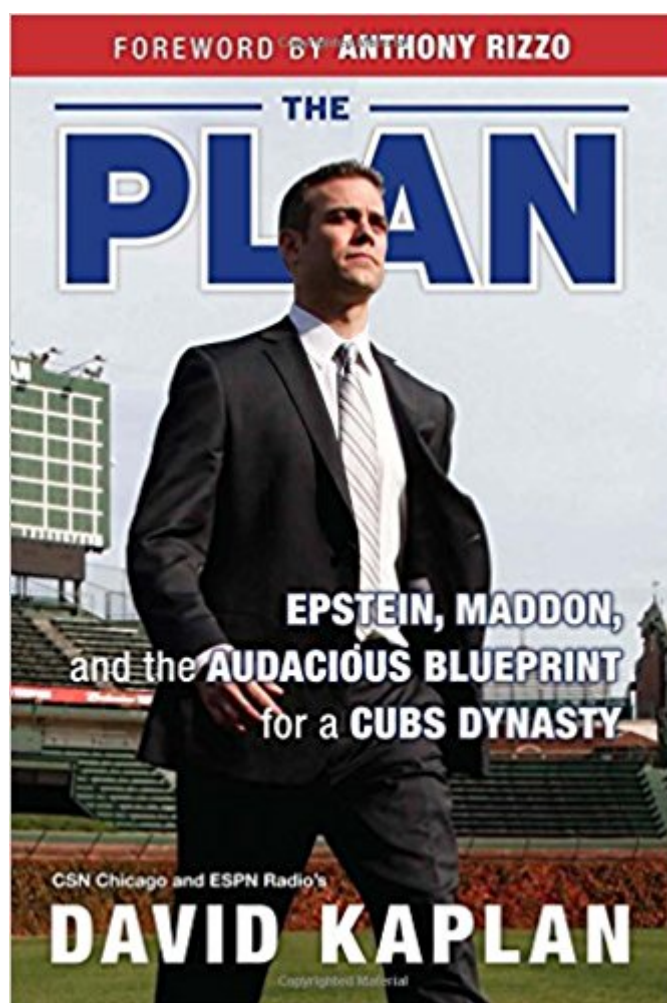


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# The Plan: Epstein, Maddon, And The Audacious Blueprint For A Cubs Dynasty



## Synopsis

On October 12, 2011, Theo Epstein became the new Chicago Cubs president of baseball operations, flipping a switch on the lovable-loser franchise and initiating a plan to accomplish in Chicago what he'd succeeded in as general manager of the Boston Red Sox: ending a World Series drought. It would require a complete team tear-down and turnover, a new farm system foundation of young talent which Epstein and Cubs GM Jed Hoyer gradually added to with gutsy trades and timely signings. After years of rebuilding, Epstein's crystalline vision has been unquestionably realized in the form of one of the most exciting and talented teams in baseball, led by heavyweights like Anthony Rizzo and Kris Bryant as well as visionaries like manager Joe Maddon. In *The Plan*, David Kaplan of CSN Chicago and ESPN Radio goes behind the scenes with the Cubs and their front office, walking the steps of their captivating rise to becoming 2016 World Series champions. Featuring exclusive interviews with Epstein, owner Tom Ricketts, and other team insiders, this is the definitive account of a new era on the North Side.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

David Kaplan is a three-time Emmy Award winner. He currently hosts *Kap and Co.* on ESPN Radio 1000, and co-hosts *Sports Talk Live* and the Chicago Cubs pre- and post-game shows on Comcast SportsNet. You can follow him on Twitter at @thekapman.

If you are a Chicago Cubs or a baseball fan then you've got to have this book. Easy read. If you're familiar with David Kaplan on CSN-Chicago or his pod casts, then you'll appreciate the factual approach of his writing. The book is not all Ra-Ra Cubs. It brought back memories of the early

disappointments in the rebuilding of the Cubs into the champions they became. A MUST for any Cub or even baseball fan.

World Series Champions not by chance or accident!!

Enjoyed it. Getting inside the thought processes, motivations, etc. of Tom Ricketts and Theo Epstein was fascinating. My only criticism was that Dave Kaplan got a little redundant on several points. Overall, a good re-telling of the Cubs rise to the World Series.

On an unseasonably warm night in November, 2016, the Chicago Cubs broke the longest title drought in American sports history by defeating the Cleveland Indians in one of the most memorable Game 7s in World Series history. In "The Plan", well-known Chicago sports personality David Kaplan takes the reader on a journey from the hiring of Theo Epstein to that remarkable win in Cleveland. Epstein came to Chicago in the fall of 2011, and immediately set out to change the culture of the Cubs and rebuild the farm system. Transparency was important to Epstein, and fans were told to expect a somewhat lengthy rebuild. Several poor seasons led to high draft picks which led to the drafting of Albert Almora, Kris Bryant, and Kyle Schwarber. Free agent signings of Jon Lester, Ben Zobrist, and Jason Heyward also happened. By 2015, the Cubs were ready to compete, and the Cubs won 97 games and advanced to the NLCS. In 2016, the Cubs were the odds-on favorites to win it all. And win it all they did; from a 103-win regular season to wins over San Francisco, L.A., and finally Cleveland. Kaplan does a fine job of describing the impact Epstein and Ricketts have made on the Cubs. From the culture change to hiring the best possible staff and having the best facilities, Kaplan breaks down the evolution of the Cubs from lovable losers to World Series champions. Highly recommended.

Kaplan knows what went on during the period: Before the Tribune put the Cubs up for sale to World Series victory. He names political, financial, and baseball names. A very good read.

I liked the book, how culture can help execute a good plan. Great to learn from sports to apply in work. Epstein is a genius, but team work did the job!

excellent read -

It is a few years too early to expect a definitive history of the rebuilding of the Chicago Cubs and their exciting 2016 season. That appraisal will come after the passage of time lends perspective to people and events. For now we are being treated to a spate of recaps and memoirs that are fun to read, yet serve a larger purpose in that they are the raw data that will be distilled, organized, and evaluated for that definitive history. Cubs fans (including myself, born near Wrigley field) and readers of sports magazines will love this book. It is loaded with hero-worship, melodrama, hyperbole, gossip, opinion, and a lot of go-team-go! But it reads like it was written in a hurry, and needs editing and tightening all around. There is needless repetition—the stories about the Epstein hiring and Bud Selig's help to Tom Ricketts are repeated almost verbatim; much of the content seems intended to fill space—e.g., the lengthy and detailed description of the rooftops controversy; and the content is quote-heavy, some of which are worthwhile, but many of which would benefit from paraphrasing. On the other hand, there are some statements that need more words, e.g., Joe Maddon is quoted "I didn't like the way we were going through drills." Amplify, please. What was wrong? How was it corrected? Baseball fans would be fascinated by his elaboration. There are also some typos, and a few lapses in syntax. Regarding the financial side of major league baseball, a major part of the Ricketts reformation, it is treated largely in general terms even if the subtitle promises a blueprint. That depth, too, is bound to come later. This book is worth reading if you take it for what it is—an entertaining first step in a long journey. I do, however, have one major carp—there is no index! This is nearly inexcusable, even for a first step (and the reason for three stars instead of four).

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