

Play Ball!



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On any given spring evening, 360,000 children around the world can be found on the dusty mounds and grassy fields of a Little League field. With more than four million people playing or volunteering in Little League games every year, Little League is the institutional rite of passage into the quintessential American pastime. Play Ball charts Little League's history from the earliest days and shows how, in many respects, its history parallels America's history: isolation in the beginning; rapid expansion; a civil war of sorts, followed by reconstruction; struggles over civil rights and gender equity; and foreign entanglements. A microcosm of American society, Little League reflects, and is affected by, cultural, political and historical trends. Today, Little League is played on 12,000 fields in every U.S. state and in 103 other countries on six continents. Little League also sanctions play in softball, Tee Ball, and baseball for disabled children called the Challenger Division. The Little League Baseball World Series, played annually in Williamsport, is watched by crowds of 40,000 each year in person, and by more than ten million on ABC's Wide World of Sports. The authors were given full access to the Little League Baseball archives and have created a fully illustrated and comprehensive history. Play Ball contains appendixes including winners of all Little League Baseball and Softball World Series, a year-by-year history of Little League, countries in Little League, and lists of some of the famous people who played the

game as children, including Kevin Costner, Mark McGwire, and George W. Bush. Play Ball will interest parents, former players and coaches, fans of Little League Baseball, general baseball enthusiasts, and anyone who has ever picked up a ball and bat.

作者介绍:

目录:

[Play Ball! 下载链接1](#)

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