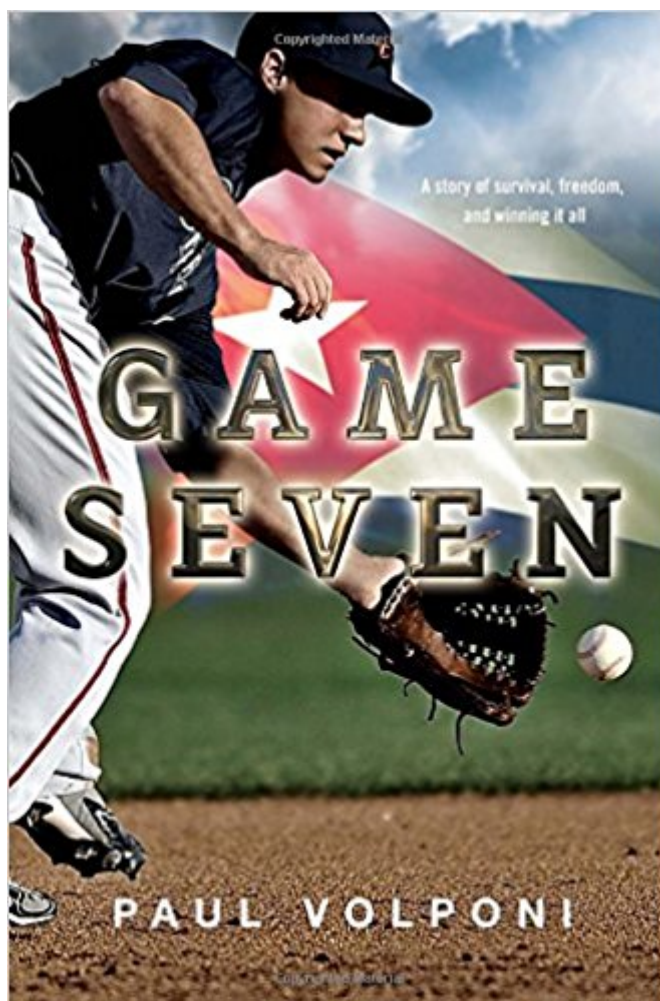


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Game Seven



Synopsis

A fastball of a book by Paul Volponi—•an author who knows sports and suspense! Julio Ramirez Jr. lives in the shadow of his famous father. Not just because Julio Senior is a pitcher for the Miami Marlins and famous for his scorching fastball, but because he defected from Cuba, leaving Julio and his sister and mother branded as the family of a traitor. Now sixteen, Julio has dreams of playing shortstop for Cuba's national team--until he's given the opportunity to sail to the U.S. Can he abandon his family, just like his Papi did? Is freedom worth the perilous journey and risking prison if he's caught? Will his Papi be waiting for him on the other shore—or, with the Marlins in the World Series against the Yankees, has Julio Senior forgotten all about his son?"An entertaining tale of baseball, family and loyalty."—Kirkus Reviews—“Volponi once again delivers top-notch sports fare coupled with a deeper story of family and fidelity. . . Readers will identify with Julio as he juggles dreams, bitterness, and family loyalties in this lyrical, spare novel.”—Booklist—“A poignant story. . . this is a must-read for any teen who not only loves stories about sports but also enjoys reading about families.”—VOYA

Book Information

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Sports & Outdoors > Baseball

Age Range: 12 and up

Grade Level: 7 and up

Customer Reviews

Gr 6
 •Julio Ramirez, Jr., son of a former Cuban national baseball hero known as El Fuego, is an outstanding player in his own right. He dreams of making the Cuban national junior team, but is viewed with suspicion because of his father's defection to the United States several years before. Julio's feelings toward his father are conflicted: he is proud of the older man's success in the American major leagues, but feels abandoned, as he, his sister, and his mother remain in poverty in Cuba while El Fuego enjoys the benefits of his multimillion dollar contract with the Florida Marlins. Unbeknownst to Julio, his father has made arrangements for him, his uncle, and his cousin to escape the island with the help of a guide named Gabriel. By means of a retrofitted '59 Buick, the four make the harrowing journey from Cuba to Miami, even as El Fuego is playing a starring role in the World Series. Arriving in the U.S., the group is put up in a luxury apartment, but much to Julio's disappointment, his father does not make an appearance. In a turn of events that stretches credulity, Julio is spirited into the Marlins's clubhouse by an ESPN reporter just before the beginning of the final game of the Series. He and his father discuss family issues as the game progresses. While their reunion is moving and appropriately equivocal, sports-savvy youngsters may find the prospect of a teenager chatting up his dad in the bullpen during game seven of the World Series a little difficult to swallow. VERDICT With its short chapters and simple vocabulary, the novel moves along briskly and would be a good fit for reluctant readers with a taste for baseball and adventure.

•Richard Luzer, Fair Haven Union High School, VT --This text refers to the Library Binding edition.

Praise for Game Seven: "An entertaining tale of baseball, family and loyalty."

•Kirkus Reviews
 "Volponi once again delivers top-notch sports fare coupled with a deeper story of family and fidelity. . . Readers will identify with Julio as he juggles dreams, bitterness, and family loyalties in this lyrical, spare novel."

•Booklist
 "A poignant story. . . this is a must-read for any teen who not only loves stories about sports but also enjoys reading about families."

•VOYA Praise for The Final Four by Paul Volponi: "A triple-overtime game keeps readers on the edge of their seats."

•BCCB, starred review
 "This gritty, realistic, and riveting novel deserves the wide audience it will no doubt attract."

•School Library Journal, starred review
 "Volponi nails it when it counts in this dynamic story."

•Booklist, starred review
 "Volponi, a multiple award-winning author, keeps the tension high from the first to last page ... The Final Four is definitely a winner."

•VOYA, starred review
 "Volponi's latest combines in-the-moment action, basketball history and the points of view of four college ballplayers with very different lives ... No story or

character is simple." Kirkus Reviews "The Final Four does a terrific job of capturing the emotion of March Madness. Mike Krzyzewski, Head Coach, Men's Basketball, Duke University "This is a great story about how one sport can transcend different experiences, backgrounds, and beliefs, and unite in a desire to succeed. Jim Calhoun, Head Coach, Men's Basketball, University of Connecticut (2010 National Champions) "It was inspirational to a coach and full of lessons to children of many ages. Jamie Dixon, Head Coach, Men's Basketball, University of Pittsburgh "A rocket ride of a plot that rips you into the story from the first line. Paul Griffin, author of Stay With Me "Paul Volponi delivers a high-octane basketball story fans will cheer for. Tim Green, author of Deep Zone, a Football Genius novel

This book was a fast read, and the plot was oh-so predictable. I really cannot recommend this book to anyone, except perhaps a reluctant reader who loves baseball. I used to cover Major League Baseball, so I know the game well, too bad the author does not seem to share my knowledge of the game or my attention to detail. There were too many cliches and too many plot elements involving baseball that simply would not happen. Reporters cannot sneak people into stadiums and clubhouses. You need a credential, and there is a photo on the credential.

I think product is great. The taste is good. I wish I can use more of the green juice but because my kidneys unfortunate I can't.

This book review is for Game Seven by Paul Volponi. The publisher of this book is Viking, the publication date is March 10th, 2015. This book has 256 pages. This story is about a boy named Julio Ramirez Jr. whose whole life is baseball. His father Julio Sr. is a Major League Baseball player for the Miami Marlins. To get to the big leagues, Julio Sr. fled Cuba and left his son, daughter and wife to fend for themselves. Julio deals with all of this as he chases his dream of playing for the Cuban National Team. The main characters of this story are Julio Jr. his father and the coach of Julio Jr.'s baseball team. Julio Jr. is not really sure what he thinks of his father. He does not know if he forgot about him or if he plans to come back to Cuba some day. Julio knows he can trust his coach and can ask him about anything. In the story, Julio Sr. is playing baseball for Miami while his son tries to make the Cuban National Team. He goes through his childhood without a father figure and must lean on others to help him through things. His family is struggling to keep up and Julio must work as a table waiter to help pay bills. He finally gets to show his talent when

his baseball team makes it to a big tournament. My favorite character is Julio Jr. because he does not let anything get in his way. He strives to make his dream come true no matter what the circumstances. I like this book because it has suspense, and it is very interesting how the characters deal with their problems and overcome them. My favorite part of the book was when Julio Jr. and his teammates were playing in the tournament. My least favorite part of the book was when the coaches for the Cuban National Team were scouting players for their team and they were not sure if they could trust Julio. They thought he might be like his father and leave the country so Julio already had a setback to making the National team. I would not change a thing in this story. The ending was perfect and the whole book just flowed perfectly. I have not read any other books by this author but I will definitely read one of his other books because of how well this book was. I would definitely recommend this book to someone it is very interesting and always has you guessing what is going to happen next. I would recommend this book to someone who loves to read sports books. If you like baseball then you would like this book. It is a great story about a boy chasing his dream to play baseball all his life. I would give this book five out of five stars because it is very interesting and I love baseball so the book had a lot of things I could relate to.

WOW! Paul Volponi once again writes an exceptional, edge-of-your-seat, page-turner!! I've only attended a 1/2 dozen baseball games in my life, but this book made me fall in love with the game. That's brilliance. The intense action and fast pace is perfect for reluctant readers, and the subject matter will appeal to boys, but is certainly accessible to and will hold the interest of girls. Paul Volponi is an exceptional writer who creates scenes so realistic that you'll feel the boat rocking and tumbling, the heat pounding, and a baseball smacking right into your glove. Get ready to escape Cuba in a '59 Buick car converted into a boat, catch a baseball at 101 mph, steal a base, kiss the Miami beach as you reach freedom. FREEDOM, I realize, that many of us Americans so easily take for granted. This is a novel is SO MUCH MORE THAN BASEBALL! It's about a family in Cuba left behind by their father and husband, who defected to the United States while playing for Cuba's national team. For six years the family suffers without Julio Sr., living in poverty, barely making ends meet. Julio Sr., aka El Fuego, is living the high life as a relief pitcher for the Miami Marlins, a source of pain and pride for young Julio aka Junior. The younger Julio plays baseball too. Coached by his uncle and cheered on by his cousin, a fellow teammate, Julio is a remarkably gifted ballplayer clearly following in his father's footsteps. But being El Fuego's son has its huge disadvantages, making life painfully difficult. When an incredible opportunity comes to Julio and his family to leave Cuba as defectors/traitors, each person has to decide what they want to do. There are many

surprises and tear-jerk moments in this novel. The descriptions, especially about life in Cuba are so vivid that readers will have no problem envisioning the scenes and understand the antiquated life most Cubans live. (The exception: government officials.) The action is intense and I couldn't read fast enough to find out what was going to happen next, often what was unexpected. I can't recommend this novel enough. It's a must read, even if you can't stand baseball. It's a must for every library. This is the novel that will keep the attention of those who LOVE SPORTS and HATE TO READ. GAME SEVEN is a game changer in that department. Without a doubt, this novel is just one more in a line of outstanding novels by Paul Volponi that solidifies his title as the King of Urban YA Fiction.

My 11 year old son devoured this book. Reading is not his favorite thing, so whenever I pick a book for him that he likes, I feel like mom of the year. It's a great choice for baseball fans. I'll be scanning this author's books for more titles.

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