

KIRKUS

REVIEWS

TITLE INFORMATION

TGIT

Thank Goodness It's T-Ball Day

Kevin Christofora/illus. by Dale Tangeman Clarens Publishing

BOOK REVIEW

The Hometown All Stars are at it again in this colorful, educational children's book.

Nick, Kareem, Flo, and the whole gang always look forward to "T-Day" on Tuesdays and Thursdays, when they all play T-ball after school. The kids, full of excitement, manage to make their way through the school day, take the bus home, complete their homework, and finally get onto the field to start T-ball practice. Before they can all be great ballplayers like Hall of Famer Cy Young (on whom the kids receive a brief history lesson), they must learn the basics, including how to throw the ball. Coach sets the whole team up on the field and outlines the T formation in which every baseball player learns how to throw. They practice on a target featuring a picture of Coach's face. He tells the kids that throwing should make one's body look like a windmill and that one should avoid "spaghetti arms." By the end of practice, the Hometown All Stars have a better understanding of one of the most important fundamentals of the game, and they had a lot of fun learning it. Christofora (*Magic Bat Day*, 2015, etc.), a T-ball coach himself, is clearly passionate about the game. The children's excitement is palpable before their practice, and so is the author's; he really understands not only the game of baseball, but also how to teach the basics of a complicated game to children. Young readers could use this work as an instruction manual to learn proper throwing techniques. The historic bits are a wonderful touch that will teach children about some of the game's most important players. A friendly, anthropomorphic baseball also offers advice and trivia, including notes on Cooperstown, New York, the site of the National Baseball Hall of Fame, and suggestions on how to properly hold a baseball. Tangeman's vibrant illustrations are also lovely and really help demonstrate the techniques that Christofora highlights. Whether a child is just dipping his or her toe into the baseball pool or is already a full-blown fan, the Hometown All Stars series, including this newest volume, is sure to delight.

A home run for kids and adults alike.