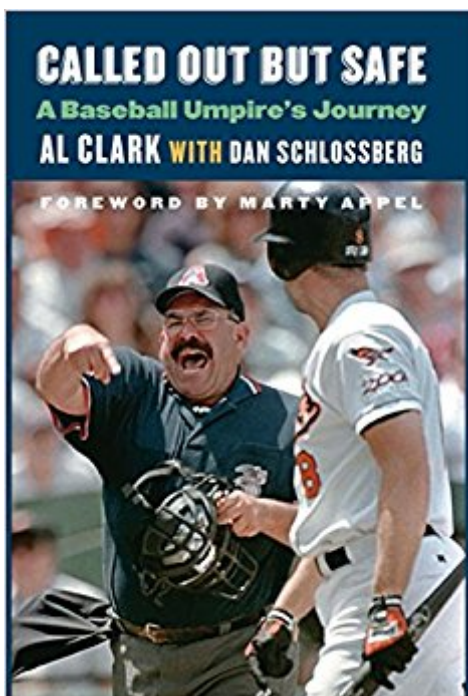


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Called Out But Safe: A Baseball Umpire's Journey



Synopsis

If an umpire could steal the show in a Major League game, Al Clark might well have been the one to do it. Tough but fair, in his thirty years as a professional umpire he took on some of baseball's great umpire baiters, such as Earl Weaver, Billy Martin, and Dick Williams, while ejecting any number of the game's elite—once tearing a hamstring in the process. He was the first Jewish umpire in American League history, and probably the first to eject his own father from the officials' dressing room. But whatever Clark was doing—officiating at Nolan Ryan's three hundredth win, Cal Ripken's record breaker, or the "earthquake" World Series of 1989, or braving a labor dispute, an anti-Semitic tirade by a Cy Young Award winner, or a legal imbroglio—it makes for a good story. *Called Out But Safe* is Clark's outspoken and often hilarious account of his life in baseball from umpire school through the highlights to the inglorious end of his stellar career. Not just a source of baseball history and lore, Clark's book also affords a rare look at what life is like for someone who works for the Major Leagues' other team.

Book Information

Hardcover: 240 pages

Publisher: University of Nebraska Press (May 1, 2014)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 0803246889

ISBN-13: 978-0803246881

Product Dimensions: 0.8 x 5.8 x 8.8 inches

Shipping Weight: 15.2 ounces (View shipping rates and policies)

Average Customer Review: 3.3 out of 5 stars 41 customer reviews

Best Sellers Rank: #357,887 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #192 in Books > Biographies & Memoirs > Sports & Outdoors > Baseball #547 in Books > Sports & Outdoors > Baseball #10146 in Books > Biographies & Memoirs > Memoirs

Customer Reviews

"Clark, having called well over 3,000 MLB games, offers a perspective that is engaging as well as steeped in personal experience. It will be of interest to any baseball fan."—Brian Renvall, *Library Journal* (Brian Renvall *Library Journal* 2014-02-19)"Everything about *Called Out But Safe* is personal, and thank goodness for it."—Don Laible, *Utica Observer-Dispatch* (Don Laible *Utica Observer-Dispatch*)"Al Clark never threw me out of a game, but Billy Martin

wasn't so fortunate. I not only witnessed his confrontations with AI but enjoyed remembering them in this book.

•Ron Blomberg, first designated hitter (Ron Blomberg 2013-09-20)

“Some of the nicest conversations I've had in forty-two years of baseball have been with umpires. I loved any time spent with my friend Al Clark. Enjoy some great baseball stories from a man who once had a front-row seat in our great game.”

•Chris Wheeler, Phillies broadcaster (Chris Wheeler 2013-09-20)

“Books from umpires are infrequent and refreshing. . . . It is baseball's timeless field of vision that offers the vantage where Clark made a living for more than twenty-five years. From a reader's perspective it's a point of view worth sharing.”

•The Plain Dealer (Cleveland) (The Plain Dealer (Cleveland) 2017-08-11)

Al Clark was a professional umpire for thirty years, working more than three thousand games, including two All-Star Games, seven playoff series, and two World Series. Former AP sportswriter Dan Schlossberg is the author or coauthor of more than thirty baseball books, including *Designated Hebrew: The Ron Blomberg Story* and *Making Airwaves: 60 Years at Milo's Microphone*.

The umpire speaks poorly of another MLB Umpire who is deceased and can't defend himself (and was considered by players as one of the best umpires in baseball) and ends up in Federal Prison. No self respecting umpire runs down other umpires. He spends a lot of time justifying why he thinks the justice system is bad and how he is rebuilding himself. I'm sorry, I don't consider him a MLB role model and I would not have wasted my money on this book. I hope you choose not to waste yours.

Don't waste your money. The author said it took him a year to write but I think he could have done it in a week; a work week! It was shallow and had little depth. He said he enjoyed telling anecdotes on the speaking circuit, I only wished he had shared them in his book. It was poorly edited with multiple spelling errors. Finally, the woe is me and I am such a nice guy gets real old real fast.

As a lifetime baseball fan who's read baseball books veritabily non-stop for over half-a-century it was a nice change of pace to read about the National Pastime (at least formerly if not currently) from a totally different perspective. The normal perspective is from either a player or a manager or a coach or a team executive or biased or

unbiased sportswriters. Al Clark, etc. Al Clark but to be taken by the hand through the lifetime of a man who spent twenty-six years in the Major Leagues as an Umpire. Al creates a number of unique experiences that at times you don't see coming. To follow the dreams of a young man hoping to reach the Big Leagues that evolve around the game of baseball old habits sway you into almost forgetting mid-stream that you're not reading about a player. And then all of a sudden you're being educated on the way umpires rotate all their positions on the field based on how many runners are on base and where the ball is almost like synchronized swimming albeit one of the swimmers is wearing a face mask and shin protectors. Al Clark along with being the only Jewish umpire in American League history during his career Major League Baseball changed from a team of umpires specific to each league to one team of umpires that rotated through both leagues. Al takes you from his childhood in New Jersey with loving parents all the way to the Big Leagues with a late life detour into prison for a bad decision and association. The book is peppered with anecdotes of famous players but truth be told this reader hoped for more than were provided. It seems that Al perhaps subconsciously still tried to heed the most important guidelines that his umpiring career was built around not to care who won and to blend into the background as much as possible because the old saying is that fans don't pay to come watch the umps and referees. Surprisingly the most impactful part of the book was his four months in prison. The author truly understood and insightfully shared what the loss of one of life's most valuable assets freedom is really like even in a minimal security prison. So Al may have tripped up rounding third and been tagged out but he certainly got up dusted himself off and still made it home!

I read reviews that slammed this book. They are all grossly mistaken. I am a long-time sports official. An umpire for many years (and still active in my 40's) and this book is superb. Those criticizing the book can call themselves "fans" and that's all they are. They have most likely never

umpired a game in their life. I've umpired thousands. Al Clark did a superb job. This book is well worth the read. You will not be disappointed. Ignore the haters and wannabe officials. This is the real deal.

I saw the author speak at an event prior to reading this book and was fascinated by his story. The book is a quick read and pretty well written. The biggest issue I saw with it (which I also noticed at the speaking engagement) was that Clark refused to accept responsibility for any of his mistakes. Clark seemed like a genuinely good man, but he clearly has made his share of mistakes, resulting in MLB firing him and a short stay at a low security prison. Overall, this is an enjoyable book, it just needed a bit more accountability.

A job well done,, I can visualize the happenings while reading. Mr Clark's animation comes thru. Thanks for a good read.. Great job my friend.

Just very self indulgent. His stories were more about him and not about his interactions with the players. The only interesting thing to read would have been behind the scenes things that no one knew about. His biography is not a compelling story. He glosses over his legal troubles. Just not a book worth reading

Sorry, prospective readers, this just isn't very good. Not well written. Quite disorganized, with the same anecdotes repeated several times. And some real whoppers of proofreading errors: Musician Wynton Marsalis's name is rendered as, "Winton Marcellus."

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