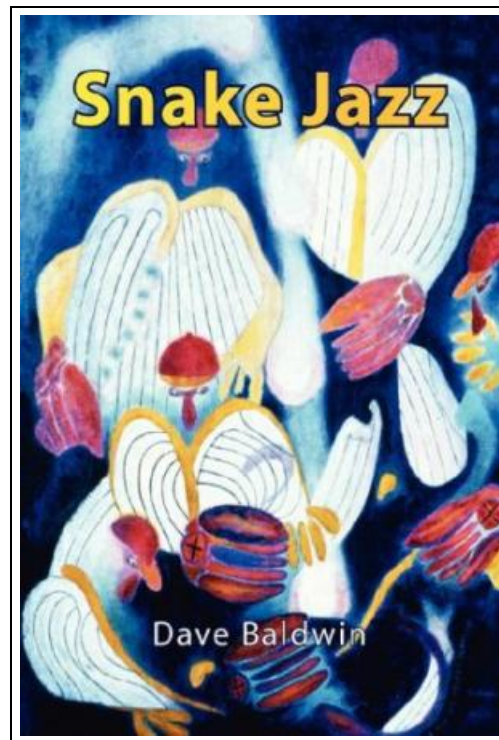


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SNAKE JAZZ



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Xlibris Corporation. Hardcover. Condition: New. 356 pages. Dimensions: 9.1in. x 6.3in. x 1.2in. The baseball term, snake jazz, refers to those squiggly pitches (curve, slider, screwball, etc.) that deviate from a direct path on their way to the catcher. This could also describe the strange and sometimes amusing twists in Dave Baldwins progress on his way to the big leagues. As a skinny, awkward kid in the 1940s, Dave learned to throw under the searing Arizona sun amidst cacti and snakes. Despite that modest beginning, his father convinced him that success would come with focused hard work. His dads encouragement enabled him to become one of the most highly sought-after pitching prospects in the nation as a teenager. Scouts and sportswriters said he was a natural, another Bob Feller. He began to see his ability as a gift. Scouts had a favorite mantra - We can teach a kid to throw a curve, but he has to be born with a fastball. Upon hearing this often from the experts, Dave lost the idea of self-development his father had instilled. If baseball skill is genetic, theres nothing to be done. Either the kid has the genes or he doesnt. This philosophy seemed to work well enough until one day during his sophomore year at the University of Arizona he threw a curveball that severely damaged his arm. All that natural ability went out the window. This would have ended his career before it began except he couldnt see life continuing without baseball. Thus, he started a desperate eight year struggle that culminated in his transformation into an unorthodox but successful major league pitcher - the drastic changes in his throwing style inspired by insights gained from his study of ecological genetics and advice he received from Max Surkont, an aging pitcher...



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