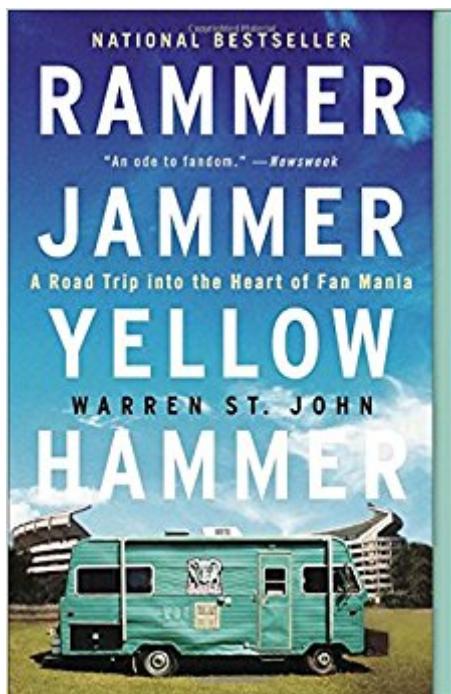


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Rammer Jammer Yellow Hammer: A Road Trip Into The Heart Of Fan Mania



Synopsis

What is it about sports that turns otherwise sane people into raving lunatics? Why does winning compel people to tear down goal posts, and losing, to drown themselves in bad keg beer? In short, why do fans care? In search of answers, Warren St. John seeks out the roving community of RVers who follow the Alabama Crimson Tide from game to game. A movable feast of Weber grills and Igloo coolers, these are hard-core football fans who arrive on Wednesday for Saturday's game: The Reeses, who skipped their own daughter's wedding because it coincided with a Bama game; Ray Pradat, the Episcopal minister who watches the games on a television beside his altar while performing weddings; and John Ed, the wheeling and dealing ticket scalper whose access to good seats gives him power on par with the governor. In no time at all, St. John buys an RV (a \$5,500 beater named The Hawg) and joins the caravan for a full football season, chronicling the world of the extreme fan and learning that in the shadow of the stadium, it can all begin to seem strangely normal. *Rammer Jammer Yellow Hammer* is not only a hilarious travel story, but a cultural anthropology of fans that goes a long way toward demystifying the universal urge to take sides and to win.

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Customer Reviews

St. John's account of following the University of Alabama's football team as a part of the team's fanatical legion of tailgaters is just as much fun as the book's title (words to a school chant). As St. John, an Alabama native who writes for the New York Times, tries to join Bama RV nation, he spends five months obsessing about every tiny detail associated with Alabama football and, in the

process, comes into contact with a slew of good ol' boys, well-to-do entrepreneurs and the most hated man in Alabama. Despite his own passion for Bama football, St. John is an outsider and must go to the extreme, like buying his own dilapidated RV (astutely nicknamed "The Hawg"), to be completely accepted by the hardcore RV-owning regulars. Driving the country roads from Gainesville to Nashville, St. John uncovers the ugly, quirky and splendid qualities of both football fans and the states below the Mason-Dixon line. But this book is more than a beer and barbecue-fueled travelogue. St. John also explores the sociological and physical effects of being a rabid sports fan. These journalistic asides contrast nicely with St. John's superstitious, obsessed sports-fan persona, which rules much of this amusing and insightful book. Copyright © Reed Business Information, a division of Reed Elsevier Inc. All rights reserved. --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

Adult/High School - With the intent of investigating hard-core "fandom" in all its extreme manifestations, St. John, an Alabama native and lifelong fan of the Crimson Tide, spent a season commingling with those who trail this college football team from stadium to stadium. He purchased a motor home and joined the dedicated crowd that often arrived for the Saturday game on Wednesday, jamming the roadways of the host town and jockeying for prime parking in lots where they quickly deployed all of the amenities of ongoing tailgate parties. The narrative is lively and entertaining, punctuated by rich regional speech patterns and sports-related profanity. A modest amount of space is devoted to analyzing fan moods/behaviors from a sociological standpoint (why fandom "is as much about opposing as advocating"), but the greater portion of the book consists of memorably drawn portraits of the regulars in the crowd, including a couple who skipped their daughter's wedding because it conflicted with a game. The coach, the team, their stats, and headline-generating plays are certainly on scene, but it is the fan action that St. John captures with empathy and wit. - Lynn Nutwell, Fairfax City Regional Library, VA Copyright © Reed Business Information, a division of Reed Elsevier Inc. All rights reserved. --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

A thoroughly enjoyable tale of one man's exploration of the obsession of Alabama football, and of America. There's not a lot that I can add to what other reviewers have written. I do dissent, though, from one reviewer's comment that "you don't need to be a football fan to enjoy this." You do, and you probably need to have dipped more than a toe into the Crimson Tide. I happen to love Alabama football, but I'm a novice, and I couldn't keep up entirely. And ten years later, reading about

forgotten, minor characters like Mike DuBose had me wishing for Nick Saban and the modern Tide. But even so, this is a funny, fun read. Bravo.

I just purchased this Kindle book so I could read "Rammer Jammer Yellow Hammer" again. Hilarity never read so well...over and over again! I bought the hardcover book when it was first published and for the next several days, every free hour I had was spent absorbing every word of this book. Warren St. John share's his story in the written word as easy as if he was sitting next to you telling you about his adventures with RVers dedicated to the Alabama Crimson Tide. SEC football is unlike any other football conference, and each University has it's own qwerky traditions that make outsiders scratch their heads. It doesn't matter if you are a diehard Alabama fan who wants to relive the 1999 season or if you are not an Alabama fan, but you love football and reading stories about others who love is as much and maybe even more than you do. Or maybe you don't like football, but you're interested in Southern culture, especially Alabama, reading this book will give you insight into one of the best parts of Southern culture that often encompasses the other parts. If you want to laugh out loud and smile without stopping from front cover to back, then this is a book you have to read!

If you are an RVer and/or a fan of any college sport, you might enjoy this light hearted look at tailgating. Even though I cheer for the Buckeyes, I was fascinated by the Tide.

I have two annual traditions to get me appropriately amped up for football season: I re-watch The Program and I reread Rammer Jammer Yellow Hammer. The second is going to get me in trouble one day when I spend a large portion of my life's savings on an incredibly inefficient and expensive monstrosity. Warren St. John's delightful book follows the Alabama Crimson Tide's 1999 football season by RV. With a product part sports book, part travelogue, and part popular social science book, St. John shows that same enthusiasm for his subject and humanity in general that makes Tony Horowitz's books so great. Both stand in marked contrast to the misanthropy of Bill Bryson, who St. John has also been compared to. With St. John's expressive prose, the denizens of the 'Bama RV crowd come alive. I could see them in my mind with a clarity that is very rare for characters in a book. He also takes frequent asides to discuss the peculiar condition that is fandom and various social science on the subject. You don't have to love (or like) the Crimson Tide to love this book. Buy it if you love football, sports in general, or have ever wondered "what the heck is up with those people?".

I'm not a Crimson Tide fan (go Irish!), but I don't think an Auburn fan could read Rammer Jammer Yellow Hammer without nodding along. St. John's picture of intense fandom is gorgeous and accurate -- not least because he succumbs to it, going so far as to buy his own RV -- but he doesn't use the novel preach about Bama being the best there is. Or, more accurately, this book wasn't written specifically for Bama fans. It was written for sports fans, and Bama was the lens St. John chose. So there might be some preaching, but it's forgivable... and besides, it's really easy to substitute your own team name into his sentences. Really, though, this book should be required reading for all souls unlucky enough to have latched on to a sports team. It's funny, and touching, and validating. And reading it made me hungry for football.

I've been an Alabama fan now for most of my life. Since the beginning of the 1992 season, when my sister was admitted to the University. I too ended up in Tuscaloosa for three years, so I got to experience the gameday aura. It is interesting now seeing it from a different perspective, especially now after graduation. What I liked about the book was the "I've been there!" or "I drive down that every day." feeling I get through most of the book. I also like the memories (good and bad) about the 1999 season he brings up. I remember what I was thinking during that good season (not great, because we lost 3, a great season ends with a National Championship). I also enjoyed the different perspective on the RVers. I viewed them mostly as faceless androgenous beings clogging up the streets of T-Town. Now I can place faces, attitudes, perspectives, et cetera on these people. You'll laugh. You'll cry--and not just at our losses. It's humorous, but deperessing in parts as well (seeing how some people let it absolutely rule their lives). An enjoyable read--to be sure.

Loved it--this book captures what it is like to be a true fan of something, particularly a sports team. I read it out loud to my husband and we both laughed until we cried at some of the stories. These types of stories are repeated over and over all during football season all over the United States (we live in Arkansas and it is certainly true here in Razorback Country--the RVers call themselves the Road Hogs). Being born and raised a Bama fan, though, all the madness makes perfect sense to me and I must sheepishly admit I see myself in many of the stories. It also brought back many childhood memories of watching the Bear Bryant Show with my Daddy on Sunday afternoons (Coca-cola and Golden Flake potato chips!!) and the whole mystique of the Bear Bryant experience. I have no doubt I will read this again closer to football season this year to get primed for the games! Roll Tide Ya'll!

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