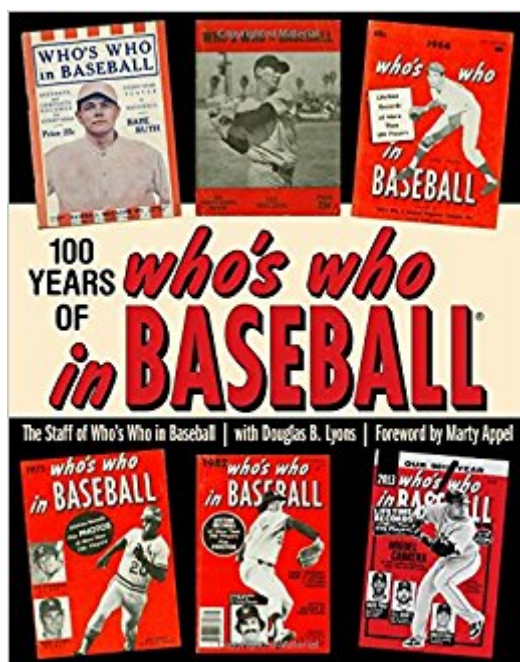


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100 Years Of Who's Who In Baseball



Synopsis

In celebration of the 100th issue of *Who's Who in Baseball* "one of the game's most venerable publications" comes a century's worth of the annual's iconic covers, insightful breakdowns of the players featured on those covers, and informative accounts of the baseball history tied to each year's issue. *100 Years of Who's Who in Baseball* is a colorful, must-have book of baseball nostalgia for fans of the American Pastime. The start of the baseball season brings with it a host of annual traditions and reminders, and one of the most beloved "the annual *Who's Who in Baseball*" arrives on newsstands across the country every Spring Training. The 2015 season marks 100 years of *Who's Who* delivering year-by-year stats to generations of baseball fans to quickly and easily track a player's performance from the minors to the majors. And while *Who's Who* is trusted as an authoritative source of baseball statistics and has been used by generations of club executives, broadcasters, journalists, and fans "it's the publication's cover subject that each year generates as much hot-stove speculation and buzz as off-season rumors of trades, firings, and pitching rotations. In partnership with *Who's Who in Baseball*, this celebratory book features each of the annual's 100 iconic covers in full color along with an account of why the player rated the cover and what was going on in baseball at the time. From baseball's deadball era to the dawn of replay review, this collection offers a gorgeously illustrated history of the game.

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Customer Reviews

This [book] is a great piece of history, mining the iconic, digest-size annual Who's Who in Baseball. Each cover is reproduced — the first player on the cover was Ty Cobb, and it cost 15 cents. Babe Ruth made his first cover appearance in 1920, his first with the Yankees. And shockingly, the first African-American player to grace the cover was in 1966. And even then, Willie Mays shared the front with four other players . . . [A] fascinating artifact, with some stats and stories from every year. (New York Post)

Who's Who in Baseball traces its origins back to its being a spin-off of the popular Baseball Magazine deep in baseball's dead ball era. The first issue appeared in 1912, and the second issue appeared in 1916, with Ty Cobb on the cover. The publication has come out each spring since. Harris Publications, Inc. (through its division, Who's Who in Baseball Magazine Co.,) has published the book since 1956. The basic cover-design format of red cover background and black type has been used since the 1940s, and the look of this great publication is so recognizable to readers that the editors feel comfortable covering up most of the word BASEBALL in the logo. Douglas B. Lyons is a leading authority on all things baseball. He is the author of *Out of Left Field*, *Curveballs and Screwballs*, and *Short Hops and Foul Tips*, all of which he co-wrote with his brother Jeffrey. He also wrote *Broadcast Rites and Sites: I Saw It on the Radio with Red Sox* broadcaster Joe Castiglione. Marty Appel is the author of many books, including *Pinstripe Empire* and most recently the New York Times bestseller *Munson*. Following his years as the Yankees' public relations director, he became an Emmy Award-winning television producer and director of Marty Appel Public Relations. Appel lives in New York City and appears frequently on ESPN, HBO, the MLB Network, and the YES Network.

What's Good: The book shows the front covers in full size of the 100 years of publication with interesting and striking pictures, especially before the magazine went to the all-red background in the 1950's. It would be very expensive - if not impossible for the reader to accumulate these on his own.
What's Indifferent: In a 200 page book, the pictures of covers noted above take up half the space all by themselves. The other pages are devoted to brief biographical sketches of the players on the cover, and to very brief summaries of what happened in baseball that year. The consumer who buys this book is most likely a baseball nut (like myself), and who likely already has much of this information in his memory, or has it readily available, and in more detail, on thirty other books on his shelves.
What's Not So Good: There's a lot of material that might have been included that was left out - and, sadly, a lot of blank space that might have been put to better use. Back in the

1950's and '60's, many of us would use the *Who's Who* (and *Street & Smith's Annual*) for much of our baseball information. *Street and Smith's* gave a snapshot of the coming year along with a good stat summary of the previous year. But *Who's Who* gave us the player's entire career stats, including minor league stats. Back then, a player could be in the minors for 8-10 years before getting up to the majors; his minor league stats were his whole career, so if you wanted to know about him, you needed those stats. And *Who's Who* gave the player's trade history. Before free agency, many players, especially lesser ones, were traded many times, sometimes more than once in the same year. And the trades were complex; three-way trades involving eight or nine different players were not unheard of. All of this information is readily available today on websites like *Retrosheet* or *Baseball Reference*, but "back in the day" *Who's Who* was the only source for many of us. So *100 Years of Who's Who in Baseball* is nice to have, but I believe it missed its roots. *Who's Who* - the actual magazine - was crammed with information and stats, a stat junkie's dream. This book is a picture book with a lot of empty space and paltry facts. A few examples of a players stats - the players on the cover, or perhaps some obscure player who was always a trade "throw-in" would have put all that dead space to good use.

I've been reading *Who's Who in Baseball* for over 20 years, buying each issue every season. I love the stats in the magazine. This book is a great addendum, it tells what happened every year in baseball since the start of the game. There was just the right amount of information on every season so you got a good feel for what happened that year. It really helps you understand the evolution of baseball from the Babe Ruth era all the way through to today. I'm a big fan and would highly recommend this to anyone who's into baseball.

I like this book as I've been a big fan of *Who's Who* since the early 70's. I give it only 3 stars however as they seem to be in desperate need of a proofreader. I only turned to page 201 regarding the 2015 edition, the last page basically. Jose Altuve won the NL batting title with a .302 average? And Clayton Kershaw was the first pitcher since both Bob Gibson & Denny McClain in 1968, to win both the Cy Young & MVP awards in the same season? Do the authors not remember Justin Verlander, Vida Blue, Willie Hernandez, Rollie Fingers, & Roger Clemens? You guys should have called me. I would have proofread this for free.

I am struck that nobody else here has made note of something that I find very disturbing about this book. Granted, the idea of this book is great, and it does make an attractive offering. But as noted

elsewhere, there is a lot of white space here that could have been made more use of, as noted elsewhere, by including some of the player register entries from the actual inside of the annuals -- the nuts and bolts and guts of what made Who's Who what it was. But here's the thing that really got me. In a book celebrating the source of facts and numbers in baseball for a number of years, there are some glaring errors in the text by Douglas Lyons. He has a lot of interesting trivial tidbits, if you can believe them. For example: Joe Torre is noted as being, in 1971, the first NL catcher to win a batting crown since Bubbles Hargrave in 1926. But by 1971 Torre was a full-time third baseman. I thought that was a pretty well-known fact. In fact Torre didn't play any games at catcher in '71. Bob Gibson is noted as having the lowest ERA in a single season -- 1.12 in 1968 -- in the 20th century. No, it's the third-lowest, topped by Dutch Leonard in 1914 (0.96) and Mordecai Brown in 1906 (1.04). Granted, that's a long time ago, but it's still the 20th century, last time I checked. When noted that Jimmy Foxx hit 50 homers in 1938, the text said the 50-homer feat had only been accomplished previously by Babe Ruth and Hack Wilson. Except that Foxx did it himself in 1932 with 58. (Hank Greenberg hit 58 in 1938.) Commenting on the most famous catch in baseball history, i.e., "The Catch" by Willie Mays in the 1954 World Series, Lyons wrote that he prevented the runners from advancing with his throw after the catch. No, Larry Doby advanced from second to third. (But Willie probably prevented Doby from scoring from second with a miraculous throw. That's how deep center field was in the Polo Grounds.) Lyons does have some great stuff in here, stuff I'll add to my own collection of fascinating baseball facts. But unfortunately in this Internet age, if you dip your toe in the trivia business you're also in the get it right business. And that means all the time, fair or not. What's really dismaying is that these faux passes were committed by someone who'd previously written three trivia books on baseball. So how much credibility can we put into the content that went into those books, given the trivial approach to trivia he seems to take, given the errors in this book? Don't get me wrong, I love this book, and it makes a nice addition to the library for any baseball history nut. But it's kind of like a store with a great window display that disappoints once you step inside.

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