

TOP 10 FAVORITE BASEBALL BOOKS

by

Robert P. Nash

Jim Bouton, edited by Leonard Shecter. *Ball Four: My Life and Hard Times Throwing the Knuckleball in the Big Leagues* (1970).

- Controversial when it was first published, Bouton's behind-the-scenes "tell-all" has endured as one of baseball's most significant books.

Robert Coover. *The Universal Baseball Association, Inc., J. Henry Waugh, Prop.* (1968).

- In this memorable novel, a man becomes obsessed with the tabletop baseball game he created, increasingly losing touch with reality in the process.

David Halberstam. *The Teammates: A Portrait of a Friendship* (2003).

- Dom DiMaggio, Bobby Doerr, Johnny Pesky, and Ted Williams were teammates on the Boston Red Sox from the 1940s through the early 1950s, but these four very different men also became lifelong friends.

Roger Kahn. *The Boys of Summer* (1972).

- Kahn's loving tribute to growing up in Brooklyn and to his hometown club, the Dodgers of the late 1940s and most of the 1950s. The author highlights 13 members of the Dodger teams of that era, who won six National League pennants (1947, 1949, 1952, 1953, 1955, 1956) and their only World Series championship (1955) before relocating to Los Angeles in 1958.

Kadir Nelson. *We Are the Ship: The Story of Negro League Baseball* (2008).

- Nelson's wonderful illustrations alone recommend this book, but his cleverly conceived text also provides an intriguing overview of the history of the Negro Leagues.

Buck O'Neil, with Steve Wulf and David Conrads. *I Was Right on Time* (1996).

- As a key resource on the history of the Negro Leagues, Buck O'Neil emerged as the star of Ken Burns' 1994 documentary series, *Baseball*. He is just as engaging in his autobiography.

Bill Reynolds. *Lost Summer: The '67 Red Sox and the Impossible Dream* (1992).

- An excellent account of Boston's improbable 1967 season when the Bosox edged out the Minnesota Twins and the Detroit Tigers on the final day of the regular season to win the American League pennant.

Lawrence S. Ritter. *The Glory of Their Times: The Story of the Early Days of Baseball Told by the Men Who Played It* (1966).

- Ritter's collection of edited interviews with 22 former major leaguers whose playing careers spanned the final years of the 19th century to the 1940s is truly a classic. Four additional former players were added to the 1985 edition.

Jackie Robinson, as told to Alfred Duckett. *I Never Had It Made: An Autobiography* (1972).

- First published just days after his death in October 1972, this personal account of the man who courageously reintegrated Organized Baseball in 1946 and the majors the following year is as much about his life off the baseball diamond as on it.

Robert Whiting. *You Gotta Have Wa* (1989).

- Americans introduced baseball to Japan, but after embracing the game, the Japanese made it distinctly their own.

How many of these have you read?