

# Early Professional Baseball and the Sporting Press: Shaping the Image of the Game

R. Terry Furst

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## Early Professional Baseball and the Sporting Press: Shaping the Image of the Game

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Early Professional Baseball and the Sporting Press: Shaping the Image of the Game R. Terry Furst The book analyzes the process by which the collective image of professional baseball was formed. It traces both the negation and the affirmation of ideas in the sports press that would impede or promote the growth of baseball from a recreational pastime to a team sport spectacle in the mid-19th century. The American collective image grew as a result of sports reportage, conversations about baseball in social and work groupings, game attendance (and changing values toward work and play), and reports of gambling.

Newspaper editorials and news stories and letters to the editor are studied as to shifting and complex and inter-related sentiments toward playing baseball. Much of this interactive complex was influenced by the English sports ideal and newly formed attitudes toward recreation. Above all, the sports press was the primary shaper of the image of professional baseball.



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