



# Tom Van Riper

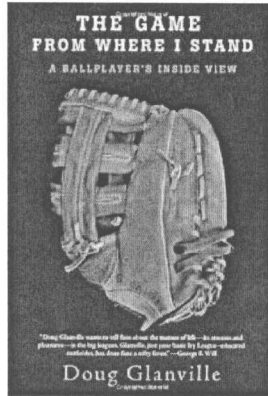
FIELDS OF GREEN

[MY PROFILE](#) [MY HEADLINE GRABS](#) [MY RSS FEED](#)

## Documentary Film to Mark Stat-O-Matic's 50th

Jan. 21 2011 - 4:29 pm | 718 views | 0 recommendations | 1 comment

A couple of days ago we posted about Strat-O-Matic turning 50 years old next month. The company is doing it up big time. Die hard players that traditionally make the pilgrimage to the company's Glen Head, Long Island headquarters each February to be the first to pick up the latest set of cards have a bigger venue to trek to this year.



Cover via Amazon

On February 12, they'll be showing up at a church in midtown Manhattan to not only collect their cards, but to hobnob with celebrity players, play pick-up games and sit in on panel discussions led by company founder Hal Richman and others. And there's more. For the game that ignited the original fantasy sports craze and, in the process, changed the way fans consumer sports, there's "Strat-O-Matic, The Movie." A small group, Riotous Pictures, plans to mark the Golden Anniversary with footage and interviews from the Feb. 12 convention, along with a behind-the-scenes look at Strat-O-Matic's annual player rating meeting and Richman's induction into the National Jewish Sports Hall of Fame. They hope to get the documentary onto television and then separately onto DVD.

Speaking of player ratings: Richmond once incurred the good natured wrath of former Phillie outfielder Doug Glanville, who was miffed at his defensive rating in 2001. Players were rated anywhere from 1 through 5 at their positions (5 being the worst). Glanville, who had achieved the coveted "1" rating in a couple of prior seasons, was horrified to suddenly see a "2" next to his name. Doubling the pain: Jim Edmonds of the Cardinals got a "1" rating, even though he made about 100 fewer putouts that season. "I could have laid down in the outfield beginning in July and still caught more balls than him," laughs Glanville about his superior range. His teammate in 1998, Greg Jefferies, was a longtime infielder converted to left field the previous season by the Phillies. Predictably, his defense was suspect at best, a fact reflected in his Star-O-Matic rating. During one game, a fan in the bleachers began screaming at him: "Hey, Jefferies, you're a five!" Glanville, standing nearby in center, had to suppress his laughter and, later on, explain to the clueless Jefferies what the guy was talking about.

11

[Share](#)

2

2

[Share](#)

Glanville, who will be hawking the paperback version of his book, *The Game From Where I Stand* at the Feb. 12 convention, became a Strat-O-Matic freak in the mid-70s, when he was barely out of his toddler years. He says it was all part of his older brother's master plan to turn him into a major league ballplayer. Whiffle ball in the yard, supplemented by Strat-O-Matic in the living room. "It was a chance to see the tactical side, how to make lineups," he says. Baseball and math seemed to mix in the Glanville family: Doug's mom was a math teacher for many years, while he went on to an engineering degree at the University of Pennsylvania and then to a nine-year big league career.

Not that Glanville didn't have his own Strat-O-Matic tiff with the fans. The game's setup includes cards numbered 1 through 20. Among their uses: players' base running speed. If you chose to have a runner try to take an extra base, a speedy one would safe if you drew, say, between 1 and 17, an 85% success rate. But outfielders arms were rated, too. A player known to have a rifle might be rated a minus-5, thereby cutting the odds of the speedy runner making it safely to 1 to 12, or 60%. Warming up with a game of catch one day before a game in San Francisco, Glanville heard a fan taunt his throwing strength by calling him a "plus-3 arm." Not figuring that a real life player would get the Strat-O reference, the fan was surprised to hear Glanville's retort: "I've never had a plus-3 arm in my life. Last year I was a minus-1."