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to the West Coast. Even though the Rainiers had a twenty-year record of competitive baseball, strong attendance, and overall profitability, Sick's failed attempt for the Rainiers' inclusion in the major leagues during this expansion proved to be the first sign of the team's decline. The franchise lasted seven more years, changed ownership, and ultimately disbanded.

Raley accomplished his goal of preserving and celebrating the history of a team with which many Seattleites still hold a sentimental bond. His conversational tone and informal writing style makes *Pitchers of Beer* accessible to a general audience. While the book is ideal for Rainiers fans or casual baseball fans, the lack of an index, the lack of proper notation, and the engagement in counterfactual arguments such as speculation regarding the possibility of Babe Ruth being hired as manager in 1941, limited its academic usefulness. Despite its shortcomings, Raley's integration of Rainiers history with macro-level events and changes during the mid-twentieth century provides possible avenues of research for scholars interested in the relationship between historical events and the dynamic between sports teams and their communities.

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RIESS, STEVEN A. *The Sport of Kings and the Kings of Crime: Horse Racing, Politics, and Organized Crime in New York, 1865-1913*. Syracuse, N.Y.: Syracuse University Press, 2011. Pp. xxiv+446. Illustrations, notes, bibliography, and index. \$45.00 cb.

Horse racing receives scant attention from academe. The plethora of sport history books cover the mainstream of spectator sports—football, baseball, hockey, basketball, boxing—and leave horse racing to journalists, betting system purveyors, and storytellers. Perhaps because of the entwining of racing and gambling—still suspect to the Protestant work ethic, moral-outrage outlook (although state lotteries seem to be more and more acceptable to the masses)—the sport part seems overshadowed by the association with betting. And that is a shame because there are a lot of good stories to tell about the history of horse racing. Some writers take a popular approach in hopes of creating a book that will appeal to general readers. Others dwell on statistics that send most readers to sleep. Sports historian Steven A. Riess has found a balance between the two—a readable academic book.

Riess focuses on the struggles of horse racing between the wars—after the American Civil War until just before World War I—in the New York City metropolitan area. Incorporating primary and secondary sources, he paints a vivid picture of the competing forces for and against racing. Organized crime in the book's subtitle, *Horse Racing, Politics, and Organized Crime in New York, 1865-1913*, is a bit misleading. The phrase organized crime has come to be synonymous with the Mafia, and if a reader expects an exposé of horse doping, jockey bribing, and ringers instigated by thugs whose last names end in vowels, this book is not about this type of organized crime but rather that perpetuated by politicians, off-track poolrooms and bookmakers, and corrupt police—all watching each other's backs to stay in power and make a profit from illegal gambling.

Organizing the book both chronologically and topically, Riess covers a brief history of racing in America, the rise of horse racing in New York, the differences between proprietary and elite racetracks, the intersection of machine politics and poolroom and racetrack owners, legal and moral opposition to gambling, and the influence of New Jersey racing on the tracks in New York. He places New York racing in context to what was happening in select locations across the country, particularly Chicago and Kentucky, only mentioning Louisiana in passing and ignoring Florida altogether. The multi-pronged approach lends itself to repetition, and there is some recurring information about the poolrooms when he switches from chronological to topical chapters.

Riess acknowledges that it took him more than ten years to complete this book project. His meticulous research shines through in the thoroughness of his coverage and his extensive bibliography and footnotes. Organized crime is hard to document with primary source materials when the nature of the clandestine business precludes standard recordkeeping not only for day-to-day operations but for posterity. Riess ferrets out details of bookmaking and poolroom operations and profits from such varied sources as police reports, government documents, and informant memoirs. He also includes a good mixture of twenty-six photographs, drawings, tables, and a map to illustrate his points and to give visual representation to the tracks, people, and poolrooms.

This book fills in a gap in racing history by focusing more on the politics of racing and gambling than on the horses themselves. While he includes some information on the big races at the New York City area tracks for context, Riess does not weigh down the reader with charts and statistics of winners or blow-by-blow accounts of specific races. He offers a history of New York City racing during a time of transition from an agrarian to an urban industrialized world, when machine politics governed, corruption ran rampant, and reformers railed against both. The book transcends horse racing to offer a microcosm of New York society in which the key players straddled the line of the straight and the crooked and sometimes were both at the same time or at least deluded themselves into believing they were above it all. Social, political, and sports historians will benefit from Riess's meticulously researched book.

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