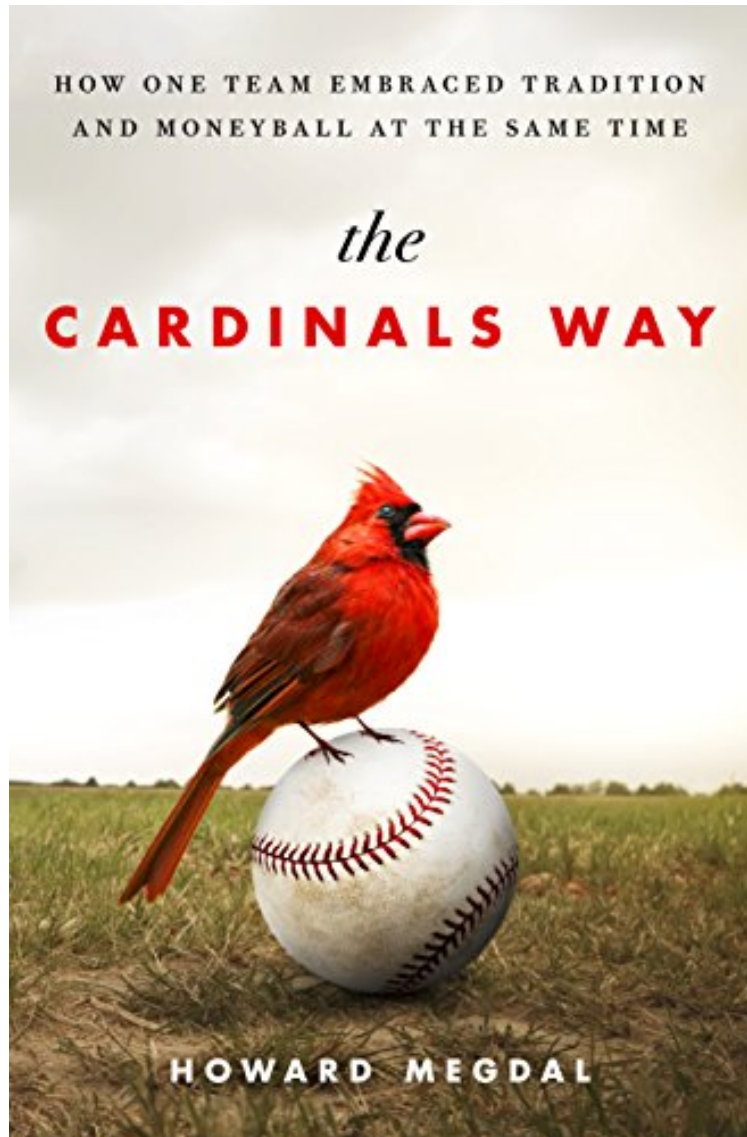


[FREE] The Cardinals Way: How One Team Embraced Tradition and Moneyball at the Same Time

The Cardinals Way: How One Team Embraced Tradition and Moneyball at the Same Time

Howard Megdal

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Howard Megdal : The Cardinals Way: How One Team Embraced Tradition and Moneyball at the Same Time before purchasing it in order to gauge whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised The Cardinals Way: How One Team Embraced Tradition and Moneyball at the Same Time:

1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. How to Run and Transform an Organization reviewed by Bill Pence of CoramDeotheBlog.com By Bill Pence Although most will see this as a sports book, it's really more so a

leadership book about how to run and transform an organization that happens to be a sports team. I was interested in it being a big St. Louis Cardinals baseball fan. I was impressed at the access that the author had to key personnel, including the managing partner and chairman (Bill DeWitt Jr.) and General Manager (John Mozeliak) of the team. Megdal's writing style reminded me positively of the writing of John Feinstein, as he does an excellent job in helping you to get to know the characters involved. If I had a criticism, it would be that he sometimes goes into too much detail, especially leading up to and during the 2014 draft, that some readers may not care about. But that's a minor criticism. Although the Cardinals have been a very successful franchise over the past twenty years, the author shows that the values of the franchise have been in place for a much longer time. In fact, he states that the phrase "The Cardinals Way" comes from a manual, written originally by George Kissell, a coach whom the Cardinals employed from 1940 until his death in 2008. The author's main point is that the Cardinals of today are both the manifestation of a vision Branch Rickey had a hundred years ago, and how much of the team's current business model both fits what Rickey envisioned and is practiced by direct followers of Rickey himself. The book details how it happened — from Rickey and DeWitt to DeWitt and Mozeliak. Here's how it happened, from George Kissell's insight and training to Jeff Luhnow's, Sig Mejdal's and Michael Girsch's revolution to Dan Kantrovitz and Gary LaRocque's implementation. And here's how it works in practice, as seen through the eyes of players and coaches, scouts and analytics experts, operating the Cardinals Way at all levels of the farm system right now. He writes that although "The Cardinals Way" is almost a hundred years old, both the deep connection with young players and reliance on new data doesn't appear to be going anywhere. The author begins by looking at Branch Rickey, best known for his role in bringing Jackie Robinson to the major leagues, as the inventor of the farm system. Rickey spent twenty-five years with the Cardinals from 1917 to 1942. Megdal states that the foundation for how the Cardinals, and ultimately, every major league team acquired and developed talent came from Rickey himself. During his time with the Browns, Rickey, in need of an administrative assistant, hired a thirteen-year-old peanut vendor at Sportsman's Park to be his new assistant: Bill DeWitt Sr. He would ultimately, become the first "farm director" in Major League Baseball history. Another key figure in this story is George Kissell. Rickey signed Red Schoendienst and Kissell. The two men taught generations of Cardinals, players and coaches who are helping the Cardinals win to this day. Another key figure in the story is Jeff Luhnow, who was at the time he was hired by the Cardinals a business-consulting specialist. The organizational change that he would bring to the club, supported by DeWitt, around the marriage of analytics and scouting would sharply conflict with the proven ways of General Manager Walt Jocketty. Luhnow, the General Manager of the Houston Astros, worked for the Cardinals in their scouting department from 2003 through 2011. The organizational conflict would eventually result in Jocketty being fired in 2007, after having just won the World Series in 2006, during which the organization was operating on parallel, often contradictory tracks. The author briefly touches on investigation by the F.B.I. and Justice Department about Cardinals' personnel hacking into an internal network of the Houston Astros to steal information about players. However, the book went to press while that story was still developing. The author points out the adaptability of the organization in that over the past twenty years, the Cardinals have had one owner, two general managers, and two managers. They don't believe they've figured out anything that won't require continual innovation to stay ahead of the competition. During that time they have won with the twentieth-century model, under Walt Jocketty, and the twenty-first-century model, under John Mozeliak. They won with an older, experienced field manager in Tony La Russa, and a young manager in Mike Matheny. This book will most likely primarily be of interest to baseball fans, specifically Cardinal fans. But I would also recommend it to leadership interested in transforming organizations to be successful in changing times.

1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. For Cardinal Fans Only By Jennifer Roland As someone who grew up in the Midwest and watched the Cardinals at both the old and new Busch Stadiums, I thought this book would help explain the history of the Cardinals and their success. Sadly it does not. It is a rambling collection of interviews. I had to force myself to finish it. I have read many other books about baseball teams that were much better written. This was as bad as a self-published fan book.

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Solid Profile By E. Preston Megdal does solid work, with access to the main players, in this book. The interplay between Sabermetrics and "Old School" baseball is a great topic for fans; especially for the storied Cardinals franchise as documented here. Even if you're not a die-hard Redbird fan (my bias), Megdal's writing is knowledgeable and makes for a quick read. Enjoy!

The St. Louis Cardinals have experienced the kind of success that is rare in baseball. Regarded by many as the premier organization in Major League Baseball, they not only win, but do so with an apparently bottomless pool of talent, one that is mostly homegrown. Despite years of phenomenal achievements, including going to the World Series in 2004 and again in 2006, the Cardinals reinvented themselves using the "Cardinal Way," a term that has come to represent many things to fans, media, and other organizations, from an ironclad code of conduct to the team's cutting-edge use of statistic and analytics, and a farm system that has transformed baseball. Baseball journalist Howard Megdal takes fans behind the scenes and off the field, interviewing dozens of key players within the Cardinals organization, including owner Bill DeWitt and the general manager John Mozeliak. Megdal reveals how the players are assessed and groomed

using an unrivaled player development system that has created a franchise that is the envy of the baseball world. In the spirit of Moneyball, *The Cardinals Way* tells an in-depth, fascinating story about a consistently good franchise, the business of sports in the twenty-first century and a team that has learned how to level the playing field, turning in season after successful season.

"Megdal enjoys terrific access to Cardinals management... Serious Cardinals fans will savor this glowing insider take on their beloved organization." - PW "This is an excellent book that every Cardinals fan will want to add to his or her bookshelf. Other readers who are interested in how players are evaluated and developed will also appreciate this book." - Sports Book Guy, 4 1/2 of 5 stars (excellent) "Megdal's talents lie in his ability to get those men to open up, to freely discuss the failures as well as the successes... those who are passionate about business and baseball will find an illuminating and educational resource in *THE CARDINALS WAY*." - Book Reporter "This is a book that will be eagerly read by front offices and sportswriters as well as fans. Megdal, a frequent contributor to *Politico* and *USA Today*, thinks with the precision of a statistician and the passion of a fan but writes like a journalist who knows how to get a point across. *The Cardinals Way* is both a reverential piece of baseball history and a lucid analysis of how a team stays great by constantly reinventing itself." - *The Dallas Morning News*

About the Author
HOWARD MEGDAL has written for *Capital New York*, *Sports Illustrated*, *The New York Times*, and *USA Today*, among others. *The Cardinals Way* is his fourth book. He lives in Rockland County, New York with his wife, Rachel and his two daughters, Mirabelle and Juliet.