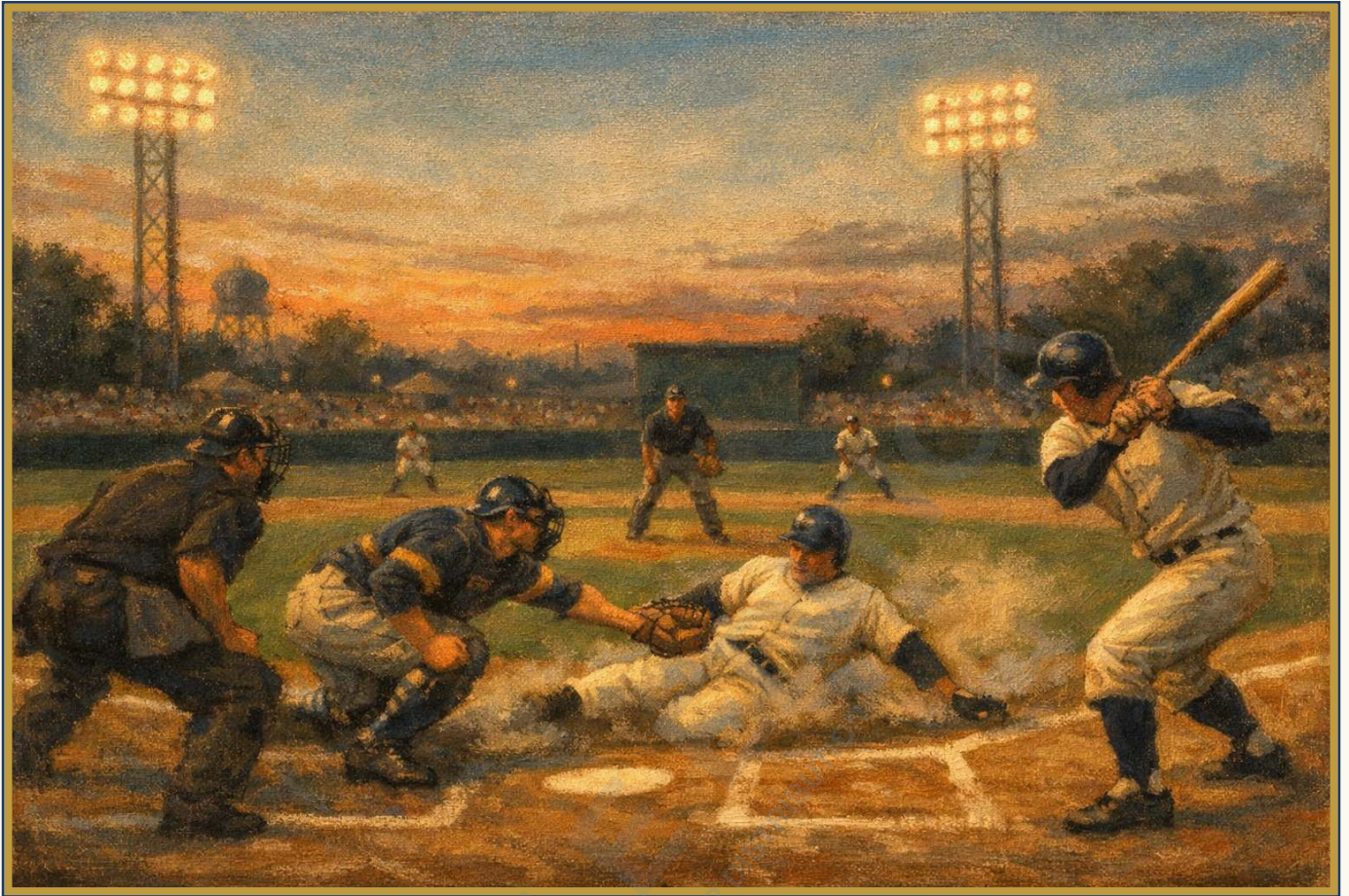
"I knew I was representing Mexico to many people."

— **Fernando Valenzuela**

This copy belongs to: Sample Reader

The Ballpark Members' Club · Pressure & Nerve

A few more from Pressure & Nerve



Nerve is not the absence of fear.

“The thought of playing baseball in the majors was intriguing. But the thought of defecting also scared me.”

— Orlando 'El Duque' Hernández

“I'm looking for a ballplayer with guts enough not to fight back.”

— Branch Rickey

“It's actually an honor to feel the pressure, because that means there's a lot of expectations, and I just change that to more of a positive.”

— Shohei Ohtani

THEME 3 OF 7

Teamwork & Trust

Pitcher and catcher, the relay, the sacrifice — the game that keeps official books on generosity.



The only game that keeps official books on sacrifice.

Teamwork & Trust — in the game, in life

Baseball hides its togetherness inside its spaciousness. Nine players stand far apart on a green field, each alone with a patch of responsibility — and yet nothing in the game happens without partnership. Begin with its oldest marriage: pitcher and catcher. Before every single pitch, two people agree on a plan — fingers flashed, a nod given or shaken off — and the catcher sets a target and promises, with his body, to stop whatever arrives in the dirt. A pitcher who trusts his catcher throws with his whole arm; one who doesn't gets beaten half-armed. Then watch a ball hit into the gap: the relay is choreography, the shortstop drifting out to a spot rehearsed ten thousand times, the throw arriving glove-high because three people each did an unglamorous thing perfectly and in order. And baseball says the quiet part out loud, in its own official vocabulary: the sacrifice is a recorded play. A batter deliberately makes an out to move a teammate along — surrendering his own numbers for the inning's sake — and the dugout meets him at the rail as though he had won the game, because everybody understands exactly what was given. The game keeps books on generosity. Life asks for the same play far more often than it admits. Somebody has to lay the runner over — take the smaller role, back up the throw, set the target and block the ball in the dirt for someone else's best work. Do it the baseball way: reliably, quietly, exactly where you said you would be. Cover your people's short hops. In the long season of a family, or a team of any kind, the club that turns the routine plays together wins — every time it matters.

“By applauding Robinson, a man did not feel that he was taking a stand on school integration, or on open housing. But for an instant he had accepted Robinson simply as a hometown ball player. To disregard color, even for an instant, is to step away from the old prejudices, the old hatred. That is not a path on which many double back.”

— Roger Kahn

Teamwork & Trust

Sit with the voice that speaks to you today.

“Talent is part of the equation, but when you combine talent with accountability and authenticity, it is tough to beat.”

— David Ross

“A life is not important except in the impact it has on other lives.”

— Jackie Robinson

“More than the number 3,000 itself, when I saw the teammates come out and how happy they were and how warm the fans were, it's not about just the 3,000 and what I did, it's about my teammates and my fans.”

— Ichiro Suzuki

“I'm not concerned with your liking or disliking me... All I ask is that you respect me as a human being.”

— Jackie Robinson

“I believe managing is like holding a dove in your hand. If you hold it too tightly you kill it, but if you hold it too loosely, you lose it.”

— Tommy Lasorda

“A player's character matters. The heartbeat matters. Fears and aspirations matter. The player's impact on others matters. The tone he sets matters.”

— Theo Epstein

“The only thing I've ever wanted to talk about is winning. When there's particular attention on you, as opposed to the team, it can be uncomfortable.”

— Derek Jeter

“I'd rather be right here, right now, representing the people who helped build a bridge across the chasm of prejudice.”

— Buck O'Neil

Teamwork & Trust

Sit with the voice that speaks to you today.

"I look forward to the day it's not a big deal that a woman is on the field of a Major League Baseball game."

— Alyssa Nakken

"The players make the manager, it's never the other way."

— Sparky Anderson

"And it is a great moment for all of us, and particularly for Henry Aaron, who was met at home plate, not only by every member of the Braves, but by his father and mother."

— Vin Scully

"But to the ball player it is the headquarters. It is the place from which the orders come, and it is here that the battle is planned and from here the moves are executed."

— Christy Mathewson

"We won the World Series. The 2020 Dodgers won the World Series. Who cares about all that other stuff? To be a part of that team, all that other stuff is just pointless."

— Clayton Kershaw

"If my story can remind you of anything, let it remind you that when you believe in someone, you can change their world. You can change their future."

— David Ortiz

"It was wildly important for me to have visible ideas of what was possible when I was coming up. And so for me to do that for somebody else is an honor, and it's a responsibility that I'm happy to have."

— Rachel Balkovec

"I was just a kid playing ball in the Dominican Republic. They saw something in me that they fought for."

— David Ortiz

Teamwork & Trust

Sit with the voice that speaks to you today.

"I wanted to prove them wrong for the guys behind me who are short, too. Guys who are not really strong, not really tall, guys who are 14 to 16 right now who are very small and want to get an opportunity."

— Jose Altuve

"Don't pay any attention to these guys who are trying to make it hard for you. Stick in there. You're doing fine. Keep your chin up."

— Hank Greenberg

"You're a pain in my butt. But I really enjoyed playing beside you for so many years. That was so much fun. Even though you wanted to catch every freaking fly ball."

— Adrián Beltré

"It's great when you have great people around you who believe in you."

— Albert Pujols

"You shared with me this amazing journey of ups and downs from the beginning, always never letting me get too high or get too low."

— Trevor Hoffman

"If you can change a life, just one life, it's going to help in the future. We go out there and we play baseball and we try to win games, but that's not all there is to it."

— Miguel Cabrera

"When everybody down to the groundskeepers and those boys in white coats remember you with trophies — that's something."

— Lou Gehrig

"It's been a long road from Vallejo, Calif., and I wouldn't have made it all this way without the women redirecting me when I got lost."

— CC Sabathia

THE BALLPARK MEMBERS' CLUB

More from Teamwork & Trust



Nobody does this alone.

“Class tells. It sticks out all over Mr. Greenberg.”

— Jackie Robinson

A few more from Teamwork & Trust



Trust, built in the ordinary weeks.

“We have a lot of GMs out here who never played the game of baseball. So take heart, girls everywhere, and work hard, because there’s a place for you if you only work hard and believe in yourselves.”

— Jean Afterman

“I don’t lose sleep over mechanics. I lose sleep over culture.”

— Rachel Balkovec

“There’s not an American in this country free until every one of us is free.”

— Jackie Robinson

THEME 4 OF 7

Defeat & Bouncing Back

Even the best lose again and again across the long season — baseball's patient course in losing well.



Even a great team loses again and again all summer — and posts the lineup again tomorrow.

Defeat & Bouncing Back — in the game, in life

Baseball is the long-season game, and the long season is a course in losing well. A schedule of a hundred and sixty-two games means that even the finest teams lose again and again, all summer long — beaten, embarrassed, shut out, swept — and are back at the ballpark the next afternoon with the gates open and the lineup posted. No sport metabolises defeat so completely. There is no time to brood, because there is a game tomorrow; there is no point pretending, because the standings are printed daily; and so baseball people long ago perfected the art the rest of us need: grieve fast, learn faster, play tomorrow. The slump is the game's other great teacher. Every hitter, without exception, walks through stretches when nothing falls — when the swing feels borrowed and the ball looks small — and the game's accumulated wisdom says the same humble things: shrink the task, trust the work, take the single, let one honest piece of contact start the healing. Slumps end for the ones who keep showing up to the cage; they calcify for the ones who start swinging at everything out of fear. And over it all stands the season's deep arithmetic — a campaign is judged at its end, not on the worst Tuesday in June, and the daily response, repeated, becomes the actual record. Your own year will bring its losses: the application declined, the plan rained out, the month where nothing falls. Do it the baseball way. Tip your cap to what beat you. Find the one honest correction and make it in tomorrow's first inning. Then post the lineup again — because the standings of a life are kept over the full season, and tomorrow there is a game.

“It breaks my heart because it was meant to, because it was meant to foster in me again the illusion that there was something abiding, some pattern and some impulse that could come together to make a reality that would resist the corrosion; and because, after it had fostered again that most hungered-for illusion, the game was meant to stop, and betray precisely what it promised.”

— A. Bartlett Giamatti

Defeat & Bouncing Back

Sit with the voice that speaks to you today.

"It's all about bouncing back. Dealing with the tough times. You know you're going to have them. What's important is how you handle it."

— Bruce Bochy

"I had many years that I was not so successful as a ballplayer, as it is a game of skill."

— Casey Stengel

"During my 18 years I came to bat almost 10,000 times. I struck out about 1,700 times and walked maybe 1,800 times. You figure a ballplayer will average about 500 at bats a season. That means I played seven years without ever hitting the ball."

— Mickey Mantle

"It didn't matter that I was one of the best players on the team, that I loved baseball, or that I practiced a lot more than any of my male friends. It only mattered that I was a girl."

— Justine Siegal

"I've learned that it's not the disability that defines you, it's how you deal with the challenges the disability presents you with. And I've learned that we have an obligation to the abilities we do have, not the disability."

— Jim Abbott

"The most cowardly thing in the world is blaming mistakes upon the umpires. Too many managers strut around on the field trying to manage the umpires instead of their teams."

— Bill Klem

"After a while I quit listening to folks telling me what I can't do. All that does is motivate me more to do it, because I know there's a bunch of people in this country that are told the same thing, and it's broken a lot of people."

— Dusty Baker

"I always knew that I would be the one banging my head against the wall so that others could go through."

— Justine Siegal

Defeat & Bouncing Back

Sit with the voice that speaks to you today.

"I've been carrying this thing inside of me for so long, I'm actually happy it's coming out."

— Dennis Eckersley

"Couple years ago, I had 60 at-bats, I was hitting .170 and everyone was ready to kill me, too. What happened? Laser show."

— Dustin Pedroia

"I went through baseball as a 'player to be named later.'"

— Joe Garagiola

"Having struck out three times, the thought of bunting in that situation crossed my mind, but the manager wanted me to swing."

— Munetaka Murakami

"Ralph, God chose you because He knew you'd be strong enough to bear this cross."

— Rev. Pat Rowley

"I mean, I got to live two dreams. And there's not a lot of people who can say that. It's hard enough to make it to the big leagues once. And now I'm the guy who gets to say that I made it twice."

— Rick Ankiel

"We have two lives, Roy, the life we learn with and the life we live with after that. Suffering is what brings us toward happiness."

— Bernard Malamud

"Wait till next year!"

— Anonymous

Defeat & Bouncing Back

Sit with the voice that speaks to you today.

"I didn't want this to be my 15 minutes of fame. I would have liked my 15 minutes to be a great call in the World Series. Hopefully, my 15 minutes are over now."

— Jim Joyce

"Do not alibi on bad hops. Anybody can field the good ones."

— Joe McCarthy

"If you aren't willing to face your demons — if you can't find the courage to take on your fear and hurt and anger — you might as well wrap them up with a bow and give them to your children."

— R.A. Dickey

"There's no way the second part of my career or my life is the way it is if I'm still drinking."

— CC Sabathia

"I just told them it's going to hurt. It hurts because we care, but they need to walk with their head held high because they left nothing on the field."

— Terry Francona

"It's a God thing."

— Josh Hamilton

"I really had to forgive, not the fans of Boston, per se, but I would have to say in my heart I had to forgive the media."

— Bill Buckner

"You're never alone and don't ever for a second think, 'Why me?' You are strong enough to be able to handle it and that's why this happened to you."

— Liam Hendriks

THE BALLPARK MEMBERS' CLUB

More from Defeat & Bouncing Back

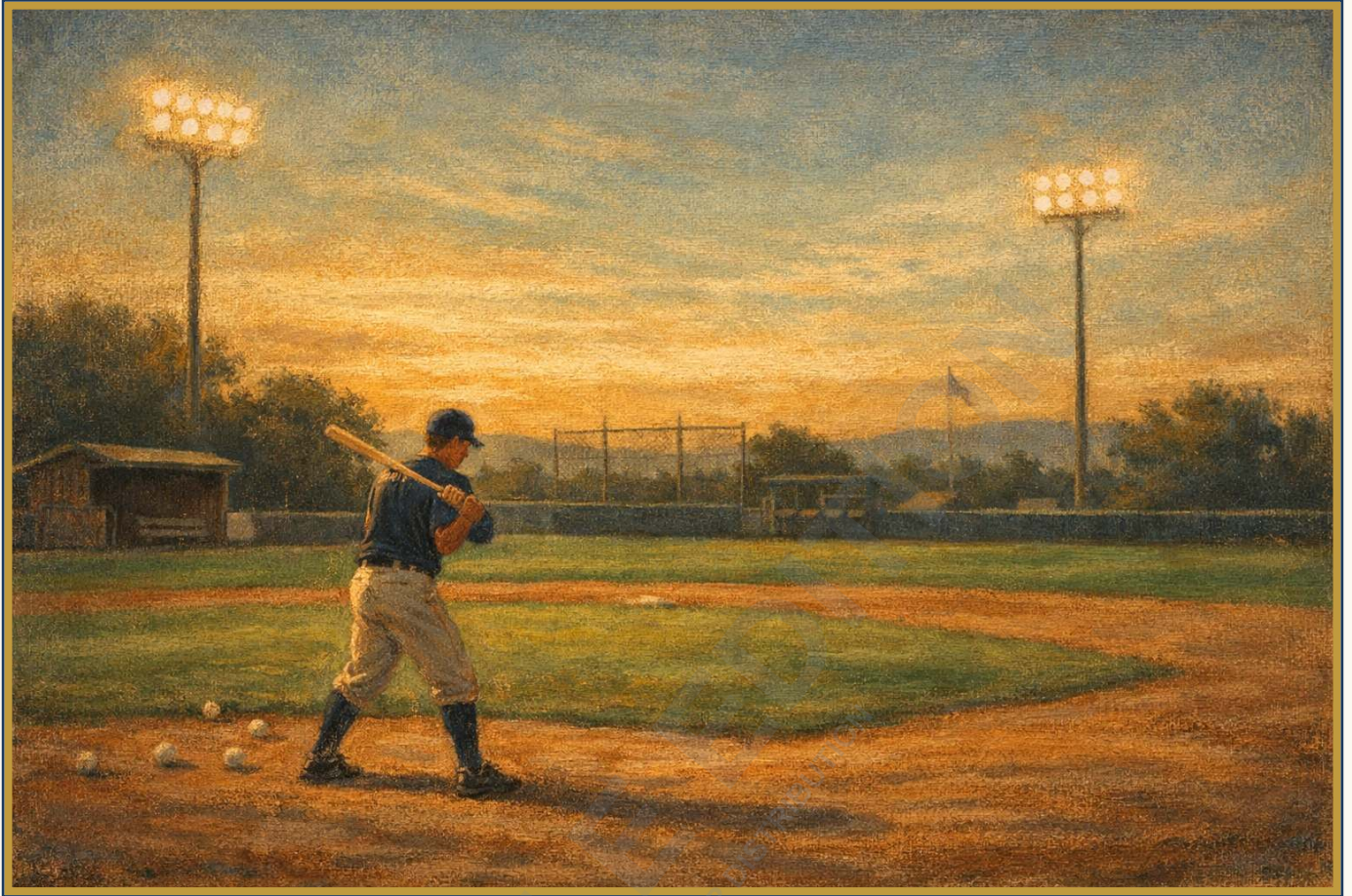


The walk back.

“A guy commits murder and he gets pardoned after 20 years. I didn't get pardoned.”

— Ralph Branca

A few more from Defeat & Bouncing Back



And then you come again.

“There are one-hundred fifty-four games in a season and you can find one-hundred fifty-four reasons why your team should have won every one of them.”

— Bill Klem

“Just tell me I can't.”

— Jamie Moyer

“Although I do not consider myself worthy of such an honor, I am deeply moved and sincerely grateful to receive an official Chicago Cubs 2016 World Series Championship ring.”

— Steve Bartman

THEME 5 OF 7

Joy & Love of the Game

Backyard catch, the smack of leather, the crack of the bat — playing because playing is the point.



It begins with a ball crossing a backyard, hand to hand, until the light fails.

Joy & Love of the Game — in the game, in life

Baseball is handed down, hand to hand, in the shape of a ball. The game's first sacrament is the backyard catch — a parent and a child and the soft repeated smack of leather, a conversation that needs no words and can go on until the light fails. Ask almost anyone who loves this game where it began and they will not name a stadium; they will name a person, and probably a glove — the smell of its leather, the years of working it soft, the way a hand remembers its own pocket in the dark. Joy is baseball's first language, and the game is generous with it. The sound of a ball struck flush on a wooden bat, which carries across a whole park and turns every head at once. The small perfect physics of a grounder taken cleanly on the short hop. The seventh-inning stretch, an entire crowd standing up together in the middle of the game simply because it is glad to be there. You can see the child break through even in the professionals — the grin at the wall after a catch stolen over it, the dugout inventing celebrations like a classroom left unsupervised, the ball flipped gently to a small fan in the front row. The players who last are the ones who protect the backyard feeling from the business. There is a rule of life folded into all this softness. Duty is a good engine and a terrible fuel; the energy for the hardest seasons comes from the play you refuse to surrender. Keep your version of catch — the piano, the garden, the Sunday walk — and keep somebody on the other end of it. Do it badly, do it laughing, do it until dark. The day it stops being play, you have only forgotten who first threw you the ball.

“There's a long drive... it's gonna be, I believe... The Giants win the pennant! The Giants win the pennant! The Giants win the pennant! The Giants win the pennant! Bobby Thomson hits into the lower deck of the left-field stands!”

— Russ Hodges

Joy & Love of the Game

Sit with the voice that speaks to you today.

“It was almost like a dream, sort of surreal. I'm just so happy I gave the people something to cheer.”

— Mike Piazza

“Bryant! The Cubs win the World Series! ... And the Cubs have finally won it all, 8-7 in 10!”

— Joe Buck

“I'll never forgive myself. We might have gotten rid of Willie forever if I'd only struck him out.”

— Warren Spahn

“The best memory I ever had in baseball was when I walked into the locker room and they gave me my dress and my uniform... And that clickety clack — you know, the spikes against the cement — isn't that beautiful music?”

— Maybelle Blair

“I know I don't speak a whole lot, but let me tell you that I am so happy to be part of this group.”

— Vladimir Guerrero

“Tonight, I stand here, overwhelmed, as my name is linked with the great and courageous Lou Gehrig.”

— Cal Ripken Jr.

“I love you, Miami!”

— Liván Hernández

“I don't believe it! I don't believe it! I do not believe it!”

— Russ Hodges

Joy & Love of the Game

Sit with the voice that speaks to you today.

“I've never heard my name chanted like that. It was so much fun.”

— Rachel Balkovec

“I never thought at the age of 13 I'd be a role model. I always wanted to be a role model, but being a baseball role model is really cool.”

— Mo'ne Davis

“Go very light on the vices, such as carrying on in society — the social ramble ain't restful.”

— Satchel Paige

“I was meant to officiate, there's no doubt in my mind. I'm one of the few people on Earth who found what he was supposed to be and got a chance to live it. God meant me to umpire.”

— Doug Harvey

“The toughest thing for me as a young manager is the fact a lot of these guys saw me play. So it's hard for me to instruct them in anything because they know how bad I was.”

— Tony La Russa

“That ball is going... going... gone!”

— Mel Allen

“If your stomach disputes you, lie down and pacify it with cool thoughts.”

— Satchel Paige

“When you have a father and a mother who work all their lives so you can have an education and build your body — it's a blessing.”

— Lou Gehrig

Joy & Love of the Game

Sit with the voice that speaks to you today.

"I want to thank everybody for making this day necessary."

— Yogi Berra

"This is just where I belong."

— Drew Robinson

"I know how lucky I was to have been born in America and had a chance to play the game I loved, the greatest game of them all — baseball."

— Ted Williams

"I stood there shaking, but I got a hit. Right out over second base. Happiest moment in my life."

— Toni Stone

"It was probably the funnest 10 days I've ever had. You can just feel it in your veins. It's a special, special feeling."

— Mike Trout

"I've been saying 'World Series champs' in my head over and over again just to see if it will sink in. I can't put it into words yet. Just so thankful."

— Clayton Kershaw

"High fly ball into right field, she is gone!"

— Vin Scully

"That's good... because if you put him in corduroys, he'd start a fire."

— Anonymous

THE BALLPARK MEMBERS' CLUB

More from Joy & Love of the Game



Why anyone starts.

“You reverse the time back 15 years ago, I was sitting under a mango tree without 50 cents to pay for a bus.”

— **Pedro Martínez**

This copy belongs to: Sample Reader

The Ballpark Members' Club · Joy & Love of the Game

A few more from Joy & Love of the Game



The part nobody has to be told to love.

“Going into the Baseball Hall of Fame was not my goal. I didn’t even know there was one until I visited Cooperstown for the first time in 2001. But being here today is like a fantastic dream.”

— Ichiro Suzuki

“I love the money, but I’d play for free.”

— Justin Verlander

“I was a very happy person because my family worked very hard. I didn’t have the best material things in the world, but in my heart my life was the best in the world.”

— Orlando ‘El Duque’ Hernández

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THEME 6 OF 7

Mastery & Practice

The cage, the bullpen, ten thousand ground balls — the quiet repetitions behind the hardest simple thing in sport.



The crowd sees one smooth swing; the cage heard the ten thousand that built it.

Mastery & Practice — in the game, in life

Baseball may be the hardest simple thing in sport: hitting a round ball with a round bat, squarely, against a person whose whole craft is preventing it. Nobody is born able to do it. The smooth swing that looks like leisure was built in cages over decades — off the tee, soft toss, round after round of batting practice, the same movement grooved until the hands can be trusted to answer before the mind has finished asking. Pitchers serve the same apprenticeship in bullpens, throwing to imagined corners over and over, learning the grip changes measured in millimetres that make a ball dance. Infielders take ground balls by the thousand until the in-between hop — the one that embarrasses beginners — becomes just another word in a language they read fluently. Baseball's masters are made of repetitions, and the game is severe about it in a way that is finally a mercy: the ball does not know your name, your bonus or your reputation. It answers attention, repetition and honest error, and nothing else. The cage never flatters and never lies. And the game adds its own quiet clause — that craft is what remains at the end of the season, when the air turns cold and the nerves turn loud, and everything unearned falls away. Nearly everything in life worth doing obeys the same law: the language, the instrument, the trade, the long patient craft of being steady for other people. Choose yours and find your cage — the hour nobody sees, the standard nobody demands of you but you. Keep a private count of your repetitions, because the crowd only counts the visible ones. And when someone calls you a natural, tip your cap. It is the name people give to work they did not witness.

“You've gotta start from way down at the bottom, when you're six or seven years of age. You can't wait until you're fifteen or sixteen. You gotta let it grow up with you, and if you're successful, and you try hard enough, you're bound to come out on top — just like these boys have come to the top now.”

— Babe Ruth

Mastery & Practice

Sit with the voice that speaks to you today.

"If there is such a thing as a science in sport, hitting a baseball is it. As with any science, there are fundamentals, certain tenets of hitting every good batter or batting coach could tell you."

— Ted Williams

"Baseball gives every American boy a chance to excel, not just to be as good as someone else, but to be better than someone else. This is the nature of man and the name of the game."

— Ted Williams

"The two misconceptions of me are I didn't work hard, and that everything I made it look easy. Just because I made it look easy doesn't mean that it was, and you don't work hard and become a Hall of Famer without working day in and day out."

— Ken Griffey Jr.

"The best umpired game is the game in which the fans cannot recall the umpires who worked it."

— Bill Klem

"The papers said that the other players, and even the umpires on the field, begged him to come out and acknowledge us in some way, but he never had and did not now. Gods do not answer letters."

— John Updike

"It was never about being the first. In my mind, you can go be the first. I want to be the best of the best. I want to be the best ever. That was my goal."

— Ila Borders

"What do I mean when I say I pitch from my heart? It means something inside me — a feeling I get. It's in my blood, my body. It's not the money. It's my pride, my name. My family's name. That's worth more than the \$75 million they're paying me."

— Pedro Martínez

"I became a good pitcher when I stopped trying to make them miss the ball and started trying to make them hit it."

— Sandy Koufax

Mastery & Practice

Sit with the voice that speaks to you today.

“He's like a meticulous surgeon out there... he puts the ball where he wants to.”

— Tony Gwynn

“I want to be remembered as a ballplayer who gave all he had to give.”

— Roberto Clemente

“Good is not good when better is expected.”

— Vin Scully

“Ninety percent of this game is half mental.”

— Jim Wohlford

“On the scoreboard in right field it is 9:46 p.m. in the City of the Angels, Los Angeles, California.”

— Vin Scully

“I throw 70 mph. That's throwing like a girl.”

— Mo'ne Davis

“The reason I think I'm a good pitcher is I locate my fastball and I change speeds. Period. That's what you do to pitch. That's what pitchers have to do to win games.”

— Greg Maddux

“Pitching, defense and the three-run homer.”

— Earl Weaver

Mastery & Practice

Sit with the voice that speaks to you today.

“The good rising fastball is the best pitch in baseball.”

— Tom Seaver

“Everybody can just see that there are a lot of opportunities in baseball. Sometimes I think we always limit ourselves to thinking what we could do.”

— Alyssa Nakken

“Little by little, I found myself doing more and more, and I finally just ended up completely involved.”

— Effa Manley

“Trying to hit him was like trying to drink coffee with a fork.”

— Willie Stargell

“They throw the ball, I hit it; they hit the ball, I catch it.”

— Willie Mays

“Inner dialogue should be focused on what the player wants to do in a situation and not on what he doesn't want to do or doesn't want to happen.”

— Bob Tewksbury

“Ninety feet between home plate and first base may be the closest man has ever come to perfection.”

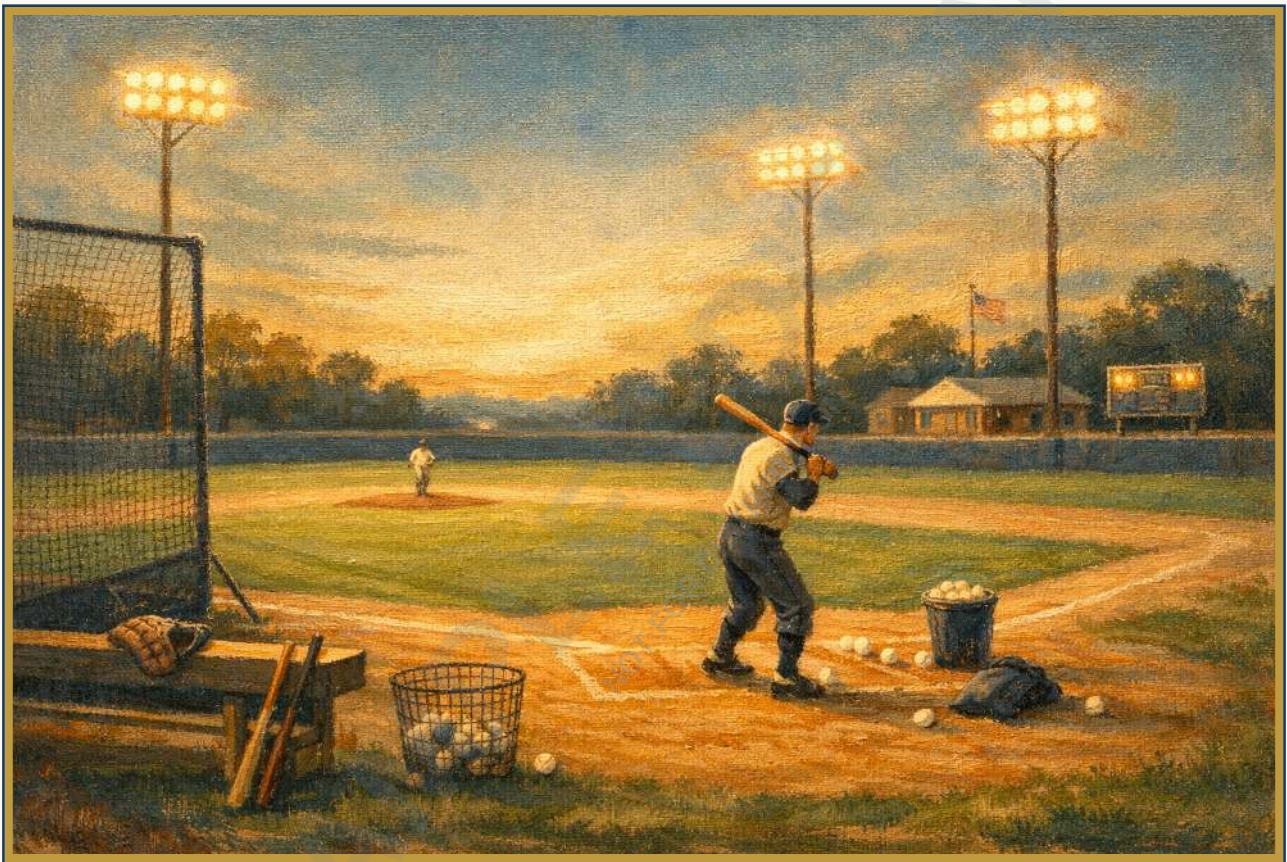
— Red Smith

“It is the psychology of baseball, the mental attitudes of the players, some intangible thing that works on the mind.”

— Christy Mathewson

THE BALLPARK MEMBERS' CLUB

More from Mastery & Practice



The thousandth repetition.

“On offense, your most precious possessions are your 27 outs.”

— Earl Weaver

This copy belongs to: Sample Reader

The Ballpark Members' Club · Mastery & Practice

A few more from Mastery & Practice



Hard-won, quietly.

“A pitcher needs two pitches, one they’re looking for and one to cross them up.”

— Warren Spahn

“There will always be people who are ahead of the curve, and people who are behind the curve. But knowledge moves the curve.”

— Bill James

“Always run them out. You never can tell.”

— Joe McCarthy

THEME 7 OF 7

Rivalry & Respect

Rivalries handed down like heirlooms — the glare across the diamond, and the tip of the cap.



The glare lasts a series; the tip of the cap lasts a lifetime.

Rivalry & Respect — in the game, in life

Baseball's rivalries are measured in generations. Because the schedule brings the same clubs together again and again, summer after summer, a rivalry in this game is not an event but an inheritance — grandparents pass it to grandchildren, whole cities set their calendars by it, and a series in August can feel like a chapter in a story that began before anyone present was born. The dugouts glare, the ballparks howl, the games tighten wonderfully — and inside all that theatre the game keeps its old courtesies. The tip of the cap to a pitcher who beat you fairly. The nod between a base runner and a first baseman who have been meeting like this for fifteen years. The handshakes around the batting cage before the storm begins. Baseball people understand something civilised: the other side is not the enemy of the game but the other half of it — no rival, no rivalry; no rivalry, no story worth retelling all winter. And rivals do their secret work all the while. The club you cannot beat is the standard you cannot ignore; every off-season move is answered, every weakness found in June becomes the winter's homework. The great pairs raised each other, and the honest ones eventually said so. Life deals everyone a rival, though we are usually too polite to use the word — the colleague whose work makes ours look ordinary, the old classmate whose progress needles us at midnight. Use yours the baseball way. Envy studies a rival's pennants; wisdom studies their patience — the things they planted years before the winning. Let the contest raise your standard and the courtesy keep you decent. Want harder, play fairer — and when you are beaten fairly, tip your cap and mean it.

“Baseball is a spirited race of man against man, reflex against reflex. A game of inches. Every skill is measured. Every heroic, every failing is seen and cheered — or booed. And then becomes a statistic.”

— Ernie Harwell

Rivalry & Respect

Sit with the voice that speaks to you today.

“Trying to hit Phil Niekro is like trying to eat Jell-O with chopsticks.”

— Bobby Murcer

“Three thousand hits or a record 262 hits in one season — those are achievements recognized by the writers. By the way, the offer for that writer to have dinner at my home has now expired.”

— Ichiro Suzuki

“It seems like he's inside your mind with you. When he knows you're not going to swing, he throws a straight one. He sees into the future. It's like he has a crystal ball hidden inside his glove.”

— Wade Boggs

“Mr. Veeck, you know if Larry Doby were white and a free agent, you'd give him \$100,000 to sign with you merely as a bonus.”

— Effa Manley

“Gentlemen, he was out because I said he was out.”

— Bill Klem

“Don't let us win tonight.”

— Kevin Millar

“Mrs. Manley told Rickey that he had taken Don Newcombe for no money but she wasn't going to let him take me without some compensation.”

— Monte Irvin

“I actually used about nine pitches — two different fastballs, two sliders, a curve, a change-up, knockdown, brushback, and hit-batsman.”

— Bob Gibson

Rivalry & Respect

Sit with the voice that speaks to you today.

“The nice guys are all over there, in seventh place.”

— Leo Durocher

“Let's stop admiring them. If you admire them, you can't surpass them. We came here to surpass them, to reach the top. For one day, let's throw away our admiration for them and just think about winning.”

— Shohei Ohtani

“All literary men are Red Sox fans — to be a Yankee fan in a literate society is to endanger your life.”

— John Cheever

“As a baseball fan, everybody wanted to see it. He won Round 1.”

— Mike Trout

“I've played a couple of hundred games of tic-tac-toe with my little daughter and she hasn't beaten me yet. I've always had to win. I've got to win.”

— Bob Gibson

“An angry player can't argue with the back of an umpire who is walking away.”

— Bill Klem

“Above anything else, I hate to lose.”

— Jackie Robinson

“Don't let us win today... if we do, we got Pedro tomorrow and Schill in Game 6, and in Game 7, anything can happen.”

— Kevin Millar

Rivalry & Respect

Sit with the voice that speaks to you today.

“And in combat I learned to give up combat. I learned in fact, there were no enemies. An opponent was someone whose strength joined to yours and created a certain result.”

— Sadaharu Oh

“When the New York Giants, a team you would give your right arm to beat, and vice versa, sends you a gift — that's something.”

— Lou Gehrig

“Why not us?”

— Curt Schilling

“I don't believe in damn curses. Wake up the damn Bambino and have me face him. Maybe I'll drill him in the ass, pardon me the word.”

— Pedro Martínez

“I never got the chance to tell you, I wasn't showing you up, I was just reacting emotionally.”

— Kirk Gibson

“It got to a point where we wanted them to boo us because that meant we were winning. I'd rather be booed than hear that chant, to tell you the truth.”

— Chipper Jones

“In playing or managing, the game of ball is only fun for me when I'm out in front and winning. I don't give a hill of beans for the rest of the game.”

— John McGraw

“I don't like to sound egotistical, but every time I stepped up to the plate with a bat in my hands, I couldn't help but feel sorry for the pitcher.”

— Rogers Hornsby

THE BALLPARK MEMBERS' CLUB

More from Rivalry & Respect



Opponents, not enemies.

“It ain't bragging if you can back it up.”

— Dizzy Dean

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The Ballpark Members' Club · Rivalry & Respect

A few more from Rivalry & Respect



Respect, earned the hard way.

"If Satch and I were pitching on the same team, we'd clinch the pennant by July 4 and go fishing until World Series time."

— Dizzy Dean

"The pitcher has got only a ball. I've got a bat. So the percentage in weapons is in my favor and I let the fellow with the ball do the fretting."

— Hank Aaron

"The main idea is to win."

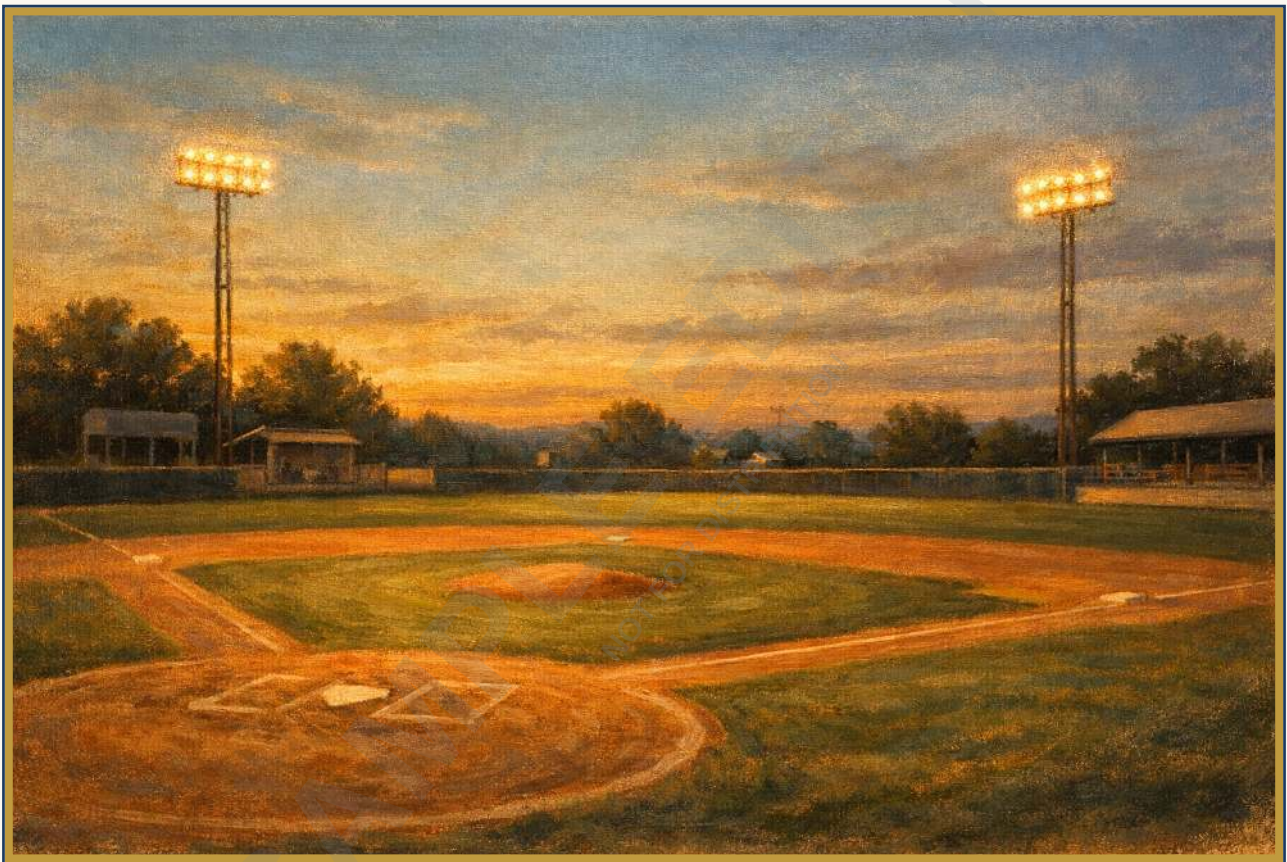
— John McGraw

About The Ballpark Members' Club

The Ballpark Members' Club is a demonstration client, invented to show how a branded edition looks and reads. In a real edition this page carries your own history, your own words, and the details your people would want to keep.

Website: sportsmart4life.co.za

After the final whistle



Until the next one.

Between the Whistles

The last out is only ever half true. Somewhere a ball is already in flight — a backyard catch stretching into the dusk, a batting cage humming with one more round, a child asking for one more inning before dark. May the voices in this collection walk with you between the innings of your own life.

SportSmart4Life is the intelligent spectator's toolkit — learn the games you love, watch them smarter, and let the wisdom of sport walk into your life. Explore the sports, SpectatorIQ and the Voices of the Game at sportsmart4life.co.za.

Go Deeper with SportSmart

This collection began as a way of watching. If the voices in these pages made you want to watch with sharper eyes — and let more of the game walk into your life — here is where the journey continues.

- **The Baseball Spectator Module**

eight tools that teach you the game itself — read the play, know the laws, follow the season's plots, and grow your Fan IQ match by match.

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- **SportSmart4Life Membership**

the intelligent spectator's home — modules across 80+ sports, one member dashboard, and wisdom tools that turn watching into wellbeing.

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- **SpectatorIQ — the Quiz Show**

test your sports brain in our quiz show — ladders, live rounds and power-ups across every sport we cover.

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- **Voices of the Game**

the living library behind this book - thousands of verified voices to explore, sport by sport and theme by theme.

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Every quotation in this collection is real, verified and honestly attributed — that is the Voices of the Game promise.