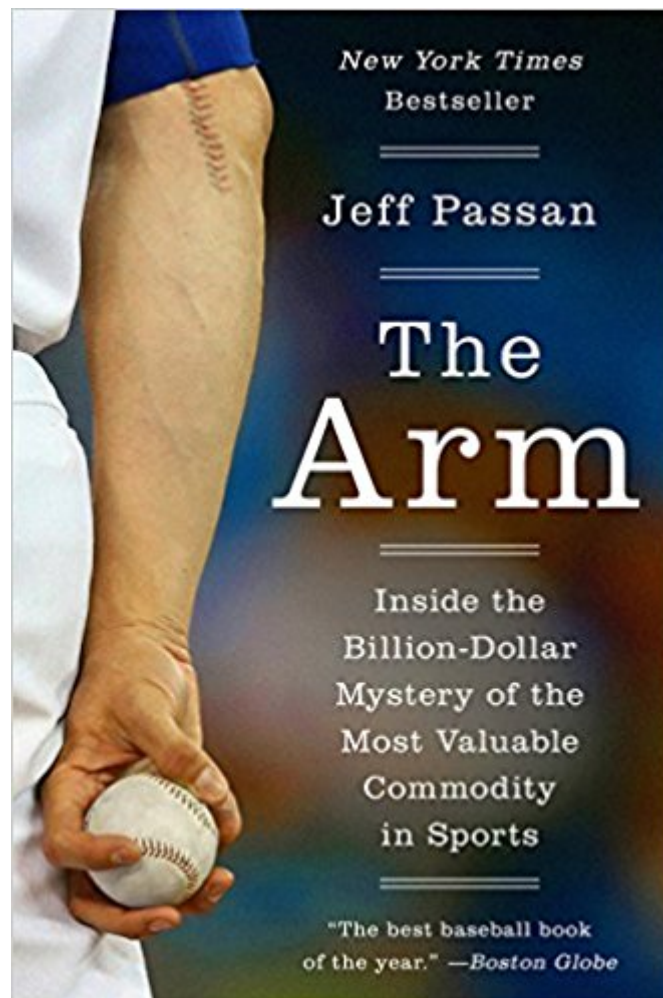




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The Arm: Inside The Billion-Dollar Mystery Of The Most Valuable Commodity In Sports



Synopsis

Yahoo's lead baseball columnist offers an in-depth look at the most valuable commodity in sports—the pitching arm—and how its vulnerability to injury is hurting players and the game, from Little League to the majors. Every year, Major League Baseball spends more than \$1.5 billion on pitchers—five times more than the salary of every NFL quarterback combined. Pitchers are the game's lifeblood. Their import is exceeded only by their fragility. One tiny band of tissue in the elbow, the ulnar collateral ligament, is snapping at unprecedented rates, leaving current big league players vulnerable and the coming generation of baseball-playing children dreading the three scariest words in the sport: Tommy John surgery. Jeff Passan traveled the world for three years to explore in-depth the past, present, and future of the arm, and how its evolution left baseball struggling to wrangle its Tommy John surgery epidemic. He examined what compelled the Chicago Cubs to spend \$155 million on one arm. He snagged a rare interview with Sandy Koufax, whose career was cut short by injury at thirty, and visited Japan to understand how another baseball-mad country treats its prized arms. And he followed two major league pitchers, Daniel Hudson and Todd Coffey, throughout their returns from Tommy John surgery. He exposes how the baseball establishment long ignored the rise in arm injuries and reveals how misplaced incentives across the sport stifle potential changes. Injuries to the UCL start as early as Little League. Without a drastic cultural shift, baseball will continue to lose hundreds of millions of dollars annually to damaged pitchers, and another generation of children will suffer the same problems that vex current players. Informative and hard-hitting, *The Arm* is essential reading for everyone who loves the game, wants to keep their children healthy, or relishes a look into how a large, complex institution can fail so spectacularly.

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“A timely and comprehensive look at all aspects of a baseball problem that in recent years appears to approach a crisis.” (Bob Costas) “This is a stunning exposé of the hidden story behind the most frequent operation performed on the most important players in this most important game in our country.” (Ken Burns) “The Arm makes it official.” • Jeff Passan is the best young baseball writer in America. This searing, meticulously reported account of the orthopedic revolution that began with Tommy John is must reading for every manager, general manager, pitcher and, most especially, every parent whose child has 100 mph dreams. (Jane Leavy, New York Times best-selling author of *The Last Boy: Mickey Mantle and the End of America's Childhood*) “The best baseball book of the year.” | Jeff Passan spent several years in clubhouses and operating rooms to report *The Arm*. It's a close, exceptionally well-written look into the game's epidemic of ruptured elbow ligaments, and the hard fact that medical science still has no real answers for it. (Boston Globe) “One of the most important books on baseball of the decade, a superbly researched and detailed look at the current epidemic of arm injuries in the sport.” (Publishers Weekly (starred review)) “... A must-read for any sports dad or anxious Mets fan. A rating.” (Entertainment Weekly) “Jeff Passan's *The Arm* is the real deal—a book that's both readable as hell and that has something meaningful to say about the way the game works... This human element lends the book its propulsive quality, but every part is fascinating. *The Arm* is a must-read.” (BookPage Magazine) “This is the most important baseball book in years, not just for major league pitchers like me who had Tommy John surgery but for every parent who wants a child with a healthy arm. This is an epidemic that can be fixed, and *The Arm* is a great first step.” (John Smoltz, former Cy Young Award winner) “Give[s] readers an insider's perspective on the threat hanging over every player who takes the mound.” (Booklist)

Every year, Major League Baseball spends upward of \$2 billion on pitchers—five times the salary of all NFL quarterbacks combined. Pitchers are the lifeblood of the sport, the ones who win championships, but today they face an epidemic unlike any baseball has seen. One tiny ligament in the elbow keeps snapping and sending teenagers and major leaguers alike to undergo surgery, an

issue the baseball establishment ignored for decades. For three years, Jeff Passan traveled the world to better understand the pitching arm and its past, present, and future. He exposed the broken youth system that spits out more injured pitchers than ever. He got the inside story of how the Chicago Cubs decided to spend \$155 million on one arm—•an arm that helped them win their first World Series in 108 years. He sat down for a rare interview with Hall of Famer Sandy Koufax, whose career ended at thirty because of an arm injury. Passan went to Japan to understand how another baseball-obsessed nation deals with this crisis. And he followed two major league pitchers as they returned from Tommy John surgery, the revolutionary procedure named for the former All-Star who first underwent it more than forty years ago. Passan discovered a culture that struggles to prevent arm injuries and lacks the support for the changes necessary to do so. He explains that without a drastic shift in how baseball thinks about its talent, another generation of pitchers will fall prey to the same problem that vexes the current one.

This is for anyone who liked Michael Lewis' Moneyball. Similarly concise yet engaging writing style. Really well-researched, thought provoking, insightful and the author does a tremendous job of bringing the subject to life through the real-life stories of some very colorful characters and a couple legends. You'll feel like an insider. You'll fly through it.

Good book. Talks about the frequent overuse in Japan along with the "showcase" culture here in the US. Goes on to discuss the different research and training methods being used here in the states. Would have liked to see overuse at the youth level addressed a bit more. Besides pitching kids participating in weekend tournaments where they are playing 3-6 games. Even if only throwing ASMI's recommended pitch counts frequently going and playing other "high use" positions.

For any sports fan and particularly baseball fans this is just a great read regarding an issue that ranks beside football concussions. Incredibly well documented that helps the reader to envision some of the mental anguish players from 12-35 go through with arm issues and subsequent "Tommy John" surgery.

The author tracks two pitchers with horrible arm injuries as they attempt to get back to the major leagues. He takes us into the sordid world of youth travel ball, Japanese youth baseball, the operating room during a Tommy John surgery, and many other places. He mentioned one of my favorite baseball books, The Diamond Appraised (Wright/House), the seminal work in discussing

pitcher injuries. I am admittedly a total baseball geek, but I was riveted by this book

Outstanding read if you like the game of baseball. An in-depth look at the role of arm health in the game. From a super-detailed description of what Tommy John surgery entails to the history of the procedure to the rehab process to what causes arm injuries to what the future looks like, it's a fantastic multi-perspective view. My only issue was the way Perfect Game baseball was portrayed - parents and over-zealous coaches are the issue, not tournament organizers in my opinion. My son plays in a few PG events a year and if we allowed him to be over-used or exploited that's on us, not the company that sponsors events. I highly recommend the book though.

A very in depth look at the rash of arm injuries across MLB all the way down to the lower levels of baseball. As a parent of a baseball player, it was a great read for me as I look for ways to keep his arm healthy. At the end of the day, it doesn't seem like there is an easy answer. Throwing a lot, throwing a little, throwing heat, throwing curve balls. But a very interesting read for anyone in the baseball world.

Passan goes in depth on all aspects imaginable regarding the current arm injury epidemic that is affecting baseball. By examining the different approaches that are used to protect (or not worry about protecting) arms around the world. Passan clearly spent years researching and planning all of the data included in this book. Passan also offers several possible solutions for the problem and offers a bit of hope for young pitchers moving forward. One of my favorite sports books of the year.

It is a very interesting book about the reasons for and what MLB tries to do (and does) with the TJ issue that pitchers these days have and the random search to find an answer. Not the fastest read but very interesting.

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