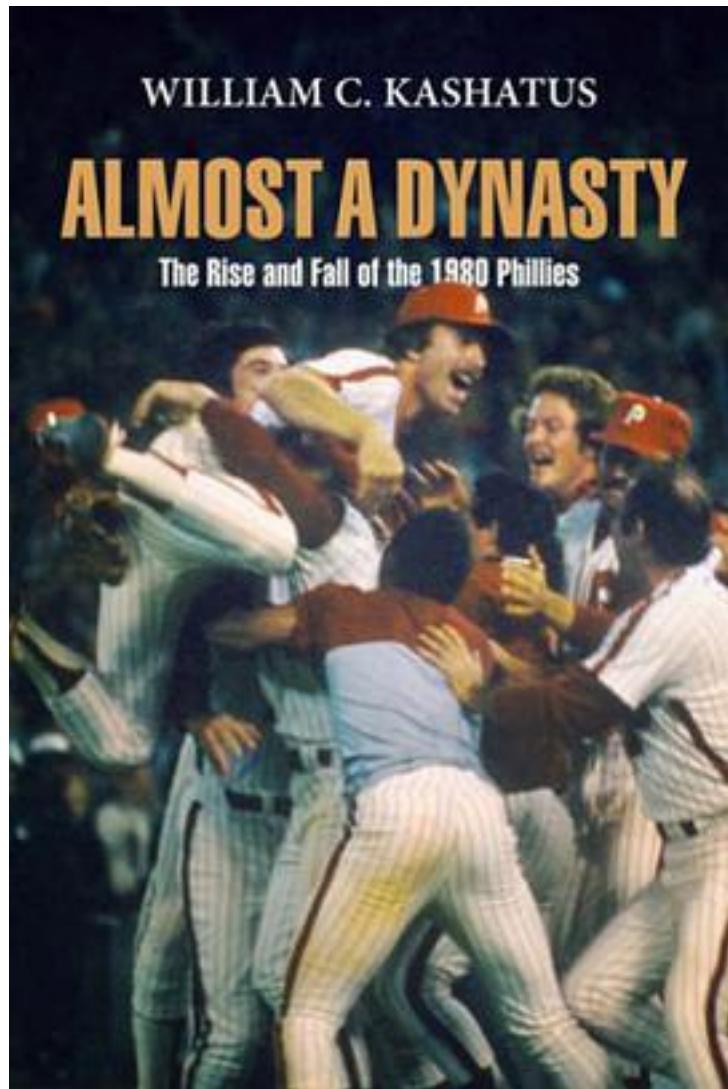


# Almost a Dynasty



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Being a Phillies fan has never been easy. The team has amassed the most losses of any professional sports franchise in history, as well as the longest losing streak and the most last-place finishes in the major leagues. The year 1980 was redemption for a miserable, century-old legacy of losing. It was also the beginning of the end for a team that could have been among the very best in baseball throughout the decade.

Between 1980 and 1983 the Philadelphia Phillies captured two pennants and a world championship. Legends like Tug McGraw, Steve Carlton, Mike Schmidt, and Pete Rose led the collection of homegrown products, veteran castoffs, and fair-haired rookies. If they had won another World Series, the team not only would have distanced themselves from a history of losing but would have established a championship dynasty. It never happened. The 1981 season was a watershed for both the Phillies and baseball. A players' strike led to a sixty-day work stoppage. The Phils, who had been in first place before the strike, were unable to regain their winning ways after play resumed. Labor relations between an increasingly powerful Players Association and inflexible owners became more acrimonious than ever before. Player salaries skyrocketed. Old loyalties were forgotten, and the notion of a homegrown team, like the 1980 Phillies, was a thing of the past. Almost a Dynasty details the rise and fall of the 1980 World Champion Phillies. Based on personal interviews, newspaper accounts, and the keen insight of a veteran baseball writer, the book convincingly explains why a team that had regularly made the post-season in the mid- to late 1970s, only to lose in the playoffs, was finally able to win its first world championship.

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