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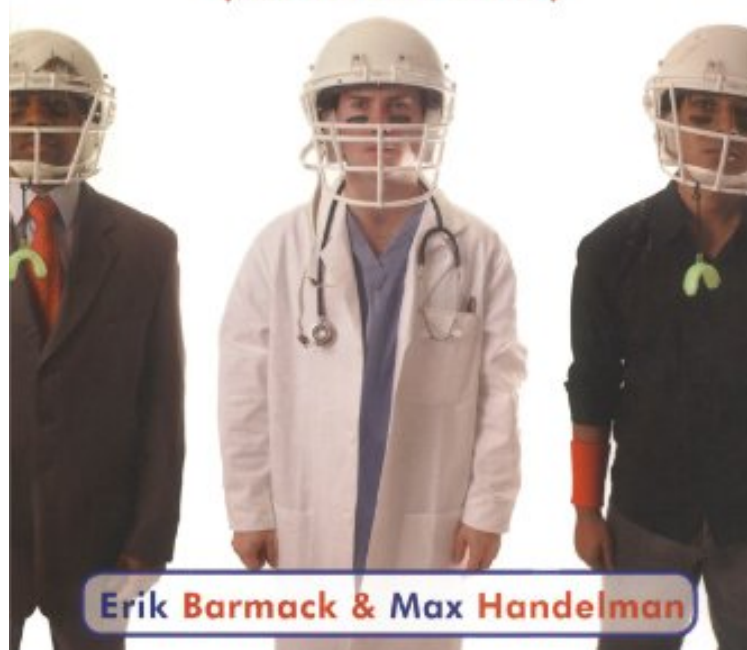
Why Fantasy Football Matters: (And Our Lives Do Not)

Erik Barmack, Max Handelman
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"This book is to fantasy football what the Bible is to religion—
only funnier—and with more football."
—Jason Sklar, cohost of *Cheap Seats*, *ESPN Classic*



(AND OUR LIVES DO NOT)



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#1148585 in Books Erik Barmack 2006-08-01 2006-08-01Original language:EnglishPDF # 1 9.00 x .70 x 6.00l, .85 #File Name: 1416909966256 pagesWhy Fantasy Football Matters and Our Lives Do Not | File size: 52.Mb

Erik Barmack, Max Handelman : Why Fantasy Football Matters: (And Our Lives Do Not) before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Why Fantasy Football Matters: (And Our Lives Do Not):

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Still Good, Worth Reading For Offseason FixBy JohnStill a fun read for any fantasy football player even though the player and other references are 10-15 years old. Made me laugh a few times. Says its fiction but based on actual people and events the authors have experienced, which was less of an issue I

initially thought it'd be when I found that out, since all of the dialogue and stories are engaging and very realistic and typical of an active league. I think it's still worth reading, especially for only \$5 total and in May-June, the most dormant months of the NFL offseason. 1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. Laugh out loud funnyBy S. Hendricks "Why Fantasy Football Matters (and our lives do not)" by Erik Barmack and Max Handelman One word sums up this book best. Captivating. I picked up "Why Fantasy Football Matters (and our lives do not)" and finished it within two days. It was hard to put down because every new chapter takes the reader along the next adventure of a league's FF season. If you play fantasy football you will enjoy reading this in-depth look at a typical fantasy football league by Barmack and Handelman. I loved the references to movies and other cultural icons like Bill O' Reilly, Seinfeld, Wile E Coyote, Cool Hand Luke, the Muppets and even Dr. Seuss. Sure some of the lists were for issues that are not of particular importance to me; however, for the most part, they were an enjoyable look back into some iconic moments from my past. I especially enjoyed Chapter 20 "Rage Against The Experts E-Mail". It has an excellent diatribe about "expert advice and analysis" and the sometimes stupid questions (and answers) FF columnists get and give. I think every fantasy footballer has had these thoughts on one occasion or another. It was good to see them in print!!! As far as criticism, do not expect too much fantasy football wisdom from this book. Just sit back, read it and enjoy the ride. It does have an occasional morsel of knowledge, but if you are into fantasy football these "tips" and "strategies" will be well known by you now. Another albeit small criticism is that "Why Fantasy Football Matters" was published in 2006, so some of the references to the fantasy football season may seem a bit old to new readers. But this does not distract from the obvious humor in these references. All-in-all, this is an entertaining book that examines the stereotypical thoughts and actions of a 12 man fantasy football league from pre-season through their post season blues. I guarantee something in the book will remind you of your league and make you laugh out loud. Along similar lines if you enjoy this book you will also love "Committed, Confessions of a Fantasy Football Junkie." by Mark St. Amant which I have also reviewed (and others have mentioned in previous reviews). It too is a humorous look at a fantasy football league's season and the World Championship of Fantasy Football (WCOFF). Sam Hendricks, Author of "Fantasy Football Guidebook" and "Fantasy Football Almanac" 0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. why fantasy football matters By gator42 I bought 5 fantasy football books to help me understand playing in money leagues. This book was a waste of money. Should have asked for a refund. I wouldn't recommend this book to anyone interested in playing fantasy football. Save your money and research for an informative book.

Talking Trash, Trading Studs, and Drafting Sleepers -- an Insider's Guide to the World's Greatest Obsession U.S. businesses lose \$200 million in productivity each football season because employees are managing their fantasy squads instead of working. In *Why Fantasy Football Matters (And Our Lives Do Not)*, two grizzled veterans revel in the addiction that is fantasy football. From pre-draft hijinx to post-draft trash talk, from tumultuous trades to the perils of free agency, it celebrates the eccentric personalities, absurd rituals, and hilarious superstitions of one of the most fanatical fantasy leagues on earth. With humor, insight, and a dash of advice, *Why Fantasy Football Matters* celebrates the thirty-two million Americans who prefer managing their fantasy squads to relaxing with loved ones. And it gives girlfriends, coworkers, and sports purists all the proof they need to accept that this is an obsession that really matters.

"This book is to fantasy football what the Bible is to religion -- only funnier -- and with more football." -- Jason Sklar, cohost of *Cheap Seats, ESPN Classic* "This is the biography of every fantasy league out there -- the camaraderie, smack talking, and competition that drives us all. The only thing more entertaining than reading about how normally responsible, mature professional people turn into obsessed lunatics is when you realize most of the writing is really about you." -- David Dorey, *TheHuddle.com* "The passion, brotherhood, and insanity of fantasy football are here in all their glory. The perfect read for fantasy football enthusiasts . . . or those who want to understand them." -- Brendan Roberts, *Sporting News* About the Author Erik Barmack is a director of business development at ESPN and is the former vice president of fantasy games at the *Sporting News*. He has written for the *Sporting News*, the *Sports Business Journal*, the *Atlantic Online*, and others. He and Max Handelman have won three Bush League Championships, and bickered endlessly while losing the other five. Max Handelman launched Fox Sports's fantasy games division. He is now an independent film producer. He and Erik Barmack have won three Bush League Championships, and bickered endlessly while losing the other five. Excerpt. Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved. THE WAR DANCE All tribes have rituals to prepare for a new season. Hopi Indians pray for rain, Jews hit the latest Neiman Marcus sale, Christians make ham and cheese sandwiches, and the Islamic fundamentalists dance a jig before showering the sky with gunfire. Fantasy football tribes are equally devoted to rituals. They take time and require deep spiritual commitment. A fantasy football fanatic must be completely dedicated to the season. There's no half-stepping or wavering. You're either all-in or you're out. And this is specifically the case in the Bush League -- the most competitive and ruthless fantasy football league in the entire western hemisphere. We prepare for the season. We dance over hot coals. We sing and we chant, our spears jutting skyward. We're girding for battle. For our annual rebirth. JULY 11 THE FLARE ACROSS THE DESERT SKY The darkest day of the year for any male sports fan. The NBA finals have just ended, and the pennant races haven't started yet. Tumbleweeds blow across the barren sports

landscape. But all of that is about to change with just one e-mail: "Subject: Bush League -- It's on, gentlemen, it's on." The author of this missive is Prashun Thind, pesky Bush League manager extraordinaire. He's hunched over his keyboard, tapping away, ready to get things rolling. Prashun Thind (aka "Prash"): Manager of the Thindianapolis Colts. A Wall Street investment banker. Resembles a gecko, with dark purple eyelids that remain one-quarter closed. Many think that this look is the result of work fatigue. Actual cause is routine pot smoking. Tends to keep his bony hands perpetually clasped, Mr. Burns-like. Speaks authoritatively on all things statistical. "Yo, hoes," Prash writes in his e-mail, a flare across the black desert sky. "Are you bitches ready to throw down? After being stopped short at the goal line last season, the Thindianapolis Colts are now primed for a title run. Team manager, Thindy Infante, has rallied the troops. We're ready, we're primed. Let's get it on." Once Prash starts trash-talking, Bush League managers leave their cover. They rub their eyes amid the glimmering light. Just one e-mail and the primal instincts return. The muscles start twitching. The brain starts churning. The fingers start tapping. Preseason has officially begun.

JULY 11 RALLYING THE TROOPS Al Lopez shakes his head and grins. He hasn't heard from Thind in seven months. Lopez has little in common with the guy, and has a difficult time discussing anything with him other than fantasy football. But looking out his Beverly Hills office window, he has to admit -- he misses the little bugger. Al Lopez (aka "El Matador"): Manager of The Cuban Missile Crisis. A William Morris film agent. In good shape with good teeth and good hair, and decked out in an obligatory three-button Armani. He's also the lone married guy of the group, and now has a son. Some question whether he can maintain his panache amid the turbulence of fatherhood. Lopez buzzes his assistant. "Hold all my calls." With that, he enters the fray: "Gentlemen, Prash's standard nonsense aside, I couldn't be more psyched for another season. I've donned my Under Armour, I've stretched my hamstrings. I hope everyone's as fired up as I am. Viva la Bush League!" "Here! Here!" writes one manager. "When are we determining draft order?" asks another. The Bush League is buzzing.

PRESEASON RITUALS 1. Clear post-Labor Day schedule for draft. 2. Make idle threats about "booting" inactive managers. 3. Watch NFL Films' year in review marathon. 4. Send out e-mail that begins, "As a former champion . . ." 5. Participate in an all-rookie dynasty mock draft.

JULY 11 THE CHECK'S IN THE MAIL Kwame Jones, the Bush League Commissioner, reads these e-mails, expects more to hit his inbox, and immediately thinks, Time to get organized. Kwame Jones (aka "Kwame Jones"): Manager of Kwame Jones, Inc. A former Purdue University tight end. Now teaches at a Catholic high school. Sports a blue blazer, khakis, and a freshly shaved head. People want Kwame to be hip-hop, but he's much more jazz. Calm, serene. But mess with Kwame and you risk a swift beat-down, though never before he warns: "Dude, you must chill." "Fellas, let's try to avoid a repeat of last year and get the league entry fees settled up front. Please send me your money. Now." He immediately receives the first of several hollow promises for quick payment. "Roger that, Kwame. The proverbial check is in the proverbial mail." **JULY 15 SURFING THE MESSAGE BOARDS** In preparation for the upcoming draft in fifty-three days, John Schlotterbeck bookmarks his favorite fantasy football sites. Fanball.com, Footballguys.com, RotoWire.com -- he's checking them all. In the background Norman Greenbaum's "Spirit in the Sky" plays loudly over his tinny speakers. Schlots nods his head to the beat as he methodically reviews Tight End rankings. John Schlotterbeck (aka "Schlots"): Manager of the The Fat Minnesota Guys. Once thin and good-looking, he's now lost much of his hair, grown a sizable paunch, and added an obligatory goatee. He dons a dirty white Notre Dame baseball hat and a purple Minnesota Vikings jacket. He's a midwestern guy: decent, religious, and genuine in all ways. Which makes his divorce from his college sweetheart, Debby Dwaynes, all the more tragic. "Hey-oh!" Schlots says, giving himself a high five. He's just discovered his first sleeper of the new season.

ON SLEEPERS A sleeper is an undervalued player with "extreme upside" who's available in the later rounds of a fantasy football draft. Or at least that's the theory. The problem is, guys like Schlots spend so much time hunting for sleepers that by the time the draft has arrived, the players are surprises no longer. Sifting through Internet message boards, Schlots has "locked in" on an athletic tight end who finished last season with a pair of 100-yard games. Swelling with pride, he e-mails Lopez: "Al, good buddy, I've found my diamond in the rough." "A tight end?" Lopez responds. "You're a day late and a dollar short. I scouted that guy already." Never mind that Lopez hasn't even cracked a fantasy football guide, or started trolling message boards. He has to pretend that he knows everything. "That guy will be gone by the seventh round. Trust me."

ALL-TIME BUSH LEAGUE SLEEPERS 1. Clinton Portis, 2002 (1,872 yards, 17 TDs), eighth round 2. Randy Moss, 1998 (1,313 yards, 17 TDs), ninth round 3. Rich Gannon, 2002 (4,698 yards, 27 TDs), seventh round 4. Terrell Owens, 2000 (1,451 yards, 13 TDs), fifth round 5. Stephen Davis, 1999 (1,405 yards, 17 TDs), tenth round

ALL-TIME BUSH LEAGUE NONSLEEPER SLEEPERS 1. Onterio Smith, 2003 (smoked ganja, split time with Moe Williams), fourth round 2. Michael Vick, 2001 (44.2 completion percentage), third round 3. Charles Rogers, 2003 (243 yards, 3 TDs), fifth round 4. Kellen Winslow, 2004 (50 yards, 0 TDs), sixth round 5. Any Cleveland Browns running back, first through sixteenth rounds (although, with the emergence of Rueben Droughns in the City by the Lake, this trend may now be over, or at least temporarily delayed)

JULY 18 THE SACRIFICIAL FISHT Twelve teams anxiously prepare for the draft. Schlots writes, "I love Peyton Manning this year, but only late in the first." Lopez swears that no matter which draft position he gets he's taking two straight running backs. Kwame wants to nab Daunte Culpepper in the second round, but only if he's sure that "his boy" will be there in the third. The Bush League, in short, has entered full preseason machination mode. But there's only so much speculating, posturing, and counter-posturing that can happen

in a vacuum. The twelve-team draft order must be determined. Who will get the Golden First Pick? And who will get leveled with the Kiss of Death Eleventh Pick? To assign draft order most leagues drop names in a hat and then select at random. That would be easy. That would make sense. But that would also be boring, and the Bush League won't settle for that. No, this league uses a far more exotic process. Some have called it barbaric, and others have suggested that it's in poor taste. "Tell that to Saddam Hussein," says Chris O'Brien. No one quite understands his point, but most nod in agreement. Chris O'Brien (aka "The Mick"): Manager of the Irish Potato Famine. An "e-commerce manager," whatever that means. Refers to himself in the third person as "The Mick," which tends to irritate others. Has fiery red hair, and freckles that blot his face when he gets angry. Which happens often. In his book, he's getting screwed. Always. And someone's gotta pay. "Thind, let's get on with it," O'Brien says. "Some fish are going to have to be sacrificed -- it's just that simple." "Gotcha, O'Brien," Thind says. Prash has been waiting all summer for the Draft Order Ceremony. Filled with childish glee he heads to a pet store in Chinatown, where he buys twelve goldfish. Each is distinctly different. Some believe this isn't possible, but as it turns out, goldfish come in a variety of shapes, sizes, and colors. Managers are then assigned fish and asked to name them. Thind calls his POW Fish. Schlots calls his Shaolin Fish. Kwame calls his Kwame Fish. Lopez calls his El Pescadito. And Chris O'Brien calls his McFish. The goldfish are placed in small ziplock bags. Swimming in sharp two-inch arcs, they're taken to Thind's office, where they await their fate. JULY 19 TAPPING THE TANK "Gentlemen," Thind e-mails, "preparations for the Draft Order Ceremon..."