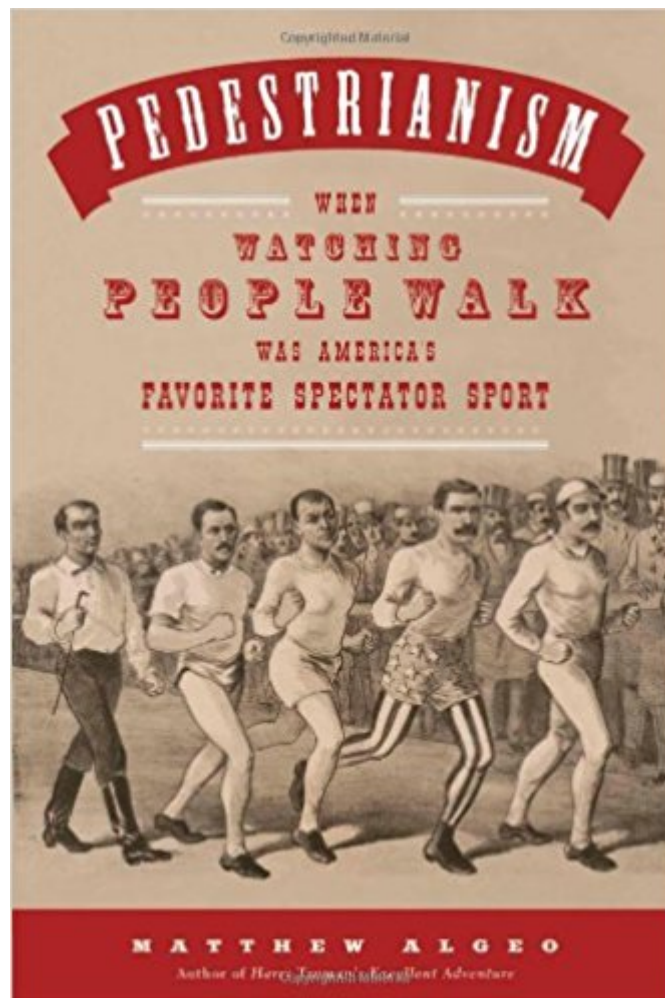




The book was found

Pedestrianism: When Watching People Walk Was America's Favorite Spectator Sport



Synopsis

Strange as it sounds, during the 1870s and 1880s, America's most popular spectator sport wasn't baseball, boxing, or horseracing—it was competitive walking. Inside sold-out arenas, competitors walked around dirt tracks almost nonstop for six straight days (never on Sunday), risking their health and sanity to see who could walk the farthest—500 miles, then 520 miles, and 565 miles! These walking matches were as talked about as the weather, the details reported from coast to coast. This long-forgotten sport, known as pedestrianism, spawned America's first celebrity athletes and opened doors for immigrants, African Americans, and women. The top pedestrians earned a fortune in prize money and endorsement deals. But along with the excitement came the inevitable scandals, charges of doping—cocaine!—and insider gambling. It even spawned a riot in 1879 when too many fans showed up at New York's Gilmore's Garden, later renamed Madison Square Garden, and were denied entry to a widely publicized showdown. *Pedestrianism: When Watching People Walk Was America's Favorite Spectator Sport* chronicles competitive walking's peculiar appeal and popularity, its rapid demise, and its enduring influence, and how pedestrianism marked the beginning of modern spectator sports in the United States.

Book Information

Hardcover: 272 pages

Publisher: Chicago Review Press (April 1, 2014)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 1613743971

ISBN-13: 978-1613743973

Product Dimensions: 6 x 0.9 x 9 inches

Shipping Weight: 11.2 ounces (View shipping rates and policies)

Average Customer Review: 4.8 out of 5 stars — See all reviews (13 customer reviews)

Best Sellers Rank: #573,381 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #238 in Books > Health, Fitness & Dieting > Exercise & Fitness > Walking #931 in Books > Health, Fitness & Dieting > Exercise & Fitness > Running & Jogging #974 in Books > Sports & Outdoors > Miscellaneous > History of Sports

Customer Reviews

Pedestrianism: When Watching People Walk Was America's Favorite Spectator Sport is a fascinating read about a little known part of 19th century American history. It's hard to believe

that before baseball, bicycle racing, or boxing gained prominence, the most popular spectator sport in America, and to a lesser degree England, was watching people walk on a circular track for days on end (usually six as the Sabbath was more strictly observed in those days). This book is excellent recounting of this oddity in American history. Algeo documents well the staggering toll the races took on the participants. The winners of the six day matches would walk as much as 600+ miles. Many of the people in attendance at these events were there to watch the pedestrians suffer, more than to enjoy a sporting event. The author is adept at drawing out the parallels with today's modern celebrity sports culture. The stars of the sport were known nationwide and received front page coverage from the newspapers. Pedestrianism had its version of a drug scandal involving the chewing of coca leaves rather than today's taking of PEDs. And as the sport was a favorite of gamblers, it had its fair share of race fixing scandals. There are several larger than life characters that the author is excellent at bringing to life and exploring their significance. Daniel O'Leary was an Irish immigrant and his successes made him a hero of the immigrant communities across the nation. Likewise, Frank Hart, an African American, was a hero to his community as well. One other aspect of the book that I enjoyed was the historical background provided by the author.

[Download to continue reading...](#)

Pedestrianism: When Watching People Walk Was America's Favorite Spectator Sport How To Analyze People: Mastering Analyzing and Reading People: (How To Read People, Analyze People, Psychology, People Skills, Body Language, Social Skills) Female Gladiators: Gender, Law, and Contact Sport in America (Sport and Society) Watching YouTube: Extraordinary Videos by Ordinary People Vintage Port: The Wine Spectator's Ultimate Guide for Consumers, Collectors, and Investors Wine Spectator's Ultimate Guide to Buying Wine Posters of the Belle Epoque: The Wine Spectator Collection UNEXPLAINED DISAPPEARANCES & MISSING PEOPLE.: MISSING PEOPLE CASE FILES; UNEXPLAINED DISAPPEARANCES; MISSING PEOPLE. (UNEXPLAINED DISAPPEARANCES : MISSING PEOPLE Book 2) The Physical Educator's Big Book of Sport Lead-Up Games: A complete K-8 sourcebook of team and lifetime sport activities for skill development, fitness and fun! Sport and the Law: Historical and Cultural Intersections (Sport, Culture & Society) Sport in the Making of Celtic Culture (Sport and Nation) Introduction to Sport Law With Case Studies in Sport Law 2nd Edition Game Faces: Sport Celebrity and the Laws of Reputation (Sport and Society) Nutrition in Exercise and Sport, Third Edition (Nutrition in Exercise & Sport) Science of Sport: Squash (The Science of Sport) The Fish That Changed America: True Stories about the People Who Made Largemouth Bass Fishing an All-American Sport El Super Deportista Científico / Sports Science: Anota, gana y rompe un record en tu deporte favorito/ Note,

gain and break the record of your favorite sport (Spanish Edition) Favorite Sacred Classics for Solo Singers (Favorite Classics for Solo Singers) with CD med/high voice A Newbies Guide to Nook HD and HD+: The Unofficial Beginners Guide Doing Everything from Watching Movies, Downloading Apps, Finding Free Books, Emailing, and More! (Minute Help Guides) A Newbies Guide to Nook HD and HD+: The Unofficial Beginners Guide Doing Everything from Watching Movies, Downloading Apps, Finding Free Books, Emailing, and More!

[Contact Us](#)

[DMCA](#)

[Privacy](#)

[FAQ & Help](#)