



# The Bullpen Gospels: Major League Dreams of a Minor League Veteran

*Dirk Hayhurst*

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From the humble heights of a Class-A pitcher's mound to the deflating lows of sleeping on his gun-toting grandmother's air mattress, veteran reliever Dirk Hayhurst steps out of the bullpen to deliver the best pitch of his career--a raw, unflinching and surprisingly moving account of his life in the minors.

*I enjoyed the visualizations, maybe a little too much, and would stop only when I felt I'd centered myself. . .or after one of my teammates hit me in the nuts with the rosin bag while my eyes were closed.*

Hilariously self-effacing and brutally honest, Hayhurst captures the absurdities, the grim realities, and the occasional nuggets of hard-won wisdom culled from four seasons in the minors. Whether training tarantulas to protect his room from thieving employees in a backwater hotel, watching the raging battles fought between his partially paralyzed father and his alcoholic brother, or absorbing the gentle mockery of some not-quite-starstruck schoolchildren, Dirk reveals a side of baseball, and life, rarely seen on ESPN.

*My career has crash-landed on the floor of my grandma's old sewing room. If this is a dream come true, then dreams smell a lot like mothballs and Bengay.*

Somewhere between Bull Durham and The Rookie, The Bullpen Gospels takes an unforgettable trot around the inglorious base paths of minor league baseball, where an inch separates a ball from a strike, and a razor-thin margin can be the difference between The Show or a long trip home.

"It's not often that someone comes along who is a good pitcher and a good writer." --King Kaufman, *Salon*

"After many minutes, hours, days, weeks, months and years spent in the bullpen, I can verify that this is a true picture of baseball."

--Tim McCarver

"There are great truths within, of the kind usually unspoken. And as he expresses them, Dirk Hayhurst describes himself as 'a real person who moonlights as a baseball player.' In much the same manner, while The Bullpen Gospels chronicles how all of us face the impact when we learn reality is both far meaner and far richer than our dreams--it also moonlights as one of the best baseball books ever written."

--Keith Olbermann

"A bit of Jim Bouton, a bit of Jim Brosnan, a bit of Pat Jordan, a bit of crash Davis, and a whole lot of Dirk Hayhurst. Often hilarious, sometimes poignant. This is a really enjoyable baseball read."

--Bob Costas

"Fascinating. . .a perspective that fans rarely see."

--Trevor Hoffman, pitcher for the Milwaukee Brewers

*"The Bullpen Gospels* is a rollicking good bus ride of a book. Hayhurst illuminates a baseball life not only with wit and humor, but also with thought-provoking introspection."

--Tom Verducci, Sports Illustrated

"Dirk Hayhurst has written a fascinating, funny and honest account on life in the minor leagues. I loved it. Writers can't play baseball, but in this case, a player sure can write."

--Tim Kurkjian, Senior Writer, ESPN The Magazine, analyst/reporter ESPN television

"Bull Durham meets Ball Four in Dirk Hayhurst's hilarious and moving account of life in baseball's glamour-free bush leagues."

--Rob Neyer, ESPN.com

"If Holden Caulfield could dial up his fastball to 90 mph, he might have written this funny, touching memoir about a ballplayer at a career--and life--crossroads. He might have called it 'Pitcher in the Rye.' Instead, he left it to Dirk Hayhurst, the only writer in the business who can make you laugh, make you cry and strike out Ryan Howard."

--King Kaufman, Salon

"*The Bullpen Gospels* is a funny bone-tickling, tear duct-stimulating, feel-good story that will leave die-hard baseball fans--and die-hard human beings, for that matter--well, feeling good."

--Bob Mitchell, author of *Once Upon a Fastball*

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