



## The Hall of Nearly Great

*Sky Kalkman (Publisher) , Marc Normandin (Publisher)*

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## **The Hall of Nearly Great** Sky Kalkman (Publisher) , Marc Normandin (Publisher)

The Hall of Nearly Great is an ebook meant to celebrate the careers of those who are not celebrated. It's not a book meant to reopen arguments about who does and does not deserve Hall of Fame enshrinement. Rather, it remembers those who, failing entrance into Cooperstown, may unfairly be lost to history. It's for the players we grew up rooting for, the ones whose best years led to flags and memories that will fly together forever. Players like David Cone, Will Clark, Dwight Evans, Norm Cash, Kenny Lofton, Brad Radke, and many others.

This is not a numbers-driven project (although our contributors lean analytical in their views). Our plan isn't to be overbearing with stats and spreadsheets to convince you that these players are worth remembering. What we aim to do, instead, is accomplish that same task through stories. Think of your favorite players growing up: they have their moments, games, seasons, quirks, personalities, and legends worth remembering and sharing. Now, combine the best of everyone's forgotten favorites, and you've got a Hall of Nearly Great. Ask the people who have those memories and love for these players to write essays about them, and you have The Hall of Nearly Great ebook.

It takes a talented writer to give these players their due honors, and we've collected forty-two talented writers to do just that. These are All-Star writers, some of our favorite must-reads in today's expansive baseball coverage landscape. They have diverse voices, diverse backgrounds and diverse interests, but they all love baseball and have a passion for the players they're writing about. You already love some of these players, and you'll come to love the rest.

## **The Hall of Nearly Great Details**

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## From Reader Review The Hall of Nearly Great for online ebook

### Nathan Krueger says

A collection of well written essays by some of the great new-wave baseball writers currently in the biz. The book focuses on those players who will (likely) never make the hall of fame. Each essay is penned by a different author, and has its own take on the subject matter. In many cases it reminded me of players I watched throughout their careers, and in others introduce facts about players I only know by name. I will certainly re-read this down the road, and hope for a similar installment from the authors/editors.

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### Tara says

A collection should be judged by two main variables: the strength of its theme, and the strength of its contributors. Unfortunately, this book doesn't particularly score high in either. Giving a blow-by-blow account of very good, if largely forgettable baseball players sounds tedious just as an idea, but in practice becomes even more tedious in the hands of the uneven talent level the book editors gathered. Some tales were actually good, and some were genuinely awful, but even some of the bigger name writers (such as Joe Posnanski) failed to deliver.

It's only available as an ebook, and regardless of the length it feels like a waste of \$12. I'd feel more comfortable with recommending it if it was \$5 or \$6, but this may depend on your own tolerance of inanity.

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### Sam Bauman says

There were a lot of fun essays in this book. I'd get excited every time one of my favorite authors was up or an essay about a Twin. Great summer reading.

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### Oliver Bateman says

Each essay in here is likely to be the best essay you'll read about a given "Hall of Nearly Great" player. Posnanski on Dale Murphy is perhaps the definitive work the collection (and I'm saying that grudgingly, since I'm not a big fan of America's most notorious Paterno defender), but the essays on Will Clark, Ellis Burks, and Darrell Porter are also very good. Notwithstanding my remarks about the "best essay you'll read about a given player," the quality in tHoNG IS uneven (after all, who is likely to bother writing a better essay?), but all of the entries are readable and mercifully short. Moreover, the editors' decision to e-publish the book in pdf format is admirable, and a business model to be encouraged. Buy their book, buy the other pdf books sold directly by Chris Brown, the Baseball/Basketball Prospectus family of writers, and the Football Outsiders crew, and perhaps in the future we'll be able to cut out fee-devouring middlemen like Amazon.com.

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## **Meril says**

Review to come, mostly about the ephemeral nature of Internet sportswriting. Also this is the 33 1/3 series of sportswriting anthologies: the ones that use the album as a springboard to further things can be great, but occasionally there's a mess. There is indeed a mess in here and if you know your internets sports guys, you can take a guess which one it is and probably be correct.

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## **Zayne Johnson says**

i dont like baseball so i didnt really like this book but it was ok i guess. it is about a baseball team going to the championship and winning it

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## **Brian Ashmore says**

Enjoyable romp through some players that seemed like legends in the making for a short time, only to fall a little short. Did that diminish how much we loved them, nope. Great read for any baseball fan.

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## **Thomas Love says**

Great idea, with no more than a couple pieces that were anything less than quite entertaining.

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## **Justin says**

Crack for baseball nerds. Beyond that, it's a terrific showcase for how sophisticated sportswriting has become these days. I loved this compilation.

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## **Patrick Coffey says**

A great book about some of the great players who are on the outside looking in to the Hall of Fame. It is interesting to imagine how some of these players would have had different careers if circumstances had been different.

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## **Thomas Greaves says**

A bit too Red Sox-centric, but overall very worthy of a read.

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### **Joel says**

A fun collection of essays about baseball players that deserve to be remembered more than they are. Obviously, the quality is going to vary in a collection like this, but for the most part the pieces are amusing and enlightening, painting interesting pictures of some players I barely knew anything about. I'd argue for the inclusions of Doc Gooden and Darryl Strawberry, but I KNOW THAT'S TWO METS, and there are literally dozens of players who would have made great additions.

The best pieces are the ones that don't go too stats heavy, considering I could just go to Baseball-Reference for that. It helps when the subject is crazy, like Lenny Dykstra; or awesome, like Keith Hernandez. WAIT TWO METS AGAIN SORRY

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### **B says**

Book of Nearly Great

Some of the essays are super-exciting. Others a little less so. I think the authors actually underestimated how interesting the stories were and sometimes got a little too literary and brief to jazz it up.

A couple of distracting errors (missing words, double quotations) in my version that I'm sure will clear up.

Also, I very much wish that the essays went in some sort of order and included fewer Red Sox.

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### **Jonathan Blanks says**

This is a great collection for baseball stat heads that have maintained their romanticism for the game. If you lack either one of those qualities, this is probably going to disappoint you. However, this collection is perfect for people who have embraced advanced stats but still maintain their love for solid players that didn't quite capture the larger public imagination or whose greatness was too fleeting for Cooperstown.

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### **Mike says**

A fantastic idea well-executed, The Hall of Nearly Great endured a name change and a Kickstarter campaign before coming to the world of e-readers, and the result charmed me thoroughly.

The book is comprised of several dozen essays of varying length dedicated to memorializing major league baseball players whose careers fell short of Hall of Fame recognition. Some were derailed by injury, others unfairly overlooked due to the era in which they played or their lack of a definitive performance peak. Five players' paeans were bought by Kickstarter backers for \$250 a pop, though you'll have a tough time picking out any of them for certain besides Darrell Porter.

The authors cover most of the Hall's more glaring exclusions, as the modern statistical movement makes its case for the likes of Lou Whitaker, Alan Trammell, David Cone and Dwight Evans. Some of the essays draw upon the nostalgia only baseball can provoke to elevate players, as any baseball fan will do. There's something about standing up for a guy who didn't get his due that makes you feel like you're defending a family member -- one of your own. The same arguments will be made for the Whitakers and Trammells of the world until the Veterans Committee open their collective ears, but the call to remember men who deserve even some small recognition is what sets this book apart.

The Hall of Nearly Great stands as an Ebenezer to players who might otherwise be forgotten, an ethereal ebook to suffice instead of a Cooperstown plaque. Doubtless, other names will appear in this mythical pantheon in years to come; I only hope they receive the same quality of monument carved out for the players in this book.

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