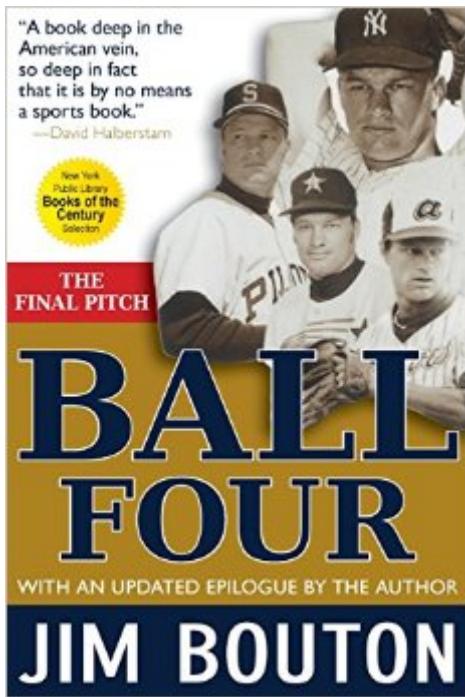


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Ball Four: The Final Pitch



Synopsis

The beloved baseball classic now available in paperback, with an updated epilogue by Jim Bouton. When *Ball Four* was first published in 1970, it hit the sports world like a lightning bolt. Commissioners, executives, and players were shocked. Sportswriters called author Jim Bouton a traitor and ""social leper." Commissioner Bowie Kuhn tried to force him to declare the book untrue. Fans, however, loved the book. And serious critics called it an important social document. Today, Jim Bouton is still not invited to Oldtimer's Days at Yankee Stadium. But his landmark book is still being read by people who don't ordinarily follow baseball. For the updated edition of this historic book, Bouton has written a new epilogue, detailing his perspective on how baseball has changed since the last edition was released.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

When "Ball Four" was published in 1970, Jim Bouton was attacked by players, sportswriters, and the owners for revealing the secret, sordid underbelly of professional baseball. Which should be enough right there to get you to read this thing. But in "Ball Four," Bouton also reveals the humanity of baseball, the fear, the hate, and the fun, which makes it one of the classics of baseball literature and a must read. Basically, "Ball Four" is a diary of the 1968 season written by a journeyman middle-relief knuckleballer. Before injuring his arm, and turning to the knuckleball, Bouton was a fireball pitcher for the New York Yankees. In his rookie season in 1962, Bouton won two games for the Yanks in the World Series. He played with Mantle and Ford. Then his arm went dead, and he found himself back in the minors, where he taught himself to throw the knuckler. The Yanks didn't

think much of him anymore and traded him to the expansion Seattle Pilots (which left Seattle after a single year for...get this...Milwaukee), where he earned a spot as a spot starter and mopup long relief man. The book reveals the personalities of the players and managers and owners. It tells what the players do on the road, in the bullpen, in the minors. It reveals the petty nature of the coaching staff, who are usually all old-time baseball men, not very clever, not prone to trying new ways. It talks about the dicey contract negotiations by players in the days of the reserve clause, when average players made an average wage. Bouton travels in the world of boys. The players are mostly kids in their 20s, not educated, and spent their formative years in baseball. They like pranks. They like women, but they don't know either how to talk about them, or how to talk with them.

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