



Book Review: **Steven Yerrid's**
The Making of a Championship Heart:
Lessons Learned from Baseball & Life

By G. Steven Henry

Cite as 4 *Litigation Commentary & Rev.* 115 (June/July 2011)

I have a baseball hidden away that is covered with signatures of New York Yankees players from the early 1960s. It is kept in a controlled atmosphere because the signatures are slowly fading. For many, the Yankees' 2009 championship season was an incredible journey that rekindled memories of glory days long ago. The season was magical. The images of the players, the new Yankee Stadium and all that goes with winning another pennant were instilled in our minds and hearts, but slowly fading. Until now.

The accomplishment of "The Making of a Championship Heart: Lessons Learned From Baseball & Life," Steve Yerrid's ambitious and inspiring journal of the Yankees' 2009 season, is not only well-crafted and fulfilling but captures and preserves the best images of a special season. Yerrid's use of quotes as captions to the high quality photos, past and present, creates the illusion of a Ken Burns documentary. Only a narration by Mel Allen could make the quotes come to life more.

As one turns the 280-plus pages of images accompanied by the timeless words of Berra, DiMaggio, Mantle, Jackson, Jeter and a score of others, the internal challenge is to hear *their* voice saying the words in print. The author finds applicable even the wisdom of MLK, Jr., Helen Keller and Kahlil Gibran.

Steve Yerrid was a good friend of the late Yankees owner George Steinbrenner, who is quoted throughout the work. In a 2003 statement, Steinbrenner said of the author, "I've seen the best of lawyers, and I put Steve right in that top list. He's a fighter, and odds don't bother him. I'd like him on my team any day. Early on, I said to myself if I was going to be in a fox hole, I'd want him right next to me." Steinbrenner often called Yerrid "Hot Shot" during their years of friendship and fully supported the creation of the book.

The chapters contained in the book are imaginatively titled – Desire, Attitude, Confidence and Integrity, to mention a few. The chapters are well organized and flow seamlessly. Yerrid's use of classic photos serves to create a bridge from the past to the present, the first championship to the 27th.

Also, his use of photo and quote placement and framing is purposeful, oftentimes capturing a moment in time from the 1920s or 1950s, giving one a scrapbook *impression* as the book is read. The attractiveness of "Championship Heart" is truly from cover to

cover. The flyleaves themselves are pinstripe on navy, which sets the tone for the tribute contained within. It is a volume of work that is best suited for display on an office or home coffee table. To hide it away would be an injustice.

As a trial lawyer, Steve Yerrid has established himself as the hot shot Steinbrenner saw in him, wearing his own brand of pinstripes in a team effort. Whether the placement of Babe Ruth's memorable quote, if not philosophy, at the very halfway point of the opus was intended or not, it nevertheless reflects Yerrid's own philosophy in his life's work. Ruth's recorded passage states simply, "Don't let the fear of striking out hold you back," which should be on every trial lawyer's wall.

"Championship Heart" can be characterized by two words that have been dear to Yankees' fans' hearts since the Bronx Bombers came to be. Simply put, it is a "home run."

www.LitCounsel.org



In Honor of Excellence

© Copyright 2010. All rights reserved.