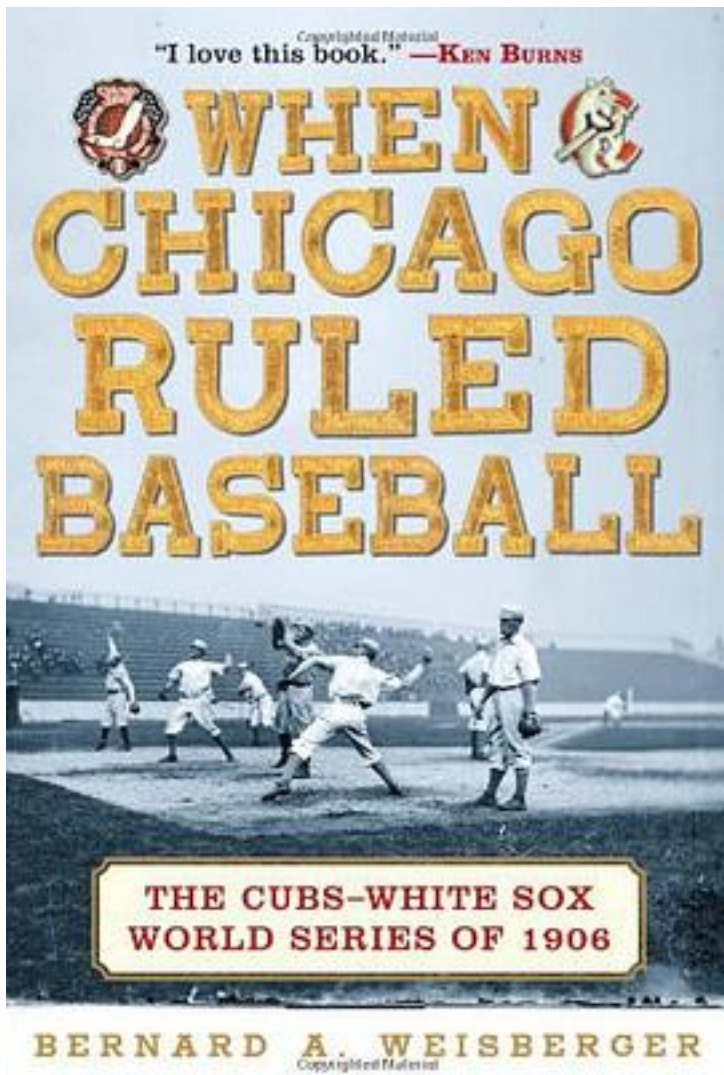


When Chicago Ruled Baseball



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In 1906, the baseball world saw something that had never been done. Two teams from the same city squared off against each other in an intracity World Series, pitting the heavily favored Cubs of the National League against the hardscrabble American League champion White Sox. Now, for its centennial anniversary, noted historian Bernard A. Weisberger tells the tale of a unique time in baseball, a unique time in America, and a time when Chicago was at the center of it all. At the turn of the century, American baseball and America itself were, to a modern observer, both completely alien and yet timelessly similar to what we know today. In 1906 the sport of baseball was still mired in the "dead ball" era, when defense won championships, and players didn't need bodybuilder physiques in order to be competitive. The league was racially segregated. A six-day workweek was threatened by early game times, as the first night game wouldn't be played for another three decades. There was no radio to broadcast the contest. Only one ball was used throughout the game. And yet it was still ninety feet between bases. The home team still batted in the bottom of the ninth inning. And the final score could still capture the attention of a nation. It was a time when the accomplishments on the field mirrored those beyond the diamond. America was the land of the self-made man, the land where hard work and determination could make a person's fortune. A.G. Spalding proved instrumental in making baseball what it is today—a thriving business and national pastime. Charles Comiskey worked his way from scoring runs as a player to becoming one of the most influential owners in baseball history. Mordecai "Three-Finger" Brown overcame a horribly disfiguring injury to become a Hall of Fame pitcher for the Cubs. And Tinkers-to-Evers-to-Chance proved that you could use teamwork to stand out as stars. A city that had rebuilt itself from the ashes of the Great Fire thirty-five years earlier was now the focal point of an entire baseball-loving country. The contest that could be called the Great Streetcar Series would electrify the city of Chicago, and prove to be one of the most unique and exciting World Series ever to be played.

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