



The Graves County Boys: A Tale of Kentucky Basketball, Perseverance, and the Unlikely Championship of the Cuba Cubs

Marianne Walker

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In 1952, just one year after Coach Adolph Rupp's University of Kentucky Wildcats won their third national championship in four years, an unlikely high school basketball team from rural Graves County, Kentucky, stole the spotlight and the media's attention. Inspired by young coach Jack Story and by the Harlem Globetrotters, the Cuba Cubs grabbed headlines when they rose from relative obscurity to defeat the big-city favorite and win the state championship.

A classic underdog tale, *The Graves County Boys* chronicles how five boys from a tiny high school in southwestern Kentucky captured the hearts of basketball fans nationwide. Marianne Walker weaves together details about the players, their coach, and their relationships in a page-turning account of triumph over adversity. This inspiring David and Goliath story takes the reader on a journey from the team's heartbreaking defeat in the 1951 state championship to their triumphant victory over Louisville Manual the next year.

More than just a basketball narrative, the book explores a period in American life when indoor plumbing and electricity were still luxuries in some areas of the country and when hardship was a way of life. With no funded school programs or bus system, the Cubs's success was a testament to the sacrifices of family and neighbors who believed in their team. Featuring new photographs, a foreword by University of Kentucky coach Joe B. Hall, and a new epilogue detailing where the players are now, *The Graves County Boys* is an unforgettable story of how a community pulled together to make a dream come true.

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