

A Game of Brawl: The Orioles, the Beaneaters, and the Battle for the 1897 Pennant

Bill Felber

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A Game of Brawl: The Orioles, the Beaneaters, and the Battle for the 1897 Pennant Bill Felber Not only was it probably the most cutthroat pennant race in baseball history; it was also a struggle to define how baseball would be played. This book re-creates the rowdy, season-long 1897 battle between the Baltimore Orioles and the Boston Beaneaters. The Orioles had acquired a reputation as the dirtiest team in baseball. Future Hall of Famers John McGraw, Wee Willie Keeler, and "Foxy" Ned Hanlon were proven winners—but their nasty tactics met with widespread disapproval among fans. So it was that their pennant race with the comparatively saintly Beaneaters took on a decidedly moralistic air.

Bill Felber brings to life the most intensely watched team sporting event in the country's history to that time. His book captures the drama of the final week, as the race came down to a three-game series. And finally, it conveys the madness of the third and decisive game, when thirty thousand fans literally knocked down the gates and walls of a facility designed to hold ten thousand to watch the Beaneaters grind out a win and bring down baseball's first and most notorious evil empire.



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