



The Bird: The Life and Legacy of Mark Fidrych

Doug Wilson

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The first biography of the eccentric pitcher, rookie All-Star starter, 70s pop icon, and first athlete on the cover of *Rolling Stone*

*Mark Fidrych exploded onto the scene in the summer of 1976 with the Detroit Tigers, capturing the hearts of Americans from coast to coast. Lanky with a curly mop, a nickname born of his resemblance to Sesame Street's Big Bird would only hint at the large personality that was about to take baseball in a new direction. Known for wildly endearing antics such as throwing back balls that "had hits in them," manicuring the mound of any cleat marks, talking to himself (and the ball for that matter), and shaking hands with just about everyone from groundskeepers to cops after games, *The Bird* infused each game with the fun, All-American spirit of 1970s baseball. A two-time All-Star player, Fidrych won nineteen games, along with the Rookie of the Year Award, becoming one of the biggest individual drawing cards baseball has ever seen.*

Recreating the magic of an unforgettable era of baseball, *The Bird* shows how Fidrych was the player that brought a smile to your face, becoming a crossover pop culture icon and household name. Through meticulous research and interviews, Doug Wilson vividly recounts Fidrych's struggles and final shining moments in the Minors, the tragic injury that signaled the beginning of the end of his career, through to his sudden death in 2009.

The Bird gives readers a long overdue look into the life of the refreshing rookie the likes of which baseball had never seen before, and has never seen since.

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