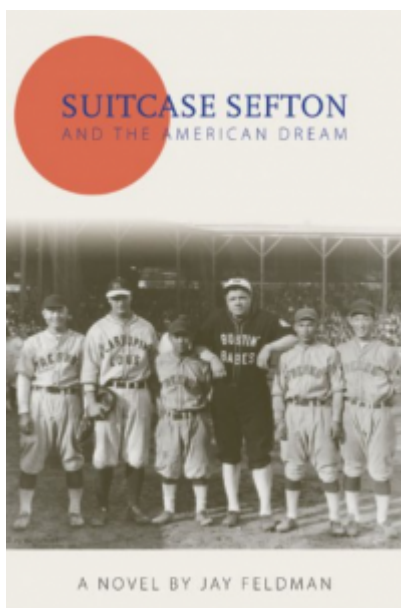


# LTN Book Club: Baseball and internment camps – great read

By Kathryn Reed

It was the summer of 1942 and life for those of Japanese descent living in the United States had been upended when they were sent to internment camps. A few pleasures, though, were possible – with baseball being one of them.



Jay Feldman weaves a tale of history, love and the American pastime into an easy to read novel. “Suitcase Sefton and the American Dream” (Triumph Books, 2006) doesn’t gloss over the hardship of living in the camps, but it also doesn’t delve too deep as to make this a downer.

While this is a work of fiction, it didn’t surprise me a guy not from the West Coast didn’t know about the camps. He got an education and some readers might as well.

As for the baseball element, well, even non-fans are bound to find some aspects interesting – like the color barrier and icons like Joe DiMaggio leaving the ball club to enlist in the military.

Mac “Suitcase” Sefton is a scout for the New York Yankees. A freak accident cut his playing days short, but he was able to stay in the game looking for prospects. In many ways it was a lonely existence being on the road, going from one small town to the next looking for boys who might one day make it to the

Major Leagues.

It was a glimpse into a segment of baseball during an era I really knew nothing about. It was a simpler time then. Guys would sign for \$100 and then see how they did in spring training.

Feldman does a good job of moving the story line along, even if at times it's rather simplistic and a bit predictable. It was a book I actually looked forward to reading each night.

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**Notes:**

- The next *Lake Tahoe News* Book Club read will be “The Doomsday Machine: Confessions of Nuclear War Planner” by Daniel Ellsberg.
- “Suitcase Sefton” questions: Was Suitcase’s character believable? Did the book minimize the internment camps or bring awareness to them? How in your life has sports been a bridge between people?