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What Jim Morris hadn't counted on was how much time a professional baseball player actually spends in the minor league - or what his life is like while he's there. He found out, soon enough, when his Brewers roommate filled him in.

Morris describes the enlightening conversation in *The Oldest Rookie*:

*...I didn't know the minor-league system from astrogology...I learned that the lowest level of play was rookie ball, and that if you played well there you were sent to either low-A ball or high-A ball, depending on whether you did really well. After that came double-A, then triple-A, then the big show - the major leagues. (The Rookie, pages 72-73.)*

In other words, just because he was recruited by the Brewers, and was paid a \$35,000 signing bonus, didn't mean Morris had a slot on the Milwaukee team. The hard reality? He might never have a place on the team! His buddy, Tom Candiotti, explained why:

*It can take years - five, six, eight, even ten years or more. And most guys never make it at all. Major-league rosters are only twenty-five players, and every year a lot of new guys try to take their place. (The Rookie, page 73.)*

So what were Jimmy's chances of actually pitching for the Brewers?

*By the time you've made it to the top, you're standing on a couple of thousand dead bodies, all of whom had the same dream you did and no idea what to do with their lives if that dream didn't come true. Fewer than one percent of those drafted ever make the big leagues. (The Rookie, page 73.)*

Jimmy realized he probably wouldn't be in Milwaukee the year he was drafted by the Brewers.

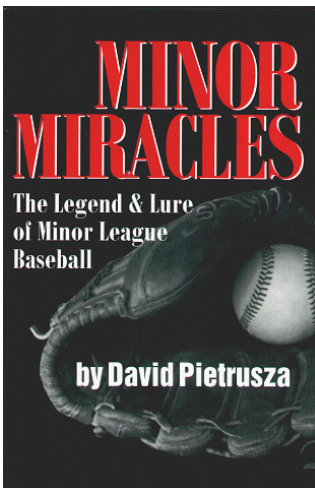
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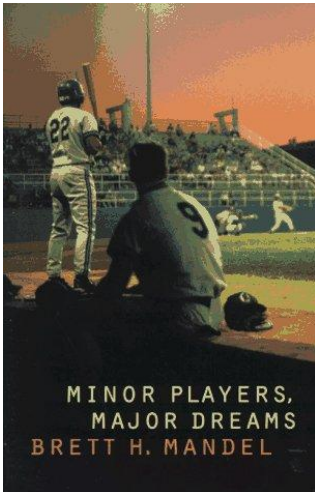


Minor Miracles: The Legend and Lure of Minor League Baseball

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Minor Players, Major Dreams

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