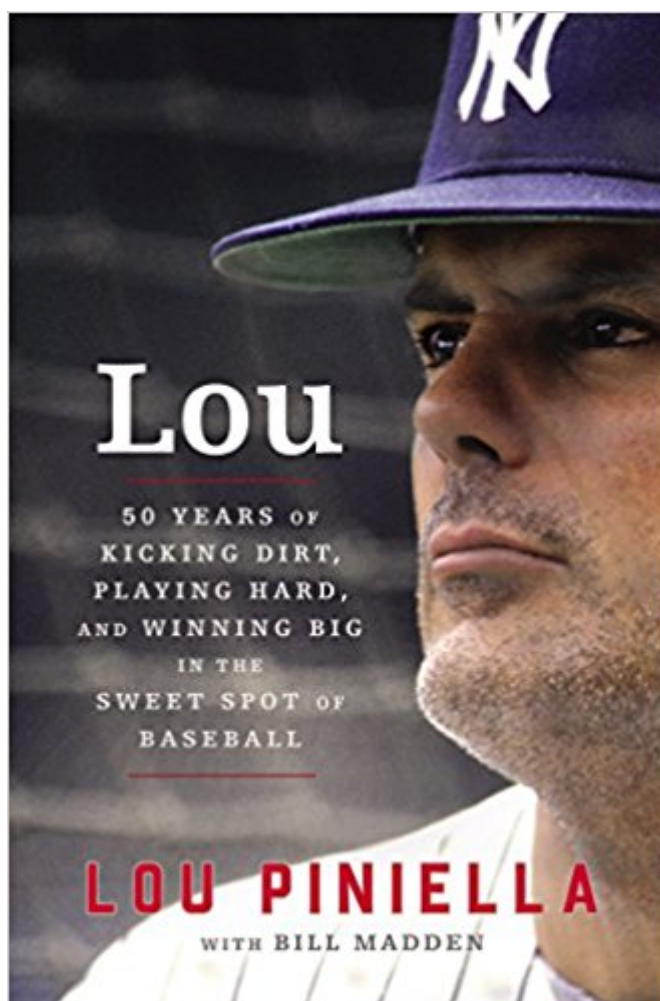


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# Lou: Fifty Years Of Kicking Dirt, Playing Hard, And Winning Big In The Sweet Spot Of Baseball



## Synopsis

In this candid, revealing, and entertaining memoir, the beloved New York Yankee legend looks back over his nearly fifty-year career as a player and a manager, sharing insights and stories about some of his most memorable moments and some of the biggest names in Major League Baseball. For nearly five decades, Lou Piniella has been a fixture in Major League Baseball, as an outfielder with the legendary New York Yankees of the 1970s, and as a manager for five teams in both the American and National leagues. With respected veteran sportswriter Bill Madden, Piniella now reflects on his storied career, offering fans a glimpse of life on the field, in the dugout, and inside the clubhouse. Piniella speaks from the heart about his teams and his players, offering a detailed, up-close portrait of the Bronx Zoo's raucous personalities such as Reggie Jackson and Catfish Hunter, as well as his close friendship with Thurman Munson and his unusual relationship with George Steinbrenner. He also delves deep into his post-Yankee experiences, from winning a World Series for the controversial owner of the Cincinnati Reds, Marge Schott, to transforming the perennial cellar-dwelling Seattle Mariners into one of the league's best teams. Some of the game's brightest stars are here: Ken Griffey Jr, Randy Johnson, and Alex Rodriguez, Piniella's supremely talented and controversial protégé. Throughout his time in the majors, Piniella has witnessed MLB grow into a multi-billion-dollar business. Piniella reflects on those changes, voicing his highly critical opinions on a range of controversial subjects, including steroids. Hilarious and uproarious, filled with eight pages of photos, Lou brings into focus a man whose deeply rooted passion for baseball has defined his life.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

Now Piniella is telling his life story with Bill Madden, who told the story of Lou's first "Boss" so perfectly in *Steinbrenner: The Last Lion of Baseball*. It's a Hall of Fame book about a baseball life, nicely framing four great decades of the national pastime. • (Dan Shaughnessy, writer for the Boston Globe, coauthor of the New York Times bestseller *Francona*, and winner of the 2016 J. G. Taylor Spink Award) "Lou Piniella was one of the smartest and gutsiest managers I've ever known, and I watched him close up with four different teams. He was also one of the funniest, and this book combines both." • (Bill Parcells) "There are not many who have led a baseball life—as both a player and a manager—as eventful as Lou Piniella's, and together with Bill Madden, Lou has covered every bit of it here.... It's all here, a sweet baseball life as told to a Hall of Fame baseball writer." • (Bob Costas)

For OVER fifty years, Lou Piniella has been a fixture in Major League Baseball, making a name for himself first as a player on the legendary New York Yankees of the 1970s and later as a manager for five different teams: the Yankees, the Reds, the Mariners, the Rays, and the Cubs. Now, in this raucous and entertaining memoir, Piniella opens up about his lifetime in the game, telling never-before-heard stories about electrifying wins, painful losses, and why sometimes your only option is to get in an umpire's face. Tracing his baseball life from its journeyman beginnings in the minors, he discusses how he came of age as a player during the wild years of the Bronx Zoo, when personalities like Reggie Jackson, Thurman Munson, Catfish Hunter, and Billy Martin made the Yankee locker room the most controversial and colorful place in baseball. With surprising candor, he details his close yet often contentious relationship with George Steinbrenner, offering a unique portrait of one of the game's most provocative figures, a man who mentored and supported Lou as a player and a manager while ultimately making life with the Yankees unsustainable for him. "Stormy as his time in New York was, it was only the start of Lou's fiery career. From managing the Cincinnati Reds and their divisive owner, Marge Schott, to a World Series win, to transforming the perennially cellar-dwelling Seattle Mariners into one of the league's best teams, he recalls his experiences—both hilarious and heartbreaking—with some of the brightest stars from the last twenty-five years, including Ken Griffey Jr., Randy Johnson, and Ichiro Suzuki. For the first time, Lou also describes his important but little-known friendship with Alex Rodriguez, sharing how they formed a connection early in Alex's time with Seattle that spanned decades, teams, and scandals, as Lou helped Alex through his most tumultuous episodes. Whether facing the difficulties of managing his home team in Tampa Bay or helping the Cubs win back-to-back division championships, Lou brings an unforgettable and feisty voice to his

rollercoaster ride of a career, going inside the fights, pranks, and seemingly impossible comebacks that defined every Lou Piniella team. Featuring a huge cast of Hall of Fame characters and uproarious stories from three generations of baseball, Lou offers a bridge to a rapidly disappearing era, a time when baseball was a bit more fun, when passion was a virtue, and when kicking a bit of dirt on an umpire was good for everyone.

You get what you hoped you would get from Lou Piniella in this no holds barred autobiography. In the same freewheeling manner that Lou would heave bases out of their holdings into the outfield and freely kick dirt on umpires Lou shares his roads traveled on the field and behind the scenes in his long winding career. From his youth in Tampa to Kansas City New York Seattle Cincinnati Tampa (as an adult) Chicago and everywhere in between. What is so enjoyable for the reader is Piniella is honest enough to compliment a famous name on one page and then rip him with his true feeling a few pages later. Everyone from George Steinbrenner whom in one breathe Piniella states that Steinbrenner had the most profound influence of anyone, even my parents, on my life. And then not hesitate to state over and over how impossible he was to work for all the mistakes he made hiring and firing managers and how despite Lou feeling so strongly about him never got any compliments from him even in his biggest moments such as when he won the World Series with the Cincinnati Reds. Another crystal clear example of Lou brazenly showing both complete sides of a coin is in his discussions regarding Billy Martin. Early on he describes Martin: "Billy, who was sharp, knew how to maneuver his players, and was the master of the unexpected. In only the second game of the season, Billy shocked us with his genius when he was able to get what appeared to be a ninth-inning, game-winning grand slam home run by the Brewers™ Don Money nullified in Milwaukee. And then fifty pages later he writes: "The one thing I didn't like about him (Martin) was that he either liked you or he didn't, and there was no gray area. It doesn't matter what team what position whether a player or executive of the team Lou lays it out with no restrictions for the world to see. One area I do feel strongly about that I don't believe Lou was open enough about was Alex Rodriguez and the indelible steroid stain on baseball. Piniella openly shares that he felt like a Father figure to Rodriguez but for a hardcore old-school baseball guy I am very disappointed on Piniella's stated (weak) position on that. A delightful icing-on-the-cake ending of the book is a section entitled \*LOU-PINIONS\* in

which Lou gives his views on everything from Pitch Counts (I love it) to Steroids (I hate it) Instant Replay Shifts and more. And then for the cherry-on-top Lou's All-Time-Teammates Team... All Opponents Team All-Time Managed Team Lou's All-Red-Tush-Team and Lou's Top Five Red-Tush-Umpires.

Lou Piniella comes across as a sincere individual in this book as he relates his experiences in over fifty years in baseball. He modeled the uniform of several major league teams most notably with the New York Yankees in addition to being at the helm of the Yankees, Reds, Rays, and the Cubs. He shows his respect for George Steinbrenner by always referring to him as Mr. Steinbrenner in relating his experiences with the demanding boss of the Yankees. Anecdotes regarding his close friends Thurman Munson, "Catfish" Hunter, Bobby Murcer, batting coach Charley Lau, and manager Billy Martin illustrate Lou wistfully regarding the memories he has of these departed individuals. Lou's experiences in Cincinnati with owner Marge Schott along with his dog were memorable in many ways but Lou was able to turn the Reds into a winner but he does give credit to those who put the team together prior to his arrival. The temptation to take on the managerial reigns of the Devil Rays in his home town of Tampa was too great to pass up but budget constraints prevented him from succeeding. Chicago was his final stop with the Cubs and their never-ending quest to win a World Championship. However, the declining health of his mother in Tampa prevented him from fulfilling his contract. Piniella makes a strong case for his induction into the Baseball Hall of Fame as his playing statistics and his managerial record rate more favorably than some of those already included. He suffered a number of financial losses during his managerial years and during this time of struggle was when he came into a closer relationship with God. Knowing of those he was close to who were taken much before their time he realizes being in a close relationship with the Lord is what is of primary importance. He feels blessed that he has his wife and family and has his priorities in order. The book closes with Piniella's opinions regarding today's game with pitch counts, instant replays, steroids, an overemphasis on statistics, defensive shifts, and limit on innings for pitchers. The book contains sixteen pages of photographs most of which are in color. Piniella's baseball experiences are all here and the book is full of anecdotes of many names in baseball that touched his life.

As a life long Yankee fan and a fan of Sweet Lou this was certainly a fun read. It is far from Bill Madden's best effort however. The first half traces Piniella's minor league, Kansas City and Yankee

years. There is virtually nothing in here that most Yankee fans haven't read before. The second half, at least for me, has much fresher material tracing his post Yankee days. The chapter describing his post Mariner relationship with Alex Rodriguez is fascinating. I understand those who criticize him for not being more critical of ARod but I sympathize with his position. if I could, I would give this book 3 1/2 stars

Lou tells it all in this book. He is not afraid to tell you whom he likes and does not like. An enjoyable read.

As a baseball fan, it is a great read. It really goes into the era of baseball when Sweet Lou played and then managed. For me, it reminded me of being a teenager watching a lot of what was described in this book. If you are a Yankees fan who is about 50 years old, then you HAVE TO READ THIS BOOK.

Loved the book, brings back lots of memories. I only wish Pinella included why he frequently tried to pluck Paul O'Neill when he was the manager of the Seattle Mariners

It was a gift and the person just loved it.

A terrific book, enjoyed reading.

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