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The Big Field



Synopsis

From the #1 New York Times bestselling author of *Heat*, *Travel Team* and *Million-Dollar Throw*. Playing shortstop is a way of life for Hutch—not only is his hero, Derek Jeter, a shortstop, but so was his father, a former local legend turned pro. Which is why having to play second base feels like demotion to second team. Yet that's where Hutch ends up after Darryl "D-Will" Williams, the best shortstop prospect since A-Rod, joins the team. But Hutch is nothing if not a team player, and he's cool with playing in D-Will's shadow—until, that is, the two shortstops in Hutch's life betray him in a way he never could have imagined. With the league championship on the line, just how far is Hutch willing to bend to be a good teammate?

Book Information

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Age Range: 8 - 12 years

Grade Level: 3 - 7

Customer Reviews

For Hutch, shortstop has always been home. It's where his father once played professionally, before injuries relegated him to watching games on TV instead of playing them. And it's where Hutch himself has always played and starred. Until now. The arrival of Darryl "D-Will" Williams, the top shortstop prospect from Florida since A-Rod, means Hutch is displaced, in more ways than one. Second base feels like second fiddle, and when he sees his father giving fielding tips to D-Will--the same father who can't be bothered to show up to watch his son play--Hutch feels betrayed. With the

summer league championship on the line, just how far is Hutch willing to bend to be a good teammate? Mike Lupica returns to the big field for the first time since his #1 New York Times bestseller *Heat* and delivers a feel-good home run, showing how love of the game is a language fathers and sons speak from the heart.

Q&A with Mike Lupica

Q: Where did the idea for *The Big Field* come from?

A: If it has one starting point, it was when Alex Rodriguez came to the Yankees and left shortstop to play third base. It wasn't so much that Rodriguez was the best all-around player in baseball at the time. It was that I knew he'd always thought of himself as a shortstop. I'm not sure he still doesn't think of himself as a shortstop. And suddenly he was a third baseman. Hutch isn't the best player in this book; Darryl Williams is. But Hutch had been a shortstop his whole life, it defined him as a ballplayer, and now because of the presence of Darryl on their American Legion team, he has to go to second base. It's the starting off point in a book that is ultimately about fathers and sons. But it's about a player having to leave his best position for the good of his team.

Q: In *The Big Field*, the emotional heart of the story is Keith "Hutch" Hutchinson's relationship with his father, a washed-up ballplayer and former boy phenomenon who never advanced past the minor leagues and who completely soured on the game, setting the stage for a distant relationship with his son. Why did you decide to focus on the father-son dynamic in this novel?

A: Sometimes with fathers and sons, when they can't communicate, they fall back on sports. It is like some universal language for fathers and sons. But at the start of *The Big Field*, Hutch and his dad don't even have that. And their journey, both of them, and I think it's a great journey, is finding that language again, finding a bond they never really lost. And finding each other.

Q: Can you offer any advice for aspiring sports writers?

A: Read the best guys, in books and newspapers and magazines. And then find ways to write. Write for the school paper, write anywhere you can, but write. I believe strongly that if you have the talent and the spirit, somebody will find you.

Q: When writing a young character do you find yourself looking back to yourself at that age? Or your children?

A: I look back to myself, and remember how important sports were to me, the fellowship, just the sheer fun of having a game with my buddies even if it wasn't organized. I tell people all the time that I still go to games thinking I might see something I've never seen before. I still have that feeling. But more than that, I see sports through the eyes of my children, too. See what they think is good, or cool, or worth watching. See what excites them. They've made me smarter about sports, they really have. But then that always happens when you hang around smart people.

Q: Have you started working on your next book? Can you give us a sneak peak?

A: My next book is already finished. It's about a young foster child, and his love for baseball. He's a catcher. And I think you're going to like him. The book is called "Safe at Home." The book I'm writing right now is my first soccer book. That's all I'm going to tell

you! --This text refers to the Audible Audio Edition edition.

Lupica offers another heartwarming, action-packed, sports-savvy novel. -- School Library Journal

--This text refers to the Audible Audio Edition edition.

I like to read baseball books with my 7 year old. This is our second my Lupica (Batboy was the first) and they have both been head and shoulders above the rest. The stories are very exciting and very real. He tends to deal quite a lot with family issues (divorce, poverty, etc.), and that is as close to a complaint as I will make. I look forward to reading every night.

Not as good as Heat. Took a while to get into the book but then I liked it.

Love Lupica

I love Mike Lupica's books because he makes you feel like you are actually there watching it happen! What a great author in my opinion! If you have a love for baseball you'd love this book!

This book just kept surprising me at the end of every chapter wanting me to keep reading which I never like reading

This book is my all time favorite. It's interesting, fun to read, and very sporty. If you love or like baseball, you'll love this.

This book is great and I recommend it to all readers. I am baseball fanatic and loved this amazing book!

It is a good book it's slow in the beginning but gets really good in the middle at the in its good as well if you like baseball it's going to be a good book for you

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