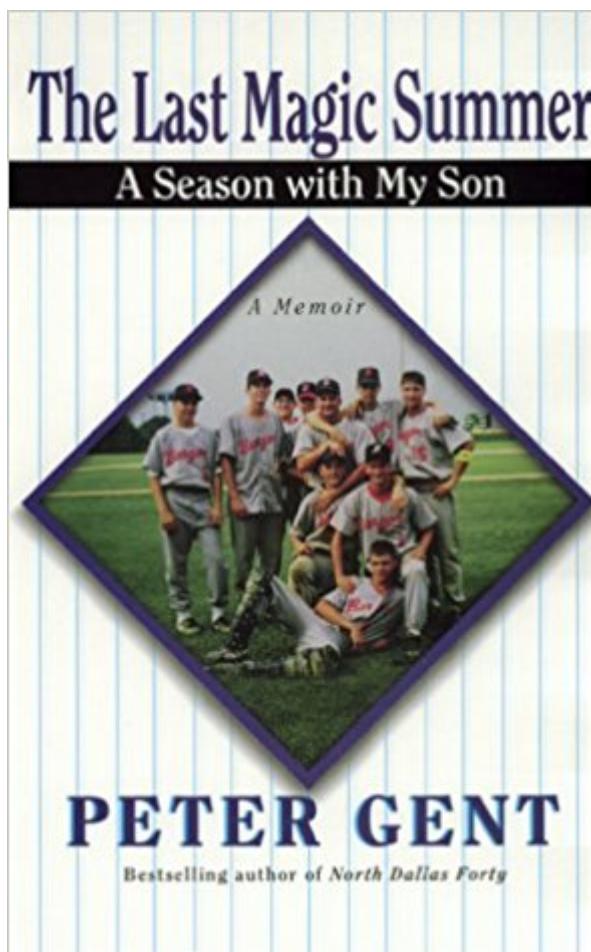


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# The Last Magic Summer: A Season With My Son



## **Synopsis**

After a rollercoaster career as a pro football star and bestselling author, Peter Gent's ride in the fast lane ended in a bruising divorce and custody battle. Afterward, he returned to his hometown to rebuild his relationship with his son, Carter. This chronicle of ten seasons coaching Carter's "Connie Mack" league baseball team celebrates the redemptive power of sports, the healing bond between father and son, and the bittersweet turning point when a father must face the proud yet painful process of letting go.

## **Book Information**

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## **Customer Reviews**

Much of the text early on has to do with the bitter and prolonged divorce in the 1980s of ex-NFL player Gent (North Dallas Forty) and his second wife, whom he portrays as a lying, thieving birdbrain (deciding that she wants a career, she is torn between painting and selling real estate) who is determined to use their son, Carter, as a bargaining chip in their battles. And, as if the catalogue of his domestic woes is insufficient, Gent provides details on his brother's death from cancer, his own recurring back injury and the decline of his hometown of Bangor, Mich., where even the trees died, of Dutch elm disease. What uplift there is here is provided by his account of the summer of 1993, when Gent coached and Carter starred on the Bangor Connie Mack League team, which made it to the district finals, then lost. But with the end of the summer, Carter went off to college, leaving Gent alone with his memories and the prospect of a lonely old age. Intended to be poignant, the story is only gloomy. Copyright 1996 Reed Business Information, Inc. --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

Gent, a former football star and author of the best-selling *North Dallas Forty* (1973), here tackles the subject closest to his heart: his relationship with his son, Carter. Ostensibly, this is a book about amateur baseball. Yet it is really a book about how baseball helped to heal emotional wounds and strengthened a bond between father and son. A finely told story that will circulate well in most libraries. Copyright 1996 Reed Business Information, Inc. --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

Very good book. This is a very touching story of Gent and his family and his relationship with his son. It is his best work in my opinion! Very glad he published his story. Before he passed away he was unable to finish a book he was writing. I hope that book will one day be completed by a trusted writer, family member and/or friend.

I cannot believe this book is out of print. I gave my copy to my brother several years ago, and went looking for a new copy today after the hated New York Yankees swept my beloved Boston Red Sox by scoring a whopping 6 runs in three games. Why? Because Peter Gent's book - which is a wonderful tale about a father and his son getting to know one another - is also a prequel to the very public and successful career of Derek Jeter. You see, Derek Jeter starred on the Connie Mack team that Gent's son Carter played against for the Michigan state championship, and even back then, he was being viewed as a big-time up-and-coming baseball phenom. And while some of the scenes between Gent and his son will tear your heart out, Jeter is front-and-center in the best sports scene in the book. That occurs when Mike Wyshowski(sp?), the farm-boy pitcher for Carter's team, whiffs Derek Jeter swinging with runners in scoring position late in the very close Championship Game, thereby sealing the win for the underdogs (and permanently endearing himself to me). This is a wonderful novel. I read *North Dallas Forty* when I was just a kid, and thought it was a great, funny book. I thought this book, which I read after I'd gotten old enough to get married and have kids of my own, was much, much better. I'm assuming the fact that it's out of print means it didn't sell well. That's a shame, because it's every bit the story *NDF* was, and then some.

Although the divorce is pivotal in this story, it is not necessarily the key to the book's essence. Any parent who has reached the point of letting go can relate to the emotions the author so wonderfully describes. If a reader is an avid baseball fan, especially Little League, Pony League, Babe Ruth, etc., the story jumps out at you and transports you to that "magic" only summer youth baseball can

take you. As the mother of three children, two who are finished with youth baseball and softball, and one still keeping me in the "magic" at the age of 13, I loved the book. Mr. Gent deals with emotions like unconditional love, fear, apprehension, regret and wins during that Last Magic Summer.

After Pete had asked a friend & I to join his Bangor team for the Kalamazoo tourney in the summer of 1991, I really got to understand & appreciate the love that he had for Carter & youth sports. His book was truly touching, especially after he asked me to be a small part of one of those summers. I will always cherish the opportunity he gave me, as well as the autographed copy of this book. A must read for all baseball fans & parents.

Based on the reviews, I was highly anticipating reading this. Was so glad I found it for sale used somewhere. I was expecting an unforgettable read. It called me on so many levels...I'm a former college & minor league baseball player, I'm a Dad, I coach my son's baseball team...I mean the subject matter of this book couldn't seem to be any better. I was hugely let down. I liked Carter and his teammates. They all seemed wonderful and I related to their comraderie of being on a team together. Where I was annoyed was with Mr. Gent. The guy coached his son for several years and didn't care enough to pick up a book and LEARN about baseball. It's great he was willing to be out there but these boys deserved more than a coach who smoked in the dugout, wouldn't take the time to learn the game at all, and couldn't find someone to donate a few hundred dollars so they could have uniforms! He admitted he sucked as a coach, but why couldn't he have DONE something about it. (for example, how hard would it have been to develop a very rudimentary signal system so he's not just yelling "steal" across the diamond as his steal sign? Shameful!) Despite the glowing reviews, if you are a huge baseball fan, I urge caution to the reader not to expect too much from this book.

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