



Growing Up Pedro: How the Martinez Brothers Made It from the Dominican Republic All the Way to the Major Leagues

By Matt Tavares

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The love between brothers is key to Matt Tavares's tale of Dominican pitcher Pedro Martínez, from his days of throwing rocks at mangoes to his years as a major-league star.

Before Pedro Martínez pitched the Red Sox to a World Series championship, before he was named to the All-Star team eight times, before he won the Cy Young three times, he was a kid from a place called Manoguayabo in the Dominican Republic. Pedro loved baseball more than anything, and his older brother Ramon was the best pitcher he'd ever seen. He'd dream of the day he and his brother could play together in the major leagues—and here, Matt Tavares tells the story of how that dream came true. In a fitting homage to a modern day baseball star, the acclaimed author-illustrator examines both Pedro Martínez's improbable rise to the top of his game and the power that comes from the deep bond between brothers.

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- Sales Rank: #157190 in Books
- Published on: 2015-02-10
- Released on: 2015-02-10
- Original language: English
- Number of items: 1
- Dimensions: 12.13" h x .41" w x 10.13" l, .0 pounds
- Binding: Hardcover
- 40 pages

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Editorial Review

From School Library Journal

Gr 2–4—Tavares is no stranger to the baseball picture book biography genre. He has several examples under his belt: *There Goes Ted Williams: The Greatest Hitter Who Ever Lived* (2012) and *Becoming Babe Ruth* (2013, both Candlewick). With his latest, Tavares looks to a more recent time and player, Cy Young Award winner and World Series champion Pedro Martinez. Tavares begins in the Dominican Republic in 1981, where Martinez witnessed his older brother Ramon's rise to stardom. Tavares masterfully depicts, with quick verse and beautiful illustrations, the world in which the two siblings came of age. Though he was considered too small to make it as a pitcher in the major leagues, his persistence eventually paid off and he was drafted by the Los Angeles Dodgers and moved to the United States. Martinez journeyed to America, facing challenges as he adapted to a new language and culture. After describing of the athlete's major league triumphs with several teams, Tavares leads readers back to the mango groves of the Dominican Republic, where Martinez developed into one of the best pitchers in baseball history. It is somewhat vexing that there is no mention of how in 2004, with Martinez, the Boston Red Sox won their first World Series in 86 years; however, this is a strong overview of a remarkable athlete. Martinez's unbelievable statistics are included at the end of the book. VERDICT A wonderful introduction to a truly special player.—Keith Klang, Port Washington Public Library, NY

Review

Tavares masterfully depicts, with quick verse and beautiful illustrations, the world in which the two siblings came of age.... This is a strong overview of a remarkable athlete. Martinez's unbelievable statistics are included at the end of the book. A wonderful introduction to a truly special player.

—School Library Journal (starred review)

Tavares highlights their warm filial relationship, inviting readers to understand how Ramón is challenged by loneliness in America, mostly because his lack of English prevents him from communicating. ... The gouache and watercolor paintings lovingly depict both players, from boyhood to adulthood. Tavares captures some of the iconic images of Pedro: pitching with intensity, goofing off in the bullpen, and even being taped to a pole by his teammates as a prank.

—Horn Book

Tavares' latest baseball profile, featuring Pedro Martínez, is as much an homage to the love between brothers as it is a biography.... Concluding stats top off this winning title.

—Booklist

Tavares's luminous paintings pair with accessible prose arranged into verselike passages to create a vivid portrait of two contemporary athletes.

—Publishers Weekly

Watercolor, gouache and pencil illustrations depict the emotional fervor of the action.... A warm portrait of a modern baseball icon.

—Kirkus Reviews

Fraternal mentoring and emulation forms a cohesive theme throughout.

—Bulletin of the Center for Children's Books

The story of how Pedro Martinez came to achieve that status is inspiring, and author/illustrator Matt Tavares captures it perfectly for younger readers.

—from Kendal Rautzhan

About the Author

Matt Tavares is the author-illustrator of *Henry Aaron's Dream*, *There Goes Ted Williams*, and *Becoming Babe Ruth* as well as *Zachary's Ball*, *Oliver's Game*, and *Mudball*. He is also the illustrator of Doreen Rappaport's *Lady Liberty* and Alicia Potter's *Jubilee!*, among others. Matt Tavares lives in Ogunquit, Maine.

Users Review

From reader reviews:

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