

[PDF] Watching Baseball Smarter: A Professional Fan's Guide For Beginners, Semi-experts, And Deeply Serious Geeks

Zack Hample - pdf download free book



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Description:

From Publishers Weekly Starred Review. "Professional fan" Hample (How to Snag Major League Baseballs), who falls squarely in the "deeply serious geek" category, has put together an invaluable resource for armchair fans. A former college shortstop, four-time attendee of Bucky Dent's Baseball

School and an obsessive baseball collector, Hample covers basics like what to watch for in pitchers, catchers, hitters, fielders and base runners; he also provides answers to such nagging questions as why spectators stretch in the seventh inning and why most ballplayers grab their crotches. He explains the difference between a change-up and a split-finger fastball, breaks down a box score and offers an extensive glossary of baseball slang that defines both a "courtesy trot" and a "dying quail." Other sections address free agency and fair balls, umpires and uniform numbers, stadiums and superstitions. Trivia abounds, including the names of the 10 switch hitters honored in the National Baseball Hall of Fame and a record of inside-the-park homeruns. Hample hits the equivalent of a reference-book homerun with his witty, loose and readable style-taking a friendly for-a-fan-by-a-fan approach that doesn't hide his enormous depth of knowledge. Highly recommended for baseball watchers, Hample also schools amateur players and coaches with well-illustrated examples of some complex pitching, hitting and base-running scenarios.

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From Hample is known in the blogosphere as the foremost snagger of major-league baseballs (read all about it at snaggingbaseballs.mlblogs.com). Here he turns to ink and paper with a *Baseball for Dummies*-type guide that, thanks to its irreverent, tongue-in-cheek style, will also appeal to fans who left the dummy stage long ago. He covers such topics as the amateur draft, grips for various pitches--slider, curve, splitter, etc.--and what managers talk about on their visits to the mound. There is discussion of the seemingly obvious (the role of starting pitchers) and the more arcane (when *not* to slide), and there is plenty of genuinely fascinating historical trivia (how the letter *K* came to be the scorekeeper's symbol for a strikeout). All in all, this is a light but informative tome that will be just the ticket to get fans in the right frame of mind for opening day. *Wes Lukowsky*
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