



I Wore Babe Ruth's Hat: Field Notes from a Life in Sports (Sport and Society)

David W. Zang

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David W. Zang played junior high school basketball in a drained swimming pool. He wore a rubber suit to bed to make weight for a wrestling meet. He kept a log as an obsessive runner (not a jogger). In short, he soldiered through the life of an ordinary athlete.

Whether pondering his long-unbuilt replica of Connie Mack Stadium or his eye-opening turn as the Baltimore Ravens' mascot, Zang offers tales at turns poignant and hilarious as he engages with the passions that shaped his life. Yet his meditations also probe the tragedy of a modern athletic culture that substitutes hyped spectatorship for participation. As he laments, American society's increasing scorn for taking part in play robs adults of the life-affirming virtues of games that challenge us to accomplish the impossible for the most transcendent of reasons: to see if it can be done.

From teammates named Lop to tracing Joe Paterno's long shadow over Happy Valley, *I Wore Babe Ruth's Hat* reports from the everyman's Elysium where games and life intersect.

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