



Magic Bat Day

Kevin Christofora; illustrated by Dale Tangeman

Clarens, 28 pages, (hardcover) \$12.99, 9780986349317

(Reviewed: September 2015)

Kevin Christofora looks to inspire a new generation of children to take up the sport of baseball in the second book of his "Hometown All-Stars" series, *Magic Bat Day*.

Picking up from the first book in the series, *Nick's Very First Day of Baseball*, *Magic Bat Day* follows Nick as he prepares for and experiences his second day of practice. Nick and his teammates are taught about legendary slugger Babe Ruth, how to warm up properly, and how to hit. Occasionally, an anthropomorphic, cap-wearing baseball mascot appears on the page to share a thought or helpful hint.

Although the book is targeted to young kids with little or no baseball experience, it should also prove useful to adults coaching a team or just teaching their own children how to play, as many of the tips delivered by the friendly mascot are equally helpful to coaches: "Coach spray-painted circles for the kids to put their feet in; it keeps their bodies facing the correct direction," he informs readers on one page featuring an illustration of a batter with his feet firmly planted in separate circles drawn on the ground. Getting the fundamentals right is essential for hitting, which is the focus of this volume. Aside from the tip above, there's also a useful guideline about keeping the knuckles lined up when gripping the bat.

Nick, the main character, has an enthusiasm that's infectious; when he finds his "magic bat" and has success hitting, it's hard to imagine a young reader *not* asking to go outside and try it himself.

The art is competent, though sometimes the various perspectives don't work as well as intended. As a whole, though, *Magic Bat Day* is extremely enjoyable and accomplishes its goal of encouraging an interest in baseball among the newest generation.