ForeWord Reviews

SPORTS & RECREATION

Take a Shot: A Remarkable Story of Perserverence, Friendship, and a Really Crazy Adventure
Jake Steinfeld
Dave Morrow
Hay House
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Jake Steinfeld, perhaps better known by his media persona, “Body by Jake,” had what he considered a great idea. And once Jake Steinfeld gets a great idea, it’s nearly impossible to deter him from seeing it through.

This time it was the creation of a new professional sports league—what would eventually become Major League Lacrosse. With the help of Dave Morrow, an unpresupposing yet ambitious savant of the sport, both as a player and, later, an entreprenuer, Steinfeld set in motion the process of this exciting venture, tapping into a new niche of small sports that, with the proper management and promotion, could become a national phenomenon.

Stenfeld employs what he calls his “rap-a-doo,” to buttonhole prospective investors, partners, advertisers, fans, etc. His pleasure is as much in the set-up as the pay-off. But when he reports that Morrow and his wife “got a litle creative when reporting Dave’s income” to acquire credit for their lacrosse equipment company, you wonder what kind of people you’re dealing with. In another era, Steinfeld might be called a “snakeoil salesman,” except his product actually works, even if he must undertake some unorthodox means to achieve his goals.

Rarely has a subtitle been so accurate as indeed Steinfeld and Morrow maneuver through the process, taking meetings with colorful characters who may or may not be able to put their money where their mouths are; well-meaning investors who don't understand why players have to be paid in a professional situation; and the various eleventh-hour disappointments that send the ever-calculating Steinfeld loking for a way to fix the problems. You say we need another $30,000 at the last minute because the lights are inadequate for the TV cameras? Done. Another $2 million in the pot would be helpful? Steinfeld knows just the guy. No doubt his reputation as fitness trainer to the stars as well as a motivational speaker went a long way in lining up the ducks they needed. (Some might find his name-dropping and pet names—"J-Man" for John F. Kennedy Jr., "Speils and Weils" for Stephen Speilberg—a bit grating.)

That MLL is still around a decade after the "founding fathers" fought, fudged, and fueded is an indication that their goal was for the long-run, not some short-term money making scheme. *Take a Shot* is a fascinating, if manic, look at doing what it takes to get the job done and definitely not taking no for an answer.

Ron Kaplan