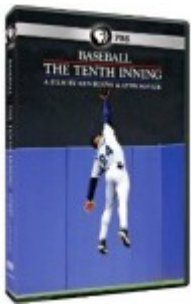


'Tenth Inning' is perfect prelude to baseball season

By Kathryn Reed

Ah, it's baseball season. Pitchers and catchers for the San Francisco Giants reported to spring training in Scottsdale on Saturday. Position players report Thursday. The first full workout is Friday.



Each winter it's a ritual in our house to watch baseball movies to fill the void between the last out of the World Series and first crack of the bat for the new season.

Instead of our normal line up, we rented something new. "Baseball: The Tenth Inning" is a film by Ken Burns and Lynn Novick. It will get you ready for the 2012 season – all four-plus hours. The documentary is so long it comes on two discs. I would have been fine with it being longer.

This movie is essentially a follow-up to Burns' 1994 movie "Baseball". It picks up in the 1990s and goes until just before the film came out in 2010.

From the film's website, "In an age of globalization, deregulation and speculation, the film demonstrates that baseball has continued to be a mirror of the country – at its best and at its worst. The film also movingly shows that when America felt most threatened, following the terrorist attacks of Sept. 11, 2001, baseball offered common ground, providing Americans with solace, distraction, and the hope that things could one day return to normal."

The film doesn't gloss over the steroid infused players, the

strike, and the Boston-New York rivalry. With there being so many facets to the world of baseball, many segments could have been four-hour documentaries on their own – like the use of performance-enhancing drugs.

The whole issue of Bill James transforming baseball through nontraditional stats was barely touched on. One has to read “Moneyball” to get that full story.

Still, “Baseball: The Tenth Inning” is a must-see for anyone who calls themselves a fan of baseball.