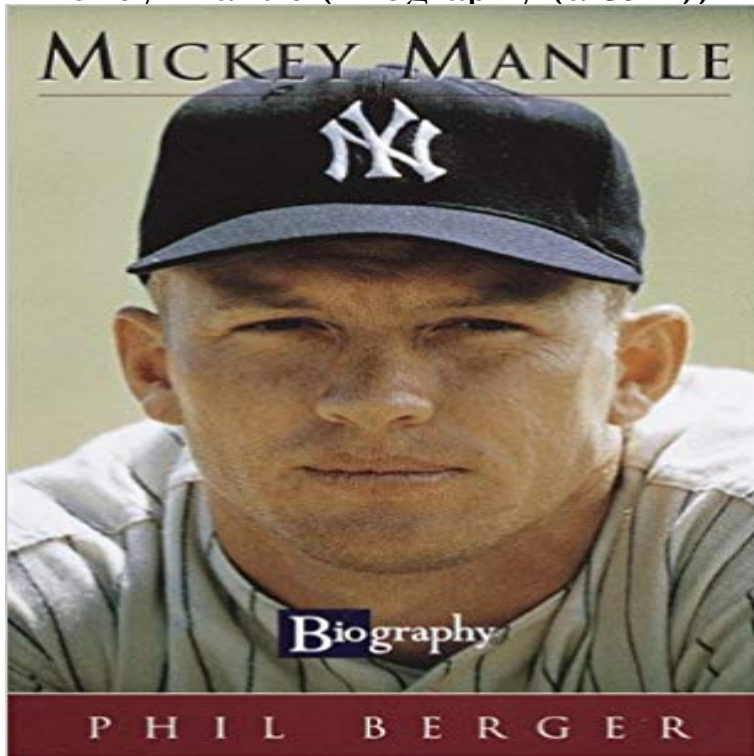


Mickey Mantle (Biography (a & E))



The life of Mickey Mantle is the rags-to-riches story of the American dream. Born in the midst of the Great Depression, the eldest child in a mining family, Mantle rose to be one of Americas ultimate baseball heroes. In this portrait, veteran sportswriter Phil Berger recounts Mantles stardom and the high price he paid to attain it. His fathers sole passion was baseball, and he fervently dreamed that his first son would grow up to play in the majors. Under his fathers relentless pressure, Mickey became a switch-hitter and refined his skills in all aspects of the game. In 1949, Mantle signed with the Yankees minor league team in Independence, Kansas. It was a difficult transition for the temperamental ball player. Despite his powerful hitting, Mantles quick temper plagued him, making his performance erratic and his future uncertain. However, in 1951, Mickey moved to the major leagues and with the Yankees soon came to epitomize the confidence and success of postwar America. He became the hero of his fathers dreams. The man with this brilliant career also had a dark side. Phil Berger shows us the glorious Mantle and the alcoholic one, the good teammate and the absent father and husband, and all the other contradictions and complexities of one of Americas greatest celebrity athletes. Mickey Mantles baseball glory still shines through more than thirty years since his retirement, and it began on the dusty plains of Oklahoma, where Mantles father drilled baseball into his sons bones, along with a drive to greatness. But greatness has its price--alcoholism, and the need to live up to his fathers dreams shadowed Mantle throughout his life. Journalist Phil Berger goes beyond the legend to find the man beneath the Yankee pinstripes, the baseball player whose brilliance millions envied and whose flaws they felt themselves.

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