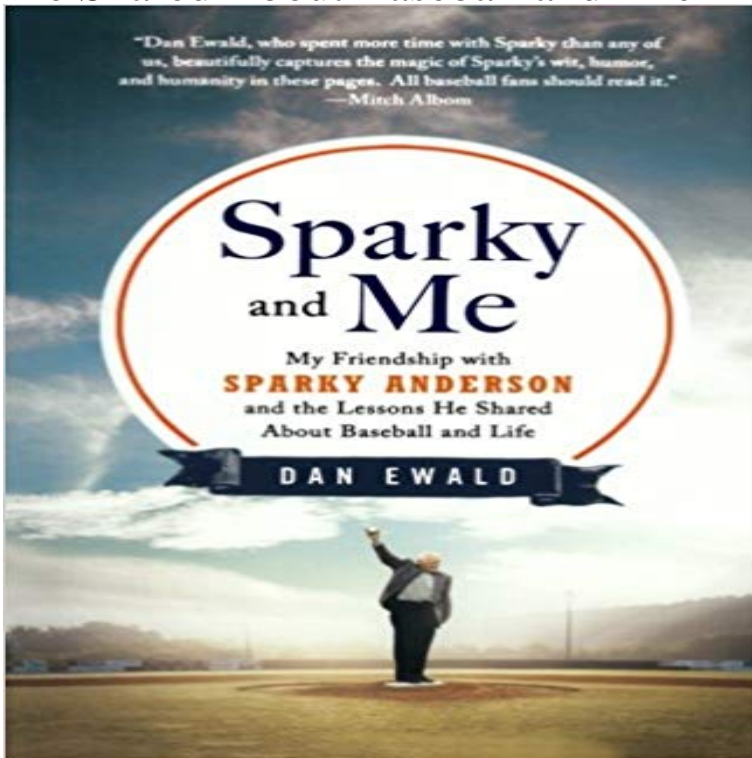


# Sparky and Me: My Friendship with Sparky Anderson and the Lessons He Shared About Baseball and Life



In the tradition of Tuesdays With Morrie, Dan Ewald pens a memoir of his friendship with legendary Tigers manager Sparky Anderson, the man who taught him not only the nuances of baseball, but the importance of life's unwritten rules. Few sports figures, regardless of their position, have generated as much good will as Sparky Anderson, the legendary manager for the Cincinnati Reds and the Detroit Tigers. Sparky met author Dan Ewald, in 1979, and thus was born a lifelong friendship not likely ever to be seen again in baseball. Along the way, Dan never took for granted the front row seat he had to watch one of history's most memorable managers' absolute mastery of baseball's nuances and intricacies. But the most important things Sparky taught Dan were the unwritten rules of life, which he practiced meticulously. To Sparky, a real professional was as great away from the diamond as he was on it. His goal was for his players to be the best husbands, fathers, and community leaders they could be—he believed that was the mark of a winner, not the box score. Sparky had a gift for taking something as inane as the infield fly rule and turning it into a lecture on how to lead a more meaningful life. In 2010, the old friends had planned a get-together before the end of the year. But Sparky's health was taking a turn for the worse, so Dan arranged a three-day visit as quickly as he could. During their last days together, the friends recalled the memories of a lifetime as each prepared silently for their final good-bye. When that weekend came to a close, Dan had grown to appreciate Sparky more than he ever thought he could. In *Sparky and Me*, Dan imparts to readers his best friend's spirit through his unforgettable life lessons and stories only the two of them shared. Like a wizard, Sparky Anderson was white-haired and wise, and sitting with him was like visiting with an oracle. Dan Ewald, who spent more time

with Sparky than any of us, beautifully captures the magic of Sparky's wit, humor, and humanity in these pages. All baseball fans should read it. -- Mitch Albom, New York Times bestselling author of Tuesdays with Morrie and Have a Little Faith  
No one understood Sparky better than Dan Ewald. Managing people in a scope far broader than a pennant race is a rare quality, and Sparky understood people, their insecurities, their motivations. This is a great read, a great understanding of the humanity of playing baseball. Peter Gammons, MLB Network  
For decades, it seemed like everyone in baseball knew Sparky Anderson, and almost all of us considered him a friend. But few knew him as Dan Ewald did. Here, Dan provides a unique look at an endearing man who led a significant life both in and out of the game. Bob Costas

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