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Juiced: Wild Times, Rampant 'Roids, Smash Hits, And How Baseball Got Big



Synopsis

When Jose Canseco burst into the Major Leagues in the 1980s, he changed the sport -- in more ways than one. No player before him possessed his mixture of speed and power, which allowed him to become the first man in history to belt more than forty home runs and swipe more than forty bases in the same season. He won Rookie of the Year, Most Valuable Player, and a World Series ring. Canseco shattered the mold of the out-of-shape baseball player and ushered in a new era of superathletes who looked like bodybuilders, made outrageous salaries, and enjoyed rock-star lifestyles. And the ticket for this ride? Steroids. Behind the gaudy stats and the glamour of his public life, Canseco cultivated a secret just about everyone in MLB knew about, one that would alter the game of baseball and the way we view our heroes forever. Canseco made himself a guinea pig of the performance-enhancing drugs that were only just beginning to infiltrate the American underground. Anabolic steroids, human growth hormones -- Canseco mixed, matched, and experimented to such a degree that he became known throughout the league as "The Chemist." He passed his knowledge on to trainers and fellow players, and before long, performance-enhancing drugs were running rampant throughout Major League Baseball. Sluggers scooping up pitches at their ankles and blasting them out of the park, pitchers cranking fastballs inning after inning -- Canseco showed the players how to customize their doses to sculpt the bodies they wanted, and baseball as we know it was the result. Today, this issue has crept out of the closet and burst into the headlines as players balloon to herculean proportions and hundred-year-old records are not only broken, but also demolished. In this shocking memoir, Canseco sheds light on a life of dizzying highs and debilitating lows, provides the answers to questions about steroids that millions of fans are only now beginning to ask -- and suggests that, far from being a passing trend, the steroid revolution is only a taste of things to come. Who's juiced? According to Canseco's authoritative account, more than you think. And baseball will never be the same.

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Customer Reviews

Touted as a Ball Four for the new millennium, Jose Canseco's *Juiced* promises to expose not only the rampant use of performance-enhancing substances in baseball (with steroids replacing the amphetamines of Bouton's day), but the painfully human flaws of its heroes as well. A steroid devotee since the age of 20, Canseco goes beyond admitting his own usage to claim that with the tacit approval of the league's powers-that-be he acted as baseball's ambassador of steroids and is therefore indirectly responsible for "saving" the game. Chief among his claims is that he introduced Mark McGwire to steroids in 1988 and that he often injected McGwire while they were teammates. According to Canseco, steroids and human growth hormones gave McGwire and Sammy Sosa (whose own usage was "so obvious, it was a joke") the strength, stamina, regenerative ability, and confidence they needed for a record-setting home run duel often credited with restoring baseball's popularity after the 1994 strike. Although he devotes a lot of ink to McGwire, Canseco envisions himself as a kind of Johnny Steroidseed, spreading the gospel of performance enhancement, naming a number of players that he either personally introduced to steroids or is relatively certain he can identify as fellow users. Because Canseco plays fast and loose with some of the facts of his own career he provides fodder for those looking to damage his credibility, but in many ways questions of public and personal perception are what raise the book beyond mere vitriolic tell-all. Those willing to heed his request and truly listen to what he has to say will find *Juiced* to be an occasionally insightful meditation on the workings of public perception and a consistently interesting character study. --Shane Farmer --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

In this poorly written, controversial memoir, Canseco, a one-time American League MVP, reveals himself to be an unapologetic user of performance-enhancing drugs. Canseco readily admits that he was never the most talented of athletes, and that he never really had the drive to be a star until he made a promise of greatness to his dying mother. After a year of playing some uninspired minor league ball, Canseco packed on a superhuman 25 pounds of muscle in one off-season with the help of steroids and a human growth hormone. A string of tainted baseball achievements followed-including an all-star invitation as a rookie, an MVP award and a World Series title with the

Oakland A's-before his life and career unraveled. Judging from the recent BALCO case, baseball certainly does have a steroid problem. But despite the headline-grabbing claims in this book, whether Canseco really knows anything about the problem beyond his own use is questionable. Rather, what emerges is a portrait of a bitter, disgraced ex-player who so desperately wants respect that he casts his own extraordinary recklessness as perfectly commonplace, a scorched-earth attempt to raise his own legend by bringing the game-and some of its great players-down to his level. Most shocking is that Canseco remains an unabashed booster of steroids, claiming they'll one day be used safely under medical supervision to propel humans to better health and great feats. Doctors disagree, and it should be noted that doctors did not administer Canseco's steroid use. "Is it cheating," Canseco asks in a revealing moment of moral relativism, "to do what everyone wants you to do?" If that very question were asked by a little leaguer, its answer could not be more obvious.

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Jose Canseco is a controversial figure, this much we know is true; everything else is kind of unclear. Professional athletes looking for an edge - an illegal edge - is as old as professional sports, but things took a terrible turn in the late 1980's when a young Cuban immigrant named Jose Canseco broke into the big leagues with the Oakland A's. After a turbulent career, things only got stranger for the proclaimed godfather of steroids. So in his book *Juiced*, Canseco lays out his life, his career, and his role in introducing baseball to infamous world of steroids. I honestly tried to sympathize with Canseco's situation, but in the end I still found Canseco to be an egotistical, has been looking for honor and glory. Canseco credits himself as the savior of baseball and revolutionary who will one day be honored when professional sports accept steroids. Though I can understand his "savior" of baseball argument considering the 1994 MLB strike and the 1998 home run chase, I cannot comprehend the declaration that steroids will one day be as customary as ice packs and sunflower seeds. Perhaps I am a little too present-minded and traditional to see professional sports encouraging steroids. While reading *Juiced*, I got confused on whom the real Jose Canseco is. At one moment he talks about baseball as if it is just a means to an end, then a few chapters later he treats the sport as if it is a religion. He credits steroids for making him a great athlete, but later explains that he is the talent and that steroids only supplemented his abilities. He considers himself a steroids expert but never once does he considered the idea that his use of performance enhancing drugs may have multiplied his trips to the disabled list. As much as he tries to fool you, Canseco did not know what he was doing. For a steroid enhanced athlete, he had a few fantastic

seasons but a forgettable career. If it was not for the steroid controversy the name Jose Canseco would have lost to long list of notable rookies with lackluster careers. Though my feelings for Canseco may be sour, I did find the book interesting as a time capsule. When you read it today in the post-steroid era, you really do see how much the owners, the union, and the fans all turned a very, very blind eye to the issues. Everyone is to blame for the steroid era, yet only the players get the guilty verdict.

Despite coming off like it was written by a sixth grader Canseco's first book is fun and, as we now know, somewhat credible. The writing here is my biggest complaint. It's just not very... good. It isn't very descriptive and lacks details and in-depth anecdotes that you would expect in a tell-all biography like this. There are some here but not as many as I would have thought. With that said, it's still a fun and easy/quick read. Great for any sports fan who's looking for something entertaining and fun... just don't expect anything overly eloquent.

Jose Canseco's "Juiced" really introduced me to a bit of the steroid culture in baseball and the appeal that steroids definitely have. While reading "Juiced", I found myself yearning for the chance to try steroids and see what they would really offer to me (against all of my better judgment of course). He offers such a bright picture of them at times done in a disciplined way that who WOULDN'T want to give them a try when a career depends on them. The book is entertaining and as Jose says: he is an entertainer. Don't expect anything cerebral here ... just a interesting view of some of the baseball culture that you may or may not know about. I enjoyed the book for what it was and found it an entertaining, quick read that I enjoyed while floating around my swimming pool. This was perfect for that.

"Juiced" is the story of Jose Canseco's no holds barred account of his years in MLB. Told in a conversational and informative way he weaves an accurate and telling account of his personal use of steroids, his experiences as an immigrant from Castro's Cuba and how a promise to his Mother on her deathbed led a young Jose to become one of the most controversial and exciting figures in America's favorite pastime, Major League Baseball! I hadn't expected this type of book from Jose Canseco! I thought I'd be reading about the Jose the media choked us with for so many years. The egotistical bad boy that everyone loved to hate but had to watch in spite of it all. What interested me was the scoop on steroids but I wasn't certain I could get through a book which had Senor Rooster preening himself in every other sentence! What a shock I had as I began to turn the

pages. This is no ordinary jock who is cocky and self-assured. This is a man who knew exactly what he was doing every moment he was doing it and with tremendous results. He was far from self-assured as he was growing up and throughout his years in the game. He educated himself about the different types of steroids and HGH, how they interacted with one another, how the body & liver processes these dangerous chemicals and came up with a regimen that suited his body and its functions to the proverbial "T" and more. He shared his knowledge with other players allowing them the same advantages he was experiencing and always cautioned them to use these enhancers responsibly. He named names of players he absolutely had first hand knowledge of using these chemicals. He knew because he injected them himself and those he wasn't certain of ever taking them, he mentioned only in passing as those he had spoken to about the chemicals. Mark McGwire had the lions share of references in the book since they were teammates on the Oakland A's and Jose used to inject him. Without giving too much away at this point, he does mention those players who went overboard on usage and gives a straightforward look into what steroids have done and can do for baseball and all sports. The revelation of this book is that I felt I understand Jose Canseco and why he did what he did. I came through to the last pages and knew I liked this man and no longer blamed him for what he knew in his heart and mind was right to do for himself. I applaud his honesty about himself, his decisions and overt head in the sand attitude by the entire MLB organization from the Commissioner's, team owners, managers, players and the way down to the bottom rung of the staffs. All in all, a fascinating expose. Juiced : Wild Times, Rampant 'Roids, Smash Hits, and How Baseball Got Big

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