This book does nothing to improve Obermeyer's batting average as a professional sports writer. Though the book's topic is important, it has been explored by many researchers and writers. Obermeyer includes coverage of the 19th century and WW I, but he mostly omits the critical Depression era. More devotion to that period, which is covered in David Surdam's Wins, Losses, and Empty Seats (CH, Nov'11, 49-1535), would have been worthwhile. The author faults baseball owners for being profit oriented and protecting their interests in wartime, but the same could be said for most any industry, including meatpacking and the media. In prose and tables the author never distinguish between real (that is, inflation adjusted) and nominal dollars; the narrative is repetitive, neither tight nor seamless. Chapter 7, on players returning from the war, treats issues not widely known or appreciated. The business of baseball takes up almost a third of the entire volume (all of chapter 6 [52 pages] and 15 pages of chapter 8) yet has relatively little to do with the war. And--big whiff!--Obermeyer does not cite any of the sports-economics literature from the last 25 years. Summing Up: Optional. Public and professional libraries.