



A Pitch for Justice

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Phillies rookie pitcher Tim Charles must decide whether to honor his manager's call to retaliate against a Met's batter or ignore him and risk losing his club's respect. The next pitch he throws will shock the nation. The crackling sound the ball makes as it hits the helmet will be heard throughout the baseball and legal community. The unthinkable has occurred. Is it just a tragic part of the game? Or could it actually be criminal?

Veteran prosecutor Jaime Brooks reluctantly accepts the task of investigating a case that could change the way the game of baseball is played forever. What began as a feud between two teams turns into a legal drama that will play out in a grand jury and potentially a full blown jury trial. The stakes are high for Tim Charles as he faces the unimaginable consequence of his last pitch. And a national debate over the unwritten code of baseball and the accountability of players for acts on the field will erupt in a courtroom and in the offices of the baseball commissioner.

What was in Charles' heart and mind when he threw the last pitch? Put yourself in the juror's seat in a case that will decide Charles' fate and possibly how baseball is played in the future.

A Pitch For Justice is a former # 1 ranked novel in baseball and sports psychology on Amazon's paid store.

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A Pitch for Justice Details

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From Reader Review A Pitch for Justice for online ebook

Janet says

Baseball fans and law enthusiasts, I highly recommend that you read *A Pitch for Justice* by Harold Kasselman. I recently read this novel while on a 10-day, guided vacation tour. As I got deeper into the book, I couldn't wait for the guide to stop talking so that I could continue reading. I felt a little guilty not watching out the window all the time, but not guilty enough to make me stop reading entirely.

Kasselman also provided some interesting side stories on several of the characters in order to break up the legalese and baseball jargon. These stories helped make me care more about the individuals involved rather than just viewing the book as a documentary. Overall this book was a great first novel! I look forward to reading his future books.

Now on to the more documentary portions of the novel: The concept of considering a pitched ball a lethal weapon put a new spin on how baseball might be played in the future. It also made me think about the other high-contact sports like football, ice hockey, and rugby. Will we start having the police on the sidelines waiting to arrest any player that gets too rough?

I don't think reasonable sports fans would ever want the laws to go in that direction. Roughness is all part of the game, in my opinion. I'm okay with having the referees/umpires take care of penalizing players for their actions. Professional players get paid huge salaries to take the risk that they might have a career-ending injury at any time. They have access to all kinds of training and protective equipment, if used properly, to minimize their odds of severe injuries. Having said this, I still wish that everyone would remember that these sports are still just games. No one should ever die because of playing a game.

R.C. says

A Pitch for Justice is a novel that combines the great sport of baseball with a good old-fashioned legal trial that kept me guessing throughout. The book started with an excellent premise, although it was one I thought was a little more speculative and hypothetical than realistic.....until I got into reading the book. There was one line in particular, and I'm going to paraphrase it, which stated that committing a murder (or manslaughter) during a sporting event doesn't mean you automatically get away with it. So true and I have no doubt that if a player were killed by a beaning they might well end up on trial and that *Pitch for Justice* would be a rationale.

The book is an overall good story, too as there is a love interest which develops over time, a few surprises that come out of the woodwork and are likely derived from the authors's 30-plus year career in the law. I learned a lot about the real workings of a legal case from this book--I especially enjoyed the grand jury process and the way the jurors impacted the charges.

This was a book I picked up on a Friday and finished by Sunday. Definitely put me in the mood for baseball season. I truly was not sure which way the verdict would come out and I'm not sure if I would have voted the same way if I was on the jury. Kasselman's book does an effective job of creating sympathy for characters who are on opposite sides of the issue which means there's not any cliche of good guy-bad guys but instead a realistic depiction where each side does their best in making their "pitch" for what they believe to be justice.

Marilou George says

Author Harold Kasselman has given us a uniquely realistic story of the ramifications that could result from a baseball pitch hitting a batter in the head and ultimately resulting in the death of the batter. Is this a situation that should be handled by the Commissioner of Baseball or is it one that should be treated as a crime and brought before a Grand Jury?

The rivalry between the Phillies and the Mets is palpable and retaliation is the name of the game. Rookie pitcher Tim Charles is embroiled in a conspiracy endorsed by manager Buck Sawyer to throw a pitch to intimidate and hit second baseman for the Mets Kenny Leyton. The pitch hits Leyton in the head and he drops to the ground. He suffers a concussion and against doctor's orders goes home to rest. The next day he is having great difficulty and is rushed to the emergency room where he subsequently dies from his injuries. Leyton's Widow Theresa masks her grief behind anger and vengeance and is determined to get justice for her husband's death no matter what the cost.

This book brings to the surface the competitive nature of baseball and the lengths that players are expected to go to in order to be competitive and support the players on their team. Does the fact that this type of retaliation has always been part of the game make it acceptable?

This is not just a book about baseball; it is also about the morals and values of those in the game and the inner workings of the legal system in their quest for justice. The process of the Grand Jury deciding to prosecute and the inner workings of this process as well as the trial that ensues are riveting and informative. You have a glimpse into the inner workings of the legal system and the compromises and deals that are made before a case gets to trial.

The characters of Tim Charles the pitcher, Buck Sawyer the team manager and Jamie Brooks the prosecutor and an avid baseball fan are extremely well-developed. They successfully draw you into their lives as the drama and intensity of the legal issues bring them together.

This is a very realistic story written with knowledge and depth. The Author's background as an attorney is evident as he leads the reader through the court system with intelligence and ease. The style of writing is easy to follow, filled with interesting characters and portrays the inner working of the legal system with great fascination.

Kent says

To be honest, I did not exactly read the whole book. I read the beginning, scanned the middle and read the ending. I did not like the documentary style, but I must admit that it was realistic and had me fooled. I started googling the names because I thought it was about real events.

Some of the conversations annoyed me. They kept saying each others name in every quote.

- Well, Peter, what do you think?

- Well, John, I think...
- You know Peter, that's what I thought.
- Okay John, then we agree.
- Okay Peter, It's been nice talking to you.
- Yeah John, my pleasure.

I have later learned that sport show host in the US actually talk like that :-)

The subject is interesting. What kind of crimes can you get away with on the playing field without being prosecuted for violence, or as in this case, murder?

I have seen some acts in sports that could have merited prosecution.

Tim says

Very nice crime novel based on baseball. The plot was well thought out and the characters (both the ADA and the pitcher) were very easy to relate to. The best part about this novel, however, was the thought-provoking premise. How would sports change if acts on the field of play could be prosecuted as crimes?

Highly recommend this novel!

Mike Rossetti says

A Pitch for Justice, by Harold Kasselman, is a well-told story that weaves the American pastime of baseball into an interesting legal scenario. The matter-of-fact method used to convey the story makes the reader feel as if he or she is watching a live feed of the trial and circumstances surrounding the unfolding legal drama. The surprise ending makes for an unexpected plot twist and provides a compelling conclusion to the book.

Some have mentioned in earlier reviews issues with editing and punctuation, and while they exist, they don't get in the way of a well-told story. A few instances of dialogue are difficult to follow, but for the most part, the story is well-told and genuine, and it presents a new and innovative storyline.

I would look forward to another book from Kasselman and would recommend this to anyone that likes legal thrillers and stories involving baseball.

John Pearce says

Harold Kasselman's "A Pitch for Justice" is not the sort of book I'd normally stay up late reading, but I found its combination of baseball and a tense courtroom drama absorbing. At one level it's a straightforward story of a young man pushed across a bright line by a mentor he admires, to the point that he will throw a fatal beanball to avenge perceived slights and injuries inflicted by the other team. In other words, it's schoolyard bullying brought to the major leagues.

There are interesting subplots aplenty. The victim's widow, who morphs from faithful wife to vindictive harridan and then abandons any pretense of self-control; the DA who gets rid of the case so it won't endanger

her re-election; the coach who zealously manipulates a 20-year-old pitcher (after a more experienced one turns him down); and a nice romantic subplot between the prosecutor and a night-club singer who was a member of the grand jury. Given Kellerman's background as a prosecutor I suspect the assistant DA Jaime is an autobiographical figure; he publicly credits his wife Robin as the model for the singer.

The book would benefit from a strong editor, both for the story line and basic grammar and punctuation, which is why I gave it four stars rather than five, but it was a good read that I enjoyed.

Harold Kasselman says

Well, there is no doubt that I am biased and have an interest in this book. I wrote it. It may not be award winning literary fiction , but I feel confident that you'll enjoy the premise, the evolution of the plot, the legal challenges inspired by the premise, and the courtroom and baseball endings.

It's a safe bet that for \$3.99 you'll find the novel unique in its theme and a realistic concept. Thanks for adding it to your to read list.

Gerry Claes says

Only one time in the history of major league baseball was a player killed during a game. It happened on August 16, 1920 in a game between the New York Yankees and the Cleveland Indians. Carl Mays, a submarine pitcher for the Yankees hit Ray Chapman, a shortstop for the Cleveland Indians, in the left temple area. Helmets were not worn at that time and the pitch knocked Chapman to the ground. Chapman was able to walk off the field with the help of other players. Chapman died at 4:00 AM the next morning after an unsuccessful operation to stop the bleeding.

The police questioned Mays and he claimed the act was an accident and he was not throwing at Chapman. The District Attorney took Mays at his word and decided to close the case without filing any charges. The DA felt that it was a tragic accident that was unavoidable in a game that had inherent risks.

"A Pitch for Justice" is the story involving the Philadelphia Phillies and the New York Mets in 2016 in which a young fastball pitcher for the Phillies intentionally throws at a Mets batter, on instructions from his manager, and hits him in the head killing him. There are a number of incidents that precede this tragedy, all of them revolving around the "code of honor" players follow to protect their team mates and to deliver payback for a perceived wrong.

The first 25% of this book involves the game of baseball and the events that lead to the players death. The remainder of the book is more about the legal issues after the Phillies pitcher is charged with first degree murder. The book poses some thought provoking questions, ie:

Should a pitcher be charged with first degree murder if he intentionally throws at a batters head and kills him?

Should the pitcher be charged with manslaughter?

Should no charges be made since this is an inherent risk all ball players must accept

Should the manager who instructs the pitcher to throw at a batter with the intention of causing injury be

charged as an accomplice?

Is a baseball in the hands of a fastball pitcher a lethal weapon?

What risks does a batter assume when facing a pitcher who throws an 100 mph fastball?

The legal proceedings are right out of a John Grisham novel. The chapters on the grand jury investigation were quite educational for me since I really did not know how a grand jury investigation works. The trial itself presents the issues that must be considered in order to arrive at a just verdict. Even if you aren't a fan of baseball I think you will enjoy this book.

Jason Stanley says

This is Kasselman's first novel, yet he writes like a seasoned pro.

If you like the intrigue of court and the workings political working of the DA's office mixed with real character development along the lines of the Butch Karp and Marlene Ciampi series by Robert Tanenbaum you are in for a double treat. A Pitch For Justice is a great book and you have found a new author to follow.

This book will delight you all the way from the realism of the set-up, the characters that build the story, and the twists and turns bringing this story to some unexpected places. Is it murder? That is the question that many people try to figure out – and I found myself wondering the same thing. Given that I knew exactly what happened it is a testament to the excellence of the writing that I was wondering if a legal murder or manslaughter had happened. This is a suspense sports psychology novel of the best type. You're gonna love it.

You will learn a lot about baseball – the nitty-gritty insider stuff that only real players or die-hard fans understand. What I found amazing is that while I am not particularly a strong baseball fan, the 'education' about the why the game is played as it is, was fascinating because it is so well told.

My only hope is that Mr. Kasselman publishes his next novel soon.

Fred Shaw says

Our own Goodreads author, Harold Kasselman, has written an outstanding and intriguing novel "A Pitch for Justice: A Legal Thriller" that keeps the pages turning and your mind working overtime, turning over and over your personal feelings about certain controversial but traditional tactics in professional sports. In this case it's the "bean ball" in baseball. The story is about a young, 20 year old pitcher with the Philadelphia Phillies, Tim Charles, who hits a NY Mets batter, Ken Leyton in the head during a game. This action culminated in a several year running feud between the 2 teams resulting in retaliations from both sides. Tradition is it seems, that players take care of their own by "doing unto others before they do you". If you hit my batter on purpose, I'm going to hit yours. The problem is that Ken Leyton died the next day from the "bean ball" thrown by Charles. Fans from both teams were up in arms and the grieving widow wants Charles charged for murder. The clincher is that the coach and teammates were pressuring Charles to retaliate.

Kasselman, the author and a lifelong Phillies fan, has been a criminal prosecutor for 30 years and very capably took me through the court battle and the emotional battle as well. On one hand, Charles, barely out of high school, was looking at a murder charge and maybe life in prison. On the other hand is the young Leyton widow and son who will be without husband and father.

The story had me saying to myself, that the batter knows of the risks when he steps up to the plate. Leyton had recently been involved in a "dirty, cleats high slide" into second base injuring the Phillies shortstop. A melee erupted on the field. When Leyton stepped up to bat, he must have been aware of the risk. Charles feeling the pressure, did not want to hurt anyone.

What would your assessment be? Should this action call for settlement in criminal court or should professional baseball authorities take the responsibility for meting out punishment. This is fiction, but in 1920, it really happened to a Cleveland Indians batter, hit by a NY Yankees pitcher. The batter later died from brain hemorrhaging. In that case, there were no criminal charges.

If you love sports and books about sports, this one is for you.

Brina says

I have been a baseball aficionado from practically the time I was born. When I found the baseball book group here on goodreads I was ecstatic because it combines my two favorite things- baseball and reading. We discuss current events around baseball, and, recently, we explored the many angles of a fight that occurred between the Texas Rangers and Toronto Bluejays. In light of that, one of the group's longtime members Harold Kasselman let me know that he recently wrote a book titled *A Pitch For Justice* that he self published on Amazon, which is about what would happen if a baseball player actually was prosecuted for his actions on the field in a court of law.

The Philadelphia Phillies and New York Mets are divisional rivals and have boiling blood between them. In a key three game series, a Mets pitcher hits a Phillies player in the hand, breaking his finger and putting him on the disabled list. The Phillies manager orders retribution; however, his pitchers do not want to face lengthy suspensions and try to get out of throwing at Mets batters. In the second game of the series, Mets second baseman Ken Leyton slides hard into second to break up a double play. Another Phillies player heads to the disabled list. The Phillies manager orders retribution again, and the next game, rookie pitcher Tim Charles hits Leyton in the head. Even though Charles claims he did not mean to throw at Leyton, in light of the events of the series, both he and his manager are ejected and subsequently handed long suspensions. The next day, the unthinkable happens: Leyton dies as a result of his injuries. His widow, Theresa, does not have time to process her loss and takes matters into her own hands: she takes her case to the DA's office and will not rest until Charles is behind bars.

What ensues is a fast reading law and order thriller. In addition to Charles and his legal team, we meet prosecuting attorney Jaime Brooks, the first officer in the DA's office who is assigned to the case. Brooks is a middle aged bachelor who is due to retire from the office at the end of the year. This case would be the crowning jewel of his career. In the first portion of the pre trial activities, one of the grand jurists Barbara Jay falls for Brooks. To counter the courtroom drama, Kasselman has Brooks and Jay develop a budding romance, which is a tension relief in the course of a heated trial.

I enjoyed the book a great deal. Only one time in the history of baseball has a player died from on field injuries. Players know they are taking a risk every time they step into the batter's box that a pitched ball of over 90 miles per hour could hit them. Despite these risks, the last on field casualty occurred in 1920. Brawls do occur; however, but the suspensions are usually kept to a minimal ten games or less, even if punches are

thrown. Kasselman has the combatants in his scenario suspended for the duration of the season pending outcome of the court case. While this may be extreme, I believe that players should be handed more lengthy suspensions for their actions on the field.

This book was a fun baseball read for summer. It spurred some interesting conversations in my family as to whether or not an athlete's actions on the field should be punishable in a court of law. I was able to read it over the course of a day and recommend it to baseball and legal fans alike.

Dan says

This is a very good idea and for the most part I enjoyed the ride more than the read. By that I mean this... I (for the most part) enjoyed the story although I do think the characters could have been developed a little more. There was no individual character that I could read about and feel "Yessss I know just how it feels" or "wow.. if that was me it would SUCK!".

The development work that IS there is shallow and predictable and some of the dialogue could have been improved.

Dont get me wrong. This is a good idea and a great first effort and I hope this review isn't too harsh. The least enjoyable part of the book was the ending, which was again predictable and almost beyond the my ability to accept. How many major league ball players are going to get lost and stop to ask a gang banger for directions? I bet a person would be hard pressed to find a MLB player that does not have a vehicle that is GPS equipped.

Over all, I give this one 3 notes of "chin music" out of a possible 5

TI just read the updated and alternate ending and this is JUST what the story needed. Great idea, great story and the new ending put this one out of the park! Worthy of 4 hit batters out of a possible 5!

Laura DeBruce says

A Pitch for Justice is based on a nightmare scenario that takes place during a baseball game in front of a stadium of fans and a national television audience. What follows is a well-written, detailed and fascinating account of the prosecution of a young pitcher who throws a fatal pitch. This is a work of fiction, and even though I was aware of the fact, the book is so well-researched and true-to-life that I found myself double-checking the dates and the last note from the author just to be sure.

I'm not a big baseball fan, but you don't have to be a fan of the sport to be intrigued by A Pitch for Justice. Kasselman deftly draws his reader into the story and the drama that leads up to the tense and exciting moments of the trial. Kasselman does a great job of showing all sides of the controversy from the devastated widow to the cynical but hardworking lawyers and the young man on trial. I found myself looking into the early case referred to in the book of a real-life instance when a batter was killed by a pitch. Kasselman's love of baseball, and his knowledge of the inner workings of the criminal justice system combine to create a very enjoyable and readable courtroom drama.

Mary says

A Pitch for Justice is a story about the unwritten rule of baseball conveyed through the mechanism of a court forum. As stated in the book, Baseball is a game for kids – but played by adults.

As an uninformed individual of both baseball and the legal system, I read this story as pure entertainment. I was not disappointed.

I learned a couple of baseball terms, such as, beaning and chin music. As far as courtroom drama goes, it maintained the suspense of an unpredictable trial. Kasselman's background affords him to educate readers regarding law issues, without sounding condescending.

A Pitch for Justice is thought provoking. The dilemma concerns a baseball player who kills another player throwing a bean ball. Does this constitute murder, or a lesser degree of murder, or none at all?

I recommend A Pitch for Justice by Harold Kasselman for readers who enjoy a good story well told.
