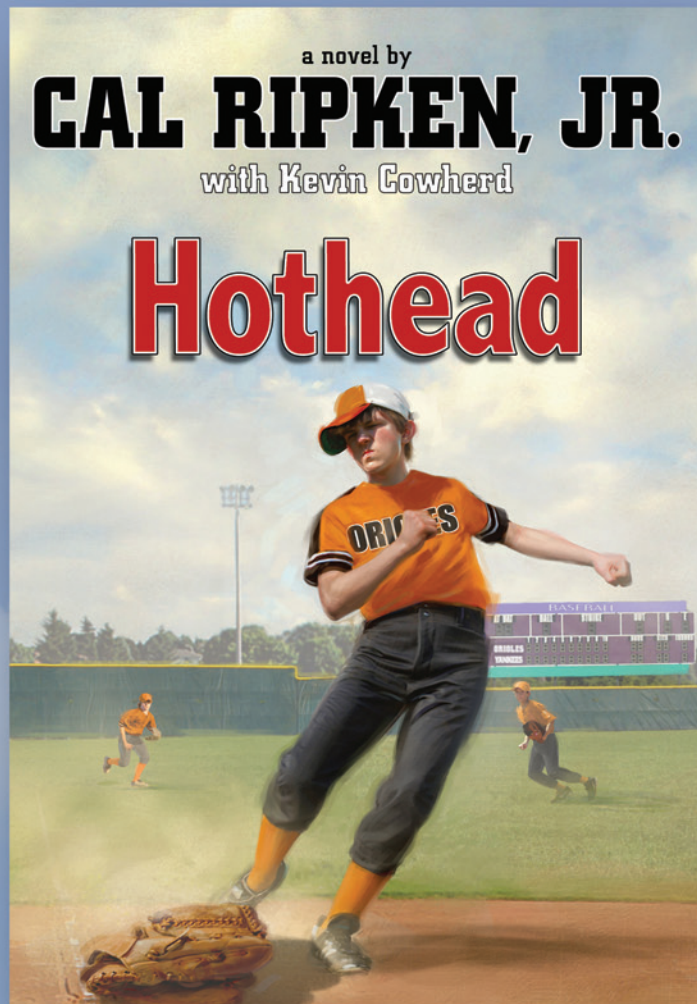
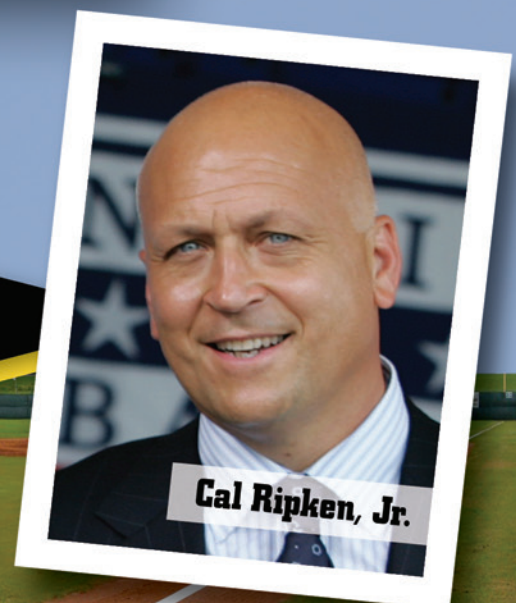




ALL-STAR PARTY KIT



**A new baseball series
from CAL RIPKEN, JR.
with Kevin Cowherd**



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Greetings, fans!

As any true baseball fan knows, there are a lot of important elements to being on a team. From mastering the skills of batting and catching to understanding the game, it's a challenging sport, but one that's rewarding and a lot of fun.

The most important part of being on a successful team is being a team player and working well with others to be the best you can be. In *Hothead*, the first book in my new baseball series, Connor Sullivan learns that being part of a team means learning to control your temper, even in the worst of times.

In this baseball party kit, you'll find party ideas and activities that are fun and show the importance of being part of a good team.

So grab your best baseball gear, get into the team spirit, and let's play ball!

Sincerely,

Carly J.

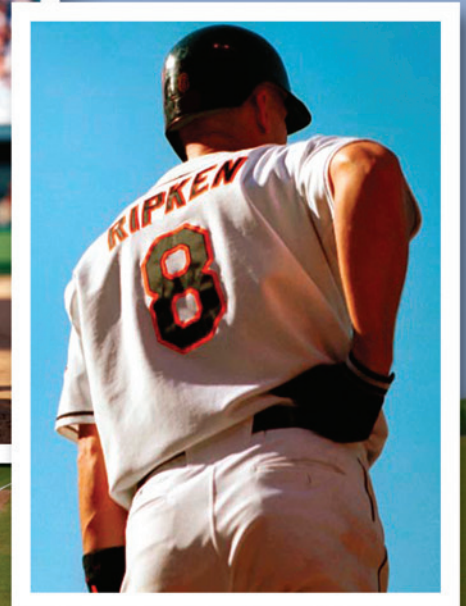
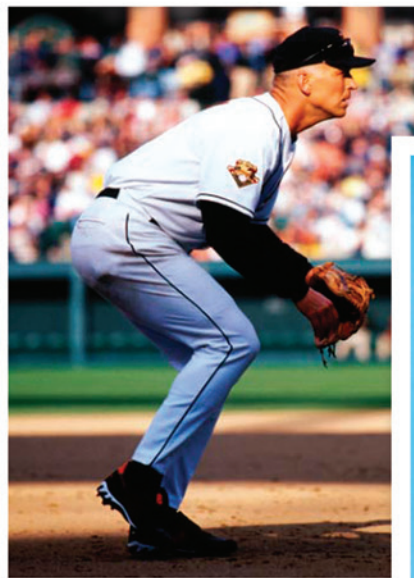


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Get Ready for Opening Day!

Celebrate the launch of *Hothead* with a baseball-themed party!

Show Your Team Spirit

No baseball party is complete without the right decorations! Take a trip to your local sports store for jerseys and pennants from your favorite major league team to liven up the scene.

And visit your local party store for inexpensive baseball-themed tableware and party favors (sports whistles, stickers, sports-themed temporary tattoos) for your guests, to take the baseball theme even further.

To complete your party, purchase a baseball for guests to sign as they arrive, as a keepsake for after the event.

Hit the Snack Bar

Keeping with the baseball theme, serve your guests snacks inspired by America's great pastime! Pick up Cracker Jack™, pretzels and popcorn (and hot dogs if you want to go the extra mile!). Be careful to avoid peanuts for those with possible allergies.

Add some festive decorations to the mix by picking up cupcakes or cookies decorated like baseballs (with white icing and red or black lacing).

For drinks, follow the lead of the players themselves by serving beverages in small sports bottles. Apple and grape juice or lemonade are ideal options for the perfect "sports drinks."



Team Uniforms

No baseball game is complete without the proper attire—the baseball uniform! Divide your guests into two teams when they arrive (the home team and the visitors) at random. Once all of your guests arrive, provide them with a set of white T-shirts (or ask them to bring a shirt with them), markers, and puff paint, and challenge them to design team uniforms matching one theme. The color choice and design is up to each team. Limit the decorating time to ten minutes, and have the two teams show off their look when complete!

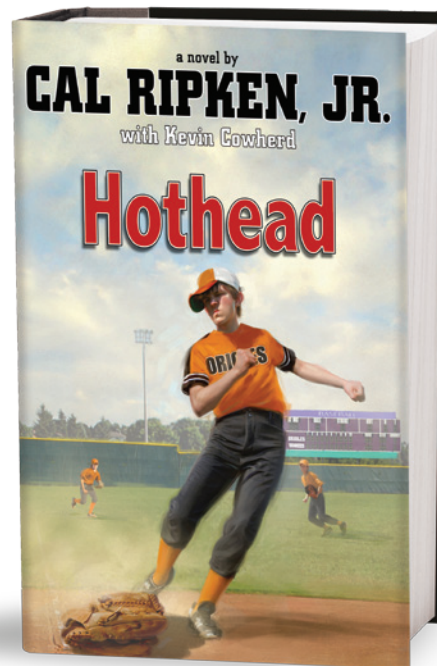
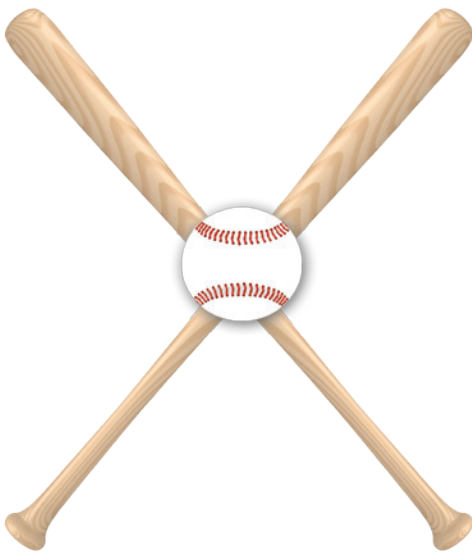
Don't have t-shirts? No problem! Provide your guests with triangles of construction paper and markers to design their own team pennants for each side to use instead.

BONUS: Check out page six of this kit for invites to your party for your guests!

Team Meeting

After reading *Hothead*, gather your guests into a circle to talk a bit more about the themes and topics from the book.



1. Frustrated by his performance, Connor loses his cool in chapter one. As a performer or athlete, what techniques can you use to cope with mistakes?
2. Describe Connor's relationship with his dad. Why are things at home different now? How do you deal with change?
3. What's at stake if Connor doesn't get his temper under control? What advice would you give to him? What techniques does he try?
4. What secrets is Connor keeping and from whom? Do you think if he revealed what is stressing him out that he would still be having these episodes or not?
5. Under what conditions does Coach allow Connor to stay on the team? Do you think this is a fair decision or not? Why?
6. How does the opening act of Connor's "apology tour" go? Have you ever been on one yourself? What's the hardest part?
7. Do you ever struggle with controlling your temper? Why or why not?
8. Have you ever been sidelined for an important event or game? How does Connor handle the news? How would you?
9. In the end, has Connor learned how to control his temper or not? What will help him over the long term?
10. Connor's main focus throughout most of *Hothead* is being the best shortstop he can be. What do you think is the all-time greatest position to play in baseball and why?



Tickets for the Big Day

Make copies of this sheet and use these VIP tickets as invites for your party guests!

Cut along dotted lines

STADIUM (VENUE): _____



DATE: _____

TIME: _____

RSVP: _____

Bring a favorite item of baseball memorabilia to show off to the group!

Cut along dotted lines

STADIUM (VENUE): _____



DATE: _____

TIME: _____

RSVP: _____

Bring a favorite item of baseball memorabilia to show off to the group!

Cut along dotted lines

STADIUM (VENUE): _____



DATE: _____

TIME: _____

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Cut along dotted lines

STADIUM (VENUE): _____

DATE: _____

TIME: _____

RSVP: _____

Bring a favorite item of baseball memorabilia to show off to the group!

You're Out!

Get the party going with this modified version of musical chairs. Set out four "bases" on the floor in an open space, labeled "first," "second," "third," and "home." Write the name of each of these bases on slips of paper and place the slips in a baseball cap.

Play "Take Me Out to the Ball Game" (or the preferred baseball theme of your choice!) as kids shuffle between bases (more than one child can be on a base at a time). When the music stops, draw one of the slips from the baseball cap. Everyone who is on that base is out!

Once you're down to four kids, allow only one child per base. Game ends when one player is left. Reward your winner with a baseball-themed prize, or a copy of *Hothead*!



HOTHEAD

Spring Training

These games will get your baseball party moving!

Get in Uniform!

Split your guests back into their two teams from the opening of your party, and host a relay race!

Designate one area at your event for the two teams to race to as the finish line, and place two sets of baseball uniforms at that spot. Either provide a full adult-sized baseball uniform (including jersey, mitt, and catcher's pads), if you can accommodate, or create your own baseball uniforms using materials around your event! The key is to have a full jersey, mitt, and catcher's pads at the finish line for each team.

Then have two teams race to the area, one member at a time. Each member must put on the entire uniform and spin three times around in a circle, then take the uniform off and race back to tag the next person in line.

The first team to finish wins!



Practice Session

Give your guests the opportunity to show off their sports skills with these activities!

Pitching Lesson

If there is enough room at your event, host a pitching contest, using Styrofoam balls and a hula hoop.

Line up your guests behind a designated marker, and have them take turns pitching the balls through a hula hoop, three to four or seven to ten feet away. Use tape to affix the hula hoop at your designated spot, and be sure to accommodate for younger players as needed by adjusting the distance.

The player with the most "strikes" wins!

Advanced Pitching Lesson

Using the baseball hat from the **You're Out!** activity (page 7), to further their pitching skills!

Divide your guests into pairs. One pair at a time, guests will pitch a Styrofoam ball into the cap of their partner standing one foot away. If successful, the thrower will take a step back and pitch the ball again. The pair who gets the farthest apart without missing a catch wins!

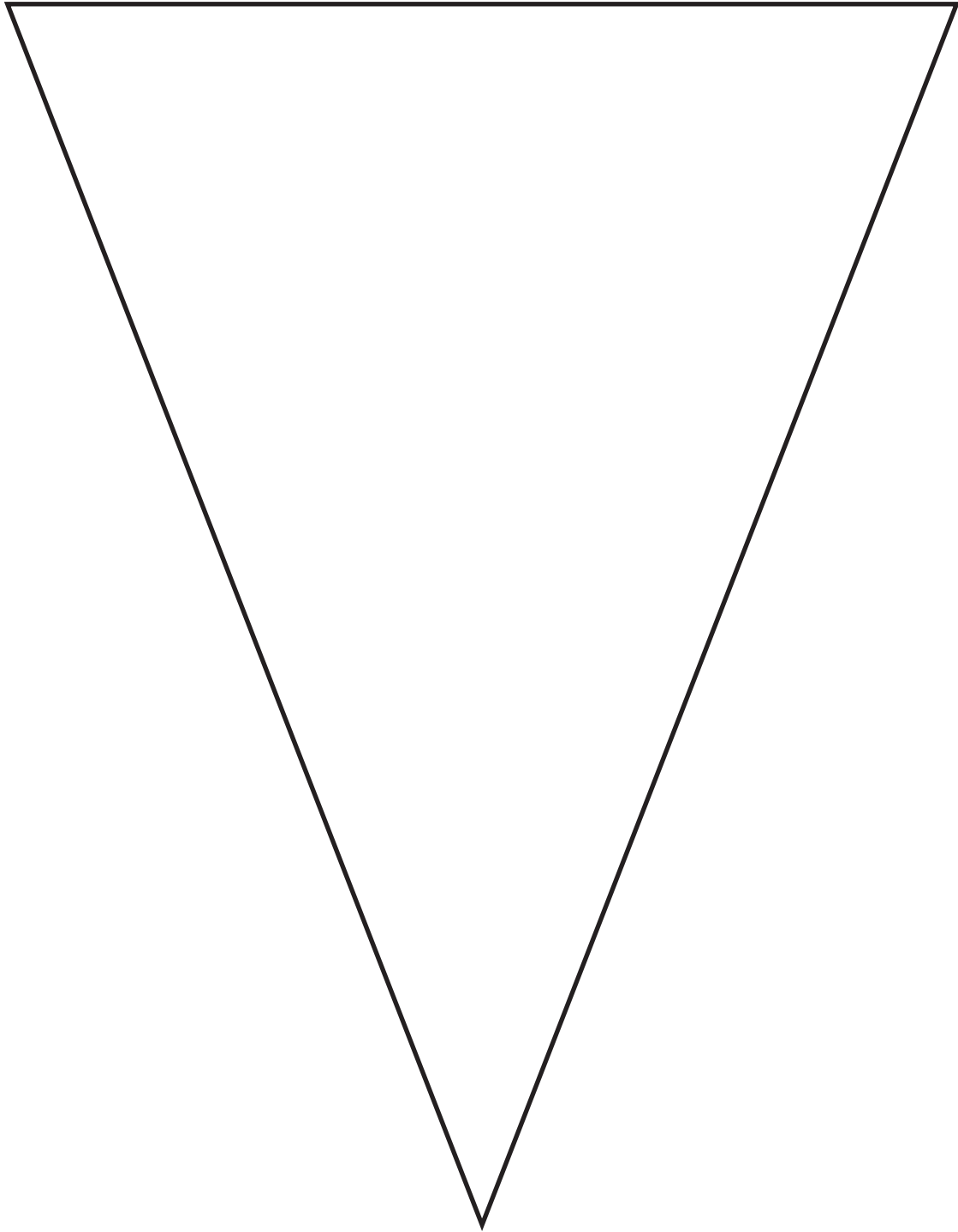


Design Your Own Pennant

Turn this page sideways and, in the space below (or on butcher paper cut in triangles), design your own team pennant.

Select a color palette to best represent your ideal team colors, think of your ideal mascot, and be sure to come up with a unique name for your own personal baseball team.

Share your final design with the group!



Hothead

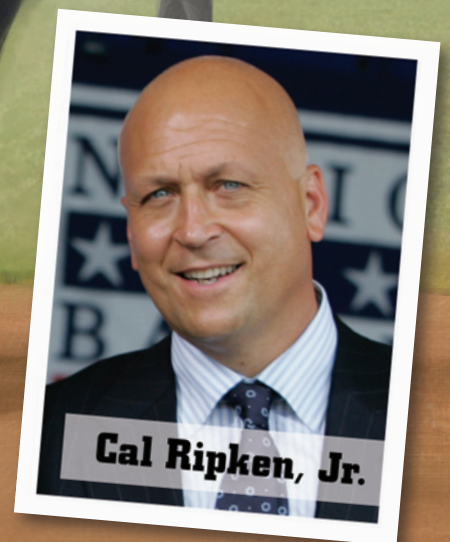
A new baseball series
from **CAL RIPKEN, JR.**
and Kevin Cowherd

**It's the Ultimate
Baseball Party!**

Date: _____

Time: _____

Place: _____





About the book

Connor Sullivan is an all-star shortstop on his Babe Ruth League team, the Orioles. He can hit and field with the best of them, but he's got one big problem: his temper.

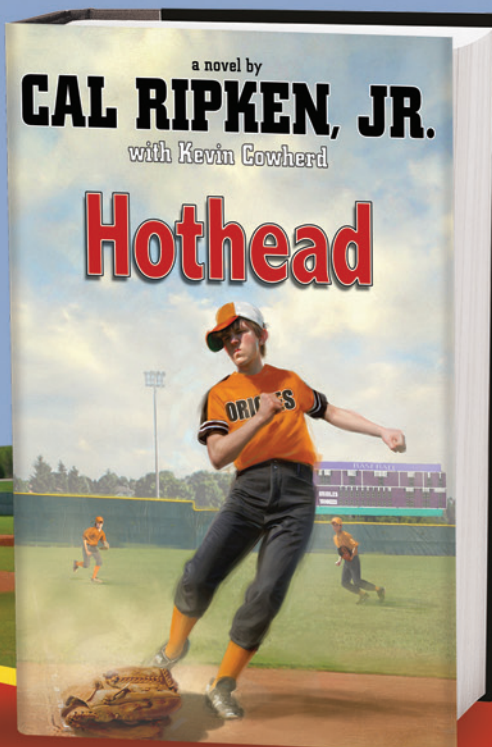
When the sports editor of the school paper threatens to do a big story on his tantrums—complete with embarrassing photos—Connor realizes he has to clean up his act. But can he do it in time to regain his teammates' trust and help the Orioles win the championship against the best team in the league?

About the authors

Cal Ripken, Jr. was a shortstop and third baseman for the Baltimore Orioles for his entire twenty-one-season career (1981-2001). Nicknamed "The Iron Man" for his work ethic and reliability on the field, Cal Ripken, Jr. is best remembered for playing a record 2,632 straight games over seventeen seasons, shattering the record previously held by the legendary Lou Gehrig. Cal was a nineteen-time All-Star and is one of eight players in history to amass over 400 home runs and 3,000 hits. In 2007 he was inducted into the National Baseball Hall of Fame, after earning the most votes in history. Mr. Ripken is CEO of Ripken Baseball, Inc., a company dedicated to growing the game of baseball at the grassroots level. He currently lives in Maryland with his wife and two children.

Kevin Cowherd is an award-winning sports columnist with the Baltimore Sun. He has also written for *Men's Health*, *Parenting*, and *Baseball Digest* magazines and is the author of a collection of columns, *Last Call at the 7-Eleven*. He has coached youth baseball, basketball, and soccer teams for many years. He lives near Baltimore, Maryland, with his wife and three children.

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Cal Ripken, Jr.



Photo Credit: National Baseball Hall of Fame and Museum Library & Archive Cooperstown, NY.