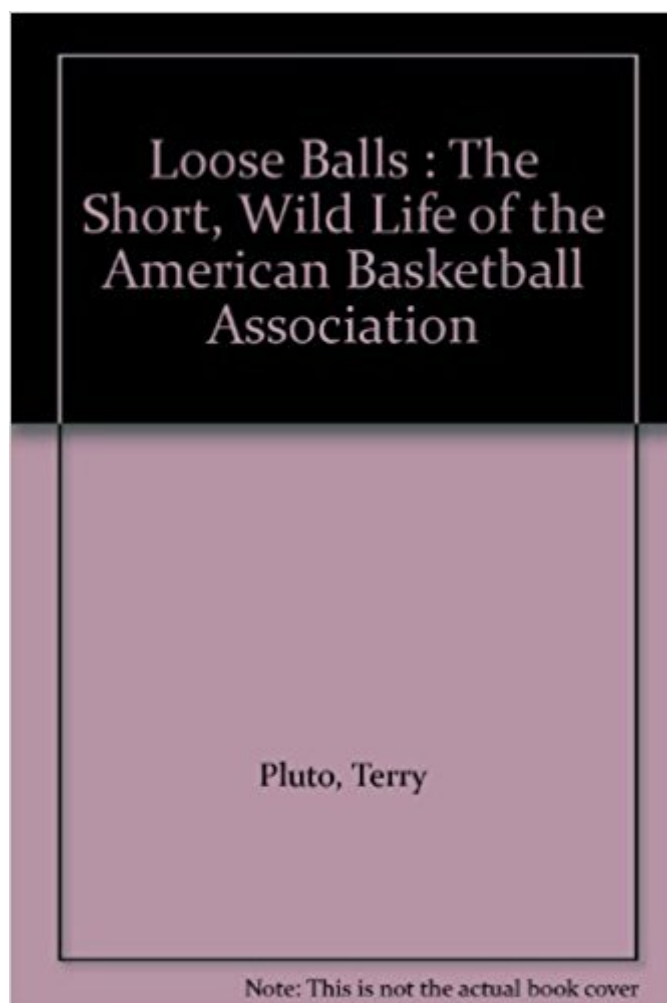


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Loose Balls: Short, Wild Life Of The American Basketball Association



Synopsis

The American Basketball Association (1967-1976) gave birth to Julius Erving, Moses Malone, Bob Costas, the Indiana Pacers, the San Antonio Spurs, the Slam Dunk contest, flashy moves, and the three-point basket. During its nine seasons, the ABA generated scorn and laughter--and made a lasting impact on how the game is played. 24 pages of photographs. --This text refers to the Paperback edition.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

If you remember the ABA, and loved the red, white and blue ball, the original 3-point line, and what it all brought to the game of basketball, then consider this required reading. I cannot remember when I have laughed so hard while reading a documentary. The depictions of the players, and the unusual antics the owners tried to get people to come watch is simply too funny to describe here. Whether it was making a big deal out of \$100,000 contracts (really just "very" long annuities) or getting the whole crowd to move to one side of the arena (the side shown on TV) the league went to new lengths to promote the product. Cow milking at halftime? Whatever the means, there is no doubt that the ABA changed the game forever. The first slam dunk contest, the 3-point line, and the creativity of the play itself were brand new. While the league may have been a circus act compared to the classic NBA who had the Laker's, Celtic's, Wilt, Russell, West, Oscar and others, make no mistake that some of the best to ever play came not out of the NBA but the ABA. Connie Hawkins was MJ long before MJ himself followed in the footsteps of another ABA great; Dr. J. The ABA started the early college exodus with the legal decision "hardship" rule applied to the great Spencer

Haywood. If you think Rasheed Wallace with his 28 technicals a season is a strange act to follow, he pales in comparison with some of the bruisers in the "other" league. One story about a player/coach, who had benched himself for fighting, ends with the coach putting himself in as a player and decking someone not 30 seconds into the game! Who can forget the famous Marvin Barnes?

This book is a sports gem. The wild ride of the American Basketball Association from inception to its eventual collapse and NBA absorption of the San Antonio Spurs, Indiana Pacers, Denver Nuggets and New Jersey Nets. The book is divided into 3 parts. Opening Gambits, Middle Game and Endgame. The first part deals with the origins of the league from the hiring of its first Commissioner, George Mikan and the idea behind the red, white and blue basketball and the struggles of early ABA teams to stock their rosters to a great section on The Indiana Pacers, one of the leagues best organizations. Everything is told in a series of stories told by the people involved. It is a credit to author Terry Pluto's reporting skills and ability to edit that makes this so enjoyable. Part 2 deals includes a lengthy section about the greatest player to come out of the ABA, Julius Erving. The Doctor must have been a wonder to behold in his early years as he is spoke of in awe by teammates, opponents, and coaches. Also the many stories of the often bizarre characters that inhabited the ABA are priceless in and of themselves. Of which the reader will often find themselves laughing out loud. The section on The San Antonio Spurs is enjoyable in that you learn the humble origins of the current NBA dynasty. Part 3 covers such franchises as the Kentucky Colonels who were considered underachievers until they finally won an ABA championship in 1975. Probably the most entertaining section of the book chronicles the story of the Spirits Of St. Louis. The tales told of this franchise often boggle the mind if one has any idea how professional athletes are expected to act.

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