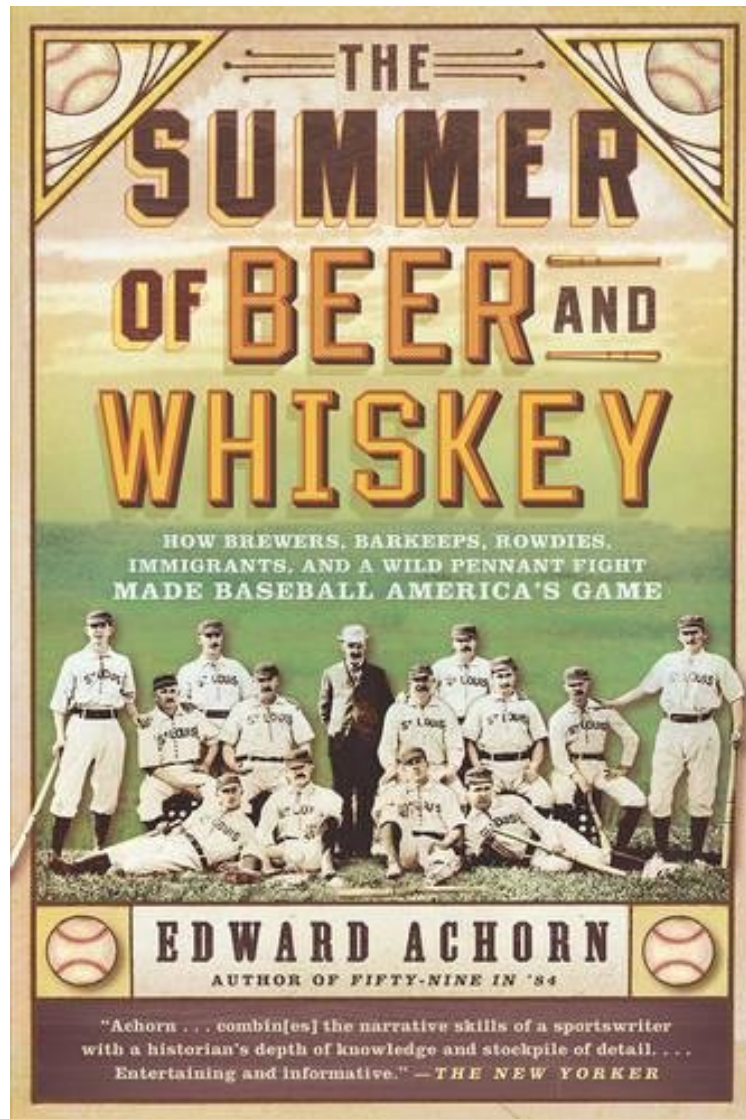


[Pdf free] The Summer of Beer and Whiskey: How Brewers, Barkeeps, Rowdies, Immigrants, and a Wild Pennant Fight Made Baseball America's Game

The Summer of Beer and Whiskey: How Brewers, Barkeeps, Rowdies, Immigrants, and a Wild Pennant Fight Made Baseball America's Game

Edward Achorn

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Edward Achorn : The Summer of Beer and Whiskey: How Brewers, Barkeeps, Rowdies, Immigrants, and a Wild Pennant Fight Made Baseball America's Game before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised The Summer of Beer and Whiskey: How Brewers, Barkeeps, Rowdies, Immigrants,

and a Wild Pennant Fight Made Baseball America's Game:

38 of 39 people found the following review helpful. The resurrection of baseball and its most improbable savior. By Paul Tognetti "But in all eight of its markets, the Association was transforming the public's perception of baseball itself, turning it from a fading game stained by corruption into a lively, affordable, fun-filled form of entertainment, the perfect two-hour escape from lives circumscribed by hard toil." - p. 116 In 1879 the game of baseball was virtually dead and buried in the city of St. Louis. A series of scandals had rocked the game in the mid 1870's and the fans were staying away in droves. The National League St. Louis Brown Stockings folded after the 1878 season to be replaced in 1879 by a semi-pro team by the same name. No one seemed to care. If baseball was going to experience a renaissance in the Gateway City it was going to require a determined owner with an innovative new approach. Enter one Chris Von Der Ahe, a German immigrant grocer and saloon owner who knew virtually nothing about the game. But while Von Der Ahe knew precious little about baseball he was a very astute businessman. He had become convinced that there was a great deal of money to be made from baseball and he set about to make his fortune. His unforgettable story is woven into the pages of Edward Achorn's marvelous new book "The Summer of Beer and Whiskey: How Brewers, Barkeeps, Rowdies, Immigrants, and a Wild Pennant Fight Made Baseball America's Game." When the American Association was founded in 1882 as a new major league, the owners adopted many of Von Der Ahe's ideas including Sunday baseball, affordable ticket prices and hawking beer at the games. The new league would become a smashing success in relatively short order. Now if you are one of those people who have read precious little about the early history of professional baseball then "The Summer of Beer and Whiskey" should prove to be a real eye-opener for you. Just imagine playing the game without any gloves. Consider what it was like for the catcher! Instead of 4 or 5 man pitching rotations most clubs relied on just two starting pitchers and the pitcher was expected to complete just about every game he started. And there was just one umpire! Ed Achorn cites a number of examples where unscrupulous players would take advantage of this unfortunate set of circumstances and cheat. The book largely focuses on the 1883 American Association season and an exciting pennant race that goes right down to the wire. You will be introduced to some of the most talented and popular players of the day and be treated to a number of memorable stories from both on and off the field. Make no mistake about it. The rough and tumble men who played the game in the early 1880's were certainly not choirboys. You will also be treated to a description of the very first "hidden ball" trick, learn the origin of the term "fan" and discover how the venerable "Louisville Slugger" came to be. Interesting stuff! As an aside I was also surprised to learn just how popular black baseball was becoming at that time. Blacks had a real passion for the game and teams like the Cincinnati Brown Stockings, Louisville Mutuals and the Geneva Clippers were drawing very respectable crowds sometimes rivaling those of the major leagues. Ed Achorn also tells the story of a very talented catcher by the name of Fleet Walker who is credited with being the first African-American to play major league baseball. I had never even heard of him! Back in 2011 I snatched a copy of Edward Achorn's first book on old-tyme baseball called "Fifty Nine in '84" off the Vine. It turned out to be the best baseball book I had ever read. A few weeks ago I discovered that Mr. Achorn had written a second book on the subject. I was all too happy to plunk down some of my hard earned dough to purchase a copy. I couldn't wait to receive the book and I read it in just a few sittings. I was not disappointed. "The Summer of Beer and Whiskey: How Brewers, Barkeeps, Rowdies, Immigrants, and a Wild Pennant Fight Made Baseball America's Game" grabbed my attention at the outset and simply never let go. This is an exceptionally well-written and meticulously documented book that is equally suitable for baseball fans, history buffs and general audiences. An important addition to the literature of our national pastime. Very highly recommended! 16 of 16 people found the following review helpful. Baseball in 1883 By Mark R. Brewer Edward Achorn is a first-rate historian. His books are well researched and well written. Baseball history is merely the topic he chooses to write about, and that's a blessing to those of us who love to read about baseball in the 19th Century. THE SUMMER OF BEER AND WHISKEY is an outstanding history of the American Association in the summer of 1883. The American Association was a rival major league (rival to the National League). The Association was in its second season in 1883 (the National League was in its eighth). Achorn argues that baseball was dying out in the late 1870s and early 1880s because so many gamblers were involved that it was seen as corrupt. Also, the National League catered to the well off, charging 50 cents and forbidding the sale of alcohol at games and the playing of games on Sundays. The American Association would change all that. They would charge only 25 cents for tickets, and would play games on Sundays, allowing the less fortunate to enjoy a game on their only day off. The league also allowed the sale of beer and whiskey at games. Thus, the American Association became known as "The Beer and Whiskey League." Achorn argues that they saved baseball. People became mad for baseball that summer. It didn't hurt that the American Association had a red-hot pennant race that went down to the wire. Achorn brings to life some wonderful characters--players, managers, and owners of the time. It is a cast worthy of Dickens, but these are real people. Perhaps the most memorable is Chris Von Der Ahe, a German immigrant who was instrumental in founding the league. He knew next to nothing about baseball, but he had money to spend, and he saw owning a ball club as a way to sell the beer his brewery made. His St. Louis Browns became the most successful team in the American Association's ten-year run. When the Association folded, four of its teams were absorbed into the National

League, Von Der Ahe's Browns being one of them. They later changed their name to Cardinals. Achorn argues that Von Der Ahe belongs in the Hall of Fame. But the Hall seems to have ignored the American Association. One of its biggest stars, Harry Stovey, led the Association in home runs four times. He also led the NL in home runs twice. When he retired, Stovey had hit more home runs and stolen more bases than anyone alive. Why is he not in the Hall of Fame? Achorn's book is a masterful history. His description of the pennant race is enthralling. As Abe Lincoln once said, "People who like this sort of thing will find this just the sort of thing they like." 25 of 27 people found the following review helpful. Baseball's Rich and Rollicking Past By Bill Emblom I first read about Chris Von der Ahe, Arlie Latham, and the St. Louis Browns (today's Cardinals) in a small paperback entitled "Comedians and Pranksters of Baseball" published by The Sporting News about 50 years ago. Thankfully author Edward Achorn has brought the period of early baseball back to life with this new gem on the 1883 pennant race between the Browns and the Philadelphia Athletics, both members of the American Association. Baseball was on a somewhat downward swing particularly in the mid-west when Browns' owner Chris Von der Ahe put together an attractive team primarily to sell his beer to the fans. Ballplayers during this era were night owls and hard drinkers which made it very difficult for a manager to control his charges. Author Achorn brings long-forgotten players such as the previously mentioned Latham, Charles Comiskey, Cap Anson, Daniel "Jumping Jack" Jones, Harry Stovey, Ed "The Only" Nolan, Moses Fleetwood Walker, Tim "Ted" Sullivan, Pete "The Old Gladiator" Browning, and several others back to life in this enriching book on the very early days of baseball. A major strength of this book is the author's ability to bring out the personalities of the characters in this 1883 pennant race. The bigoted Anson and other players in their refusal to accept the highly educated Fleetwood Walker which set the cause of blacks in organized baseball back until Jackie Robinson's arrival in 1947 is amply brought out. Browns' manager Sullivan quitting the team in the heat of a pennant race due to owner Von der Ahe's meddling in Sullivan's managerial decisions. This was an era of players who lived fast and died young. Their fame didn't last and they became as the poet Housman would write, "Runners whom renown outran and the name died before the man." An epilogue is provided at the end of the book relating what happened to the major characters following this rollicking 1883 season. If you are interested in baseball's rich history this book will bring several long-forgotten names from the game's past back to life. My sincere thanks to author Edward Achorn for providing us with this book. Thank you so much! If you claim to be a baseball fan, you need this book in your library.

Chris von der Ahe knew next to nothing about baseball when he risked his life's savings to found the franchise that would become the St. Louis Cardinals. Yet the German-born beer garden proprietor would become one of the most important and funniest figures in the game's history. Von der Ahe picked up the team for one reason to sell more beer. Then he helped gather a group of ragtag professional clubs together to create a maverick new league that would fight the haughty National League, reinventing big-league baseball to attract Americans of all classes. Sneered at as The Beer and Whiskey Circuit because it was backed by brewers, distillers, and saloon owners, their American Association brought Americans back to enjoying baseball by offering Sunday games, beer at the ballpark, and a dirt-cheap ticket price of 25 cents. The womanizing, egocentric, wildly generous Von der Ahe and his fellow owners filled their teams' rosters with drunks and renegades, and drew huge crowds of rowdy spectators who screamed at umpires and cheered like mad as the Philadelphia Athletics and St. Louis Browns fought to the bitter end for the 1883 pennant. In *The Summer of Beer and Whiskey*, Edward Achorn re-creates this wondrous and hilarious world of cunning, competition, and boozing, set amidst a rapidly transforming America. It is a classic American story of people with big dreams, no shortage of chutzpah, and love for a brilliant game that they refused to let die.

Bill Littlefield, NPR's "Only a Game" "The author makes a convincing case that it was an exceptionally entertaining time to be a baseball fan in St. Louis." Providence Journal "Edward Achorn ... favors us with a realistic and colorful look at early professional baseball." The Daily Beast "The time machine travels back to the 1880s as brewer Chris von der Ahe purchases the forerunner of the St. Louis Cardinals, with the singular purpose of selling more beer." Los Angeles Times "When it comes to baseball history, Edward Achorn has carved out his own territory, re-animating the 19th century game." The New Yorker - The Sporting Scene blog "Combining the narrative skills of a sportswriter with a historian's depth of knowledge and stockpile of detail, Achorn has produced a book that is both entertaining and informative." Ft. Wayne News-Sentinel "The Summer of Beer and Whiskey is full of great stories and interesting tidbits of history. Library Journal "Achorntakes us back to when baseball was expressed in two words and one league until the American Association was founded in 1882.