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FANTASY LIFE

AUTHOR: Matthew Berry
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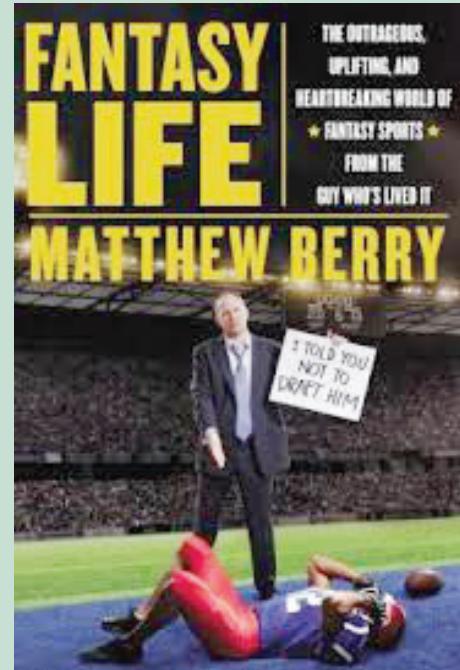
FOR A MEMOIR ON FANTASY SPORTS, you can trust Matthew Berry, the man who has based his profession on one of America's favorite pastimes. In his new book, *Fantasy Life: The Outrageous, Uplifting, and Heartbreaking World of Fantasy Sports from the Guy Who's Lived It*, the senior fantasy sports analyst for ESPN channels his passion for the game into an anecdote-packed cultural study that details the history and his own entry into fantasy sports.

In his book, Berry covers not only fantasy baseball, football and basketball but also international sports such as sumo wrestling. He mixes the historical background of fantasy competition with larger-than-life tales from leagues around the world. Berry's narration recounts trash talk between competitors, punishments dealt out to losing players and stories involving the White House Situation Room and a huge golden pelican.

Berry also chronicles his own involvement in fantasy competition. He's now one of ESPN's most-read columnists and the host of one of the sport juggernaut's most-downloaded podcasts. But before that, he was just a bespectacled 14-year-old competing in a fantasy baseball league with a bunch of guys in their late 20s and early 30s. His interest in fantasy sports never waned, and he famously left a successful career as a sitcom writer in Hollywood to start his own fantasy league website. Berry's stories transcend personal recollections. As a child of the '80s, the author witnessed the transition of fantasy sports from a niche subculture to the widespread hobby that it is today.

Fantasy Life is as much a cultural study as it is a personal memoir. Berry doesn't just celebrate the fantasy leagues themselves but also the players whose dedication to the game make it real.

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