

## BOOK REVIEW

### *GETTING IN THE GAME: INSIDE BASEBALL'S WINTER MEETINGS*

Josh Lewin

Washington, DC: Brassey's, Inc.

279 pp., \$24.95 USD

ISBN: 1-57488-791-2

There are seemingly dozens of books that provide advice for those who seek careers in the professional sport industry. Not surprisingly, many of these works address the pursuit of employment in Minor League Baseball in great detail as that segment of the industry is a traditional entrance point for many individuals hoping to develop a sports career.

Most of these texts are certainly worthwhile and give the reader basic information that could prove useful. That being said, in light of their growing number, some of these texts begin to seem alike both in terms of content and style.

In addition, some of these works are written by individuals who are outside of or on the fringe of the professional sports industry. While this does not automatically diminish the value of the information contained therein, the reader does have to question whether the lessons being described are applicable in a real world setting.

In contrast, *Getting in the Game* is written by noted veteran Major League Baseball broadcaster Josh Lewin who currently serves as the lead announcer for Texas Rangers games after stints with the Baltimore Orioles, Chicago Cubs and Detroit Tigers. Lewin also is a play-by-play broadcaster for Fox Television on their national baseball package.

Perhaps most importantly for the reader, Lewin went through the very Minor League Baseball hiring process that he goes on to describe in this book. This fact can give added hope to the reader as to the efficacy of the lessons that Lewin tries to convey throughout the text.

In light of his background, it would be easy to assume that *Getting in the Game* would also have a substantial focus on the major leagues with various tributes paid to Major League Baseball's version of the national pastime. Unfortunately, the packaging of the book does nothing to dispel any potential

fears in that regard. The book's front cover features a baseball opened at the stitches to reveal dollar bills inside while the back cover has quotes from various Major League Baseball celebrities including Ernie Harwell, Cal Ripken Jr. and Alex Rodriguez.

However, these fears are quickly alleviated once the reader begins examining the text. As anyone who has read books regarding the business of sport knows, they often have prefaces or forewords from celebrity authors that glowingly praise the book or the author but offer little informative value and leave the reader wondering whether the celebrity even read the book.

Given his apparent connections, it can be assumed that Lewin could have employed this approach by drafting a significant individual from Major League Baseball for this task. Instead, to his credit, Lewin writes his own preface and uses it to begin the process of introducing the reader to his main cast of characters and their setting, a group of three job seekers hoping to secure employment in Minor League Baseball during professional baseball's Winter Meetings.

Lewin follows up in the acknowledgements and first two chapters with details on the history of Minor League Baseball and a description of the atmosphere at Nashville's Opryland Hotel which serves as the host for the meetings. This is followed by an overview of the process for job seekers with regard to Professional Baseball Employment Opportunities (PBEO), an arm of Minor League Baseball designed to facilitate the hiring process for teams and candidates alike.

As someone who has attended the Winter Meetings in Nashville, I can attest that the author has portrayed an accurate vision of the setting and events that traditionally take place during this event. Lewin adroitly notes the separation of the major league and minor league forms of the game and the overall spectacle that exists at the event which is actually a series of meetings, seminars and awards presentations conducted simultaneously in early December every year.

That being said, my one major complaint about *Getting in the Game* is that the aforementioned introductory materials meander somewhat aimlessly through the first four sections of the book. Tighter organization into a chapter or two could have conveyed the same amount of material, but created easier flow for the reader.

With the introductory materials out of the way, chapter three entitled "Friday Early Morning" begins showing readers the challenges that individuals face when trying to secure a job in the sports industry.

As the title of this chapter implies, the heart of the book is organized in a chronological fashion taking the reader through the minor league portion of the Winter Meetings from Friday morning until Sunday evening. In this and the remaining chapters, Lewin does an outstanding job of weaving in facts and a vivid description of the setting while telling a compelling story about job seekers chasing their apparent dream. It is a fresh approach that educates the readers while also entertaining them.

While advancing the story of our three job seekers, chapter three also introduces the reader to another set of characters, a variety of successful veteran Minor League Baseball executives who also happen to be hiring at the Winter Meetings. Lewin does an excellent job of conveying how and why they got into the game, and what it takes to be successful in the baseball industry. To his credit, Lewin integrates their knowledge into the overall story in such a solid, yet subtle fashion that some of these important lessons could be missed by impatient readers.

Chapter four begins with attendees getting last minute tips on the interviewing from PBEO, as the three job seekers begin that phase of the hiring process. In this chapter the author also illustrates some of the sacrifices that individuals have to make while working in professional sports and the harshness of the process for both job seekers and teams.

Finally, we hear additional stories from industry executives about what makes them successful. As anyone who has worked for a sports franchise or had one as a client knows, sales is the lifeblood of any sports organization and Lewin does a solid job of continually emphasizing that point throughout his various anecdotes in this chapter.

Chapter five re-emphasizes many of the themes from the previous chapters including the difficulty and seeming randomness of the hiring process for all parties involved. In addition, Lewin weaves in more stories from industry executives while also introducing fringe characters that help advance the story at later points.

Perhaps most importantly, Lewin devotes several pages of chapter five to a presentation staged at the Winter Meetings for minor league executives regarding ways they can improve staff morale. This is done through various stories illustrating how teams can successfully integrate new members into their administrative teams and reward them throughout the season.

This segment of the book is a welcome addition as it helps the reader begin to understand why job seekers are willing to go through the harsh and seemingly random job process that they have endured to this point of the book. This small diversion illustrates the teamwork and camaraderie that exists in

many sport organization front offices, especially on the minor league level, and why our main characters still desire to get into the game.

In addition to an entertaining side trip with the man who created the Philly Phanatic mascot, chapter five also introduces another key point as the reader learns about the choices that individuals seeking jobs in sports have to make. Can they afford to take a job in sports? Should they pursue higher pay or a better learning experience? What do teams need to hear in an interview? Again, Lewin raises these questions in a subtle way by telling the stories of the main characters so these lessons that have been undoubtedly echoed in many sports career books over the past decade seem less heavy-handed and dry.

As the title of chapter six entitled "Trade Show" implies, Lewin takes the reader to the Baseball Trade Show staged concurrently with the Winter Meetings and which provides interesting background material on the business of baseball. This chapter provides a nice interlude as our job seekers are nowhere to be found.

Lewin writes several sections detailing the stories of exhibitors at the trade show including event insurers, bat companies, language programs, give-away novelties and traveling entertainment that will be especially interesting to the casual or novice reader. Again, surprisingly, in light of his background, several of Lewin's anecdotes emphasize the dichotomy that exists as Major League Baseball pays increasing salaries to ballplayers while tightening its fiscal belt against many smaller suppliers.

In chapter seven we see more of the highs and lows of our job seekers as they wind their way through the Winter Meetings. Lewin also gives the reader an interview forum in which he gathers four of the main industry executives that we have seen throughout the text and asks them a variety of questions about the game and their experiences in it. While differing in format, the section is still quite informative and worthwhile reading for anyone contemplating employment in sports.

Saturday begins in chapter eight with our job seekers in the midst of interviews. Chapter nine continues this process with one of the main characters actually receiving a job offer. This chapter also contains a plethora of information, advice and suggestions for successful interviewing. Additionally, the reader learns about the decision-making process for both the teams and candidates, and ethical issues that can arise during that process.

Chapter ten entitled "Saturday Night" offers a longer, in-depth illustration of the highs and lows of working in professional baseball as the personal story of long-time industry executive, Bill Terlecky, is told. Lewin also takes another shot at Major League Baseball but undoubtedly works himself back

into the game's good graces by offering a brief amount of research indicating that, to paraphrase Mark Twain, the rumors of the national pastime's demise have been greatly exaggerated.

*Getting in the Game* begins to draw to a close in chapter eleven entitled "Sunday" as the stories of both the main and fringe characters near resolution with each of the main characters receiving job offers. Along the way we learn more about the decision-making process from all parties involved which is invaluable reading for those seeking to work in professional sport.

Lewin also takes the opportunity to illustrate the pitfalls faced by the teams as they go through the hiring process with a story involving one of the main characters of the book and his decision to back away from an offer that he had earlier promised to take if it was offered. This story should help the reader understand why some teams view the process with the jaundiced eye that they appeared to display at earlier points in the book.

Interjected into this mix, Lewin provides one final brief interlude describing the previously undisclosed connection between two of the veteran industry executives. This example highlights the camaraderie in the game and indicates why the individuals discussed in the book seem willing to subject themselves to this process.

The book concludes on opening day of the following season in an Epilogue which details the end result of the process for the main characters along with many of the fringe characters we met in the text. Lewin skillfully notes the elements that had to fall into place for each of the job seekers to secure an offer and the challenging and difficult process of deciding whether to take their offers. It also becomes readily apparent in this chapter that the idealistic dreams possessed by some of the job seekers at the beginning of the book were dashed as the reality of the process set in.

The book's drawbacks are few with the aforementioned annoying organization of the first few chapters being the most glaring. There are a few minor typographical errors and factual errors. In terms of omissions, more detail on the costs associated with attending the event and the logistics faced by traditional job seekers trying to break into Minor League Baseball would have been beneficial. However, none of these minor criticisms should detract from the lessons that Lewin offers to potential employees of professional sport in this surprisingly enlightening text.

In conclusion, *Getting in the Game* should be required reading for sports management and sports law students or anyone contemplating pursuit of a job in the sports industry. The book is a de facto textbook on the highs and lows of

securing a job in the sport industry without reading like one of those stodgy treatises.

William S. Miller  
The Leib Group, LLC  
Mequon, WI

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The **SPORT AND RECREATION LAW ASSOCIATION** - is a nonprofit corporation. Our purpose is to further the study and dissemination of information regarding legal aspects of sport and physical activity. The Association addresses legal aspects of sport and physical activity within both the public and private sectors. The objectives of the Association are:

- (1) to serve as a medium for academic growth and development through professional exchange;
- (2) to provide service functions for SRLA members through conference presentations and research publications;
- (3) to assist in the development of appropriate curricula content;
- (4) to cooperate closely with allied national and international organizations in areas such as athletics, education, exercise, law, medicine, recreation, and sport; and
- (5) to network and provide a forum for discussion about the law.

## 2004 SRLA Awards

On March 5, 2004, the Sport and Recreation Law Association (SRLA) honored the following professionals and graduate student during the Seventeenth Annual SRLA / Sport, Physical Education, Recreation and the Law Conference held in Las Vegas, Nevada.

### 2004 SRLA BETTY VAN DER SMISSEN LEADERSHIP AWARD

The Betty van der Smissen Leadership Award is presented to an individual “who is recognized for leadership and vision in the study of legal aspects of sports law and physical activity.”

2004 RECIPIENT: Linda Jean Carpenter, Ph.D., J.D. Professor Emerita of Physical Education and Exercise Science at Brooklyn College of the City University of New York. Member of the NY State Bar and the U. S. Supreme Court Bar. Noted and popular author, presenter, and educator, Dr. Carpenter wrote *Legal Concepts In Sport: A Primer*, and she is co-author, along with Vivian Acosta, of the frequently cited *National Longitudinal Study of the Status of Women in Sport* and an upcoming release *Title IX*.

### 2004 SRLA HONOR AWARD

The SRLA Honor Award is presented to an individual “who has given outstanding service to the Association.”

2004 RECIPIENT: Lori K. Miller, Ed. D., J.D., and M.B.A. Professor of Sport Administration, Chairperson, Kinesiology and Sport Studies Department, and Associate Dean of the College of Education at Wichita State University. Prolific author and co-author including 3 books and 11 chapters in sport management related textbooks, 50 articles in refereed journals, and presenter of over 60 papers during professional association meetings. Dr. Miller is Executive Director of the Sport and Recreation Law Association.

### 2004 BERNARD PATRICK MALOY GRADUATE STUDENT RESEARCH AWARD

This Student Research Award is granted to the graduate student submitting the most outstanding research paper.

2004 RECIPIENT: JOHN GRADY, J.D. John’s selected paper for this award is entitled, “The Application of Title III of the ADA to sport organization websites,” and appears in this issue of the *Journal of Legal Aspects of Sport*. He is currently a doctoral student in the Sport Management program at Florida State University.



**The Sport and Recreation Law Association  
Call for Nominations  
2005 Honor and Leadership Awards**

**HONOR AWARD:**

*Criterion:* Presented to an individual who has given outstanding service to the Association.

*Nomination Procedure:* No specific form is required. A 1-5 page description of the individual's contributions and outstanding service is required.

**BETTY VAN DER SMISSEN LEADERSHIP AWARD:**

*Criterion:* Presented to an individual who is recognized for leadership and vision in the study of legal aspects of sport law and physical activity. The individual *does not* have to be member of SRLA

*Nomination Procedure:* No specific form is required. A 1-5 page description of the individual's activities, contributions, leadership and vision is required.

*All nominations must be postmarked on or before Friday, December 3, 2004.*

Send to:

Dr. Rebecca Mowrey, SRLA Honor and Awards Chair  
Wellness and Sport Sciences Department  
#112 Pucillo Hall  
Millersville University of Pennsylvania  
Millersville, PA 17551-0302  
rmowrey@millersville.edu

# CALL FOR PAPERS

THE SPORT AND RECREATION LAW ASSOCIATION  
BERNARD PATRICK MALOY GRADUATE STUDENT  
RESEARCH AWARD - DEADLINE: FRIDAY,  
12/03/04

This Student Research Award is granted to the student submitting the most outstanding research paper based upon the criteria found below. The award winner will receive free Conference Registration and expenses, the combination of these not to exceed \$500, to attend The Annual SRLA Conference. The winning paper and the selected student will be included in the Conference Program to present his/her paper. Also, the recipient will be recognized during the Award's Banquet during the Annual SRLA Conference. *Please Note: Using the appropriate format, students may simultaneously submit their manuscript to this award Call for Papers and to the general Call For Proposals for the Conference.*

## Application Criteria:

1. Students must submit a **research paper** or **case note** that deals with a significant and novel legal issue related to sport or physical activity.
2. The paper must be written in either APA or Blue Book style (follow current editions).
3. Suggested length is 10-20 double spaced pages (plus Appendices and Endnotes) using standard 12 pt. font, Times New Roman type.
4. Papers must be postmarked on or before *Friday, December 3, 2004*. Submissions received with a late postmark will not be considered.
5. The paper and associated research must be the sole work of the applicant, *and edited and approved by a faculty advisor*.
6. The applicant must be a graduate student, and must be majoring in law, sport/physical activity, sport/athletic management, or a related subject area.
7. The faculty advisor must submit written verification indicating compliance with criteria #5 and #6.
8. A maximum of three (3) student papers may be submitted from one academic institution.
9. The applicant must send one (1) hard copy of the paper or case note including applicant's name, e-mail address, postal mailing address, academic institution, the faculty advisor's signature verifying satisfaction of criteria #5 and #6, and one (1) 3.5 IBM format micro

floppy diskette with the paper or case notes in Microsoft Word 97 version or higher. The disk should be labeled with the student's name and institution. Only one student paper should be included on each diskette. Submitted hard copies and diskettes *will not* be returned to the applicant. The winner of the award will be notified via e-mail in early February.

Criteria for Selection:

1. Relevance, novelty, and importance of the topic to the legal aspects of sport and physical activity. Topic of the paper must address a legal issue. Experimental research, survey studies, or summaries of existing research will not be considered.
2. Quality and thoroughness of research; appropriateness of resources; use of primary resources
3. Quality of writing, editing, organization and logic of thoughts, grammar, and citation style
4. Adherence to all of the Application Criteria identified above

Mail all SRLA Graduate Student Research Award application materials to:

Dr. Rebecca Mowrey, SSLASPA Graduate Student Research Award  
Wellness and Sport Sciences Department  
#112 Pucillo Hall  
Millersville University of Pennsylvania  
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rmowrey@millersville.edu

# CALL FOR PAPERS

## THE SPORT AND RECREATION LAW ASSOCIATION UNDERGRADUATE STUDENT RESEARCH AWARD - DEADLINE: FRIDAY, 12/03/04

This Student Research Award is granted to the undergraduate student submitting the most outstanding research paper based upon the criteria found below. The award winner will receive recognition and a certificate during the Awards Banquet during the Annual SRLA Conference (and up to two tickets to the banquet if attending). The selected student will also receive a one-year membership to SRLA, which includes receiving the *Journal of Legal Aspects of Sport* and *The SRLA Newsletter*. *Please Note: Using the appropriate format, students may simultaneously submit their manuscript to this award Call for Papers and to the general Call For Proposals for the Conference.*

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5. The paper and associated research must be the sole work of the applicant, *and edited and approved by a faculty advisor*.
6. The applicant must be an undergraduate student, and must be majoring in sport/physical activity, sport/athletic management, or a related subject area.
7. The faculty advisor must submit written verification indicating compliance with criteria #5 and #6.
8. A maximum of three (3) student papers may be submitted from one academic institution.
9. The applicant must send one (1) hard copy of the paper or case note including applicant's name, e-mail address, postal mailing address, academic institution, the faculty advisor's signature verifying satisfaction of criteria #5 and #6, and one (1) 3.5 IBM format micro floppy diskette with the paper or case notes in Microsoft Word 97 version or higher. The disk should be labeled with the student's name and institution. Only one student paper should be included on each diskette. Submitted hard copies and diskettes *will not* be

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## Sport and Recreation Law Association

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The *Journal of Legal Aspects of Sport* is a peer-reviewed and copyrighted professional journal intended to meet the needs of sport law educators and to serve as a forum for legal issues related to clubs, fitness, health & wellness, physical activity, recreation and sport.

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Or by mail to :

Professor Paul Anderson  
Editor, Journal of Legal Aspects of Sport  
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## SUBMISSION REQUIREMENTS

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### REVIEW PROCESS

- (1) All submissions are reviewed by three selected members of the Editorial Board.
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The *Journal of Legal Aspects of Sport* endeavors to publish submissions of the highest scholarly quality in terms of novelty, writing, research, methodology and interest to the academic world, sport management and sports law professionals.

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