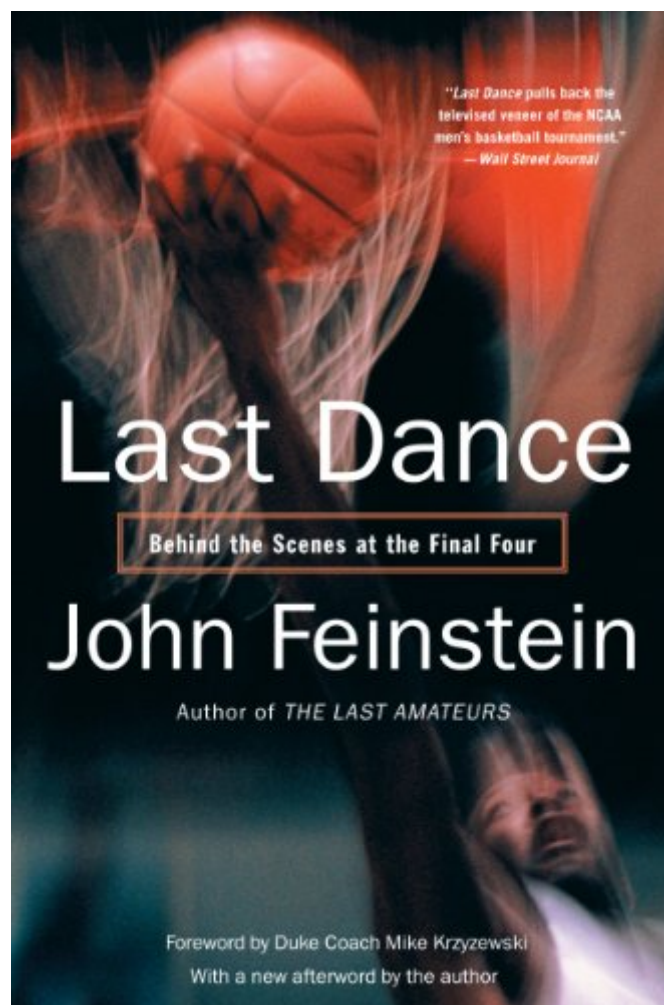


The book was found

Last Dance: Behind The Scenes At The Final Four



Synopsis

Exploring what it means to be a school, a coach, and a player in college basketball's Final Four, Feinstein exposes the driving forces behind one of the most revered events in American sports. Readers will also find dramatic stories from the officials and referees to the scouts and ticket-scalpers.

Book Information

File Size: 783 KB

Print Length: 385 pages

Page Numbers Source ISBN: 031616030X

Publisher: Back Bay Books (November 15, 2008)

Publication Date: November 15, 2008

Sold by: Digital Services LLC

Language: English

ASIN: B00FOR2H1E

Text-to-Speech: Enabled

X-Ray: Not Enabled

Word Wise: Enabled

Lending: Not Enabled

Enhanced Typesetting: Enabled

Best Sellers Rank: #1,221,680 Paid in Kindle Store (See Top 100 Paid in Kindle Store) #9

in Kindle Store > Kindle eBooks > Nonfiction > Sports > Basketball > College & University #50

in Books > Sports & Outdoors > Basketball > College & University

Customer Reviews

Any fan of college basketball will enjoy this book from John Feinstein. It is a remarkably quick read filled with interesting anecdotes and stories from previous Final Fours and different perspectives from the 2005 Final Four in St. Louis. However, I felt there were two fairly significant flaws in the book. First, the book is remarkably repetitive. Within the first 15 pages of the book I learned that the Duke class of '86 was Coach K's first "great" recruiting class, that they had a great team in '85-'86 and were stunned, disappointed and impacted by losing in the Final game to Louisville. Great. But I did not need to hear versions of literally the same sentences 3 or 4 more times in the book. Likewise, outside of Harry Potter, I never thought I would see the phrase "Lord Voltemort" 3 or 4 times in a sports book. These were not the only examples. It seemed that this was a very good 220

page book extended into 330 pages. The book felt like it was made of discrete chapters, but not to be read together due to the repetition. I am no literary critic, but I am curious about the editorial decision to compose the book in a way that so frequently repeats the same stories. The second, and perhaps more disappointing critique, is that it is not as interesting as I had hoped. Missing from this book, that likely will be read by fairly serious college basketball fans, is any sense of basketball strategy that the Final Four coaches employed during the 2005 games. I presume Feinstein did not have access during the tournament or after to the coaches that could have added detail to the game flow and strategy. With a greater level of "technical detail" the book would have been more interesting to me.

Like baseball fans who spend the winter chanting their mantra --- "pitchers and catchers" --- in anticipation of the first day of spring training, college basketball enthusiasts count down the days until March Madness, the tournament to crown the NCAA basketball champions. The sporting event has become one of the biggest in the country, aided by increased media attention that now includes coverage of all the games, not just those among the teams fighting to be involved in the final face-off. John Feinstein captures all the tumult in his typically illuminating fashion in *LAST DANCE: Behind the Scenes at the Final Four*. As in his other books, which encompass baseball, football, basketball, golf and tennis, he focuses on the buildup of the excitement leading up to the championship game rather than dwell on the athletic accomplishments of individual participants. Feinstein has the ability to entice even those who don't consider themselves sports fans. He makes his subjects human, making them accessible to the level of the average person, while at the same time telling us what makes them remarkable. For example, this anecdote about legendary UCLA coach John Wooden: "The lobby was still crowded and, as often happens when Wooden crosses a room or a lobby, people stopped what they were doing to watch the great man. At that moment, what they saw was heartbreaking: Wooden pushing his wife's wheelchair, everyone knowing that her time was short." To this day, no one is certain how it began, but someone started to clap. Then others did the same thing. By the time the Woodens had reached the elevators, everyone in the lobby was turned in their direction, clapping. It was one of those unrehearsed moments that become remarkable ones.

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