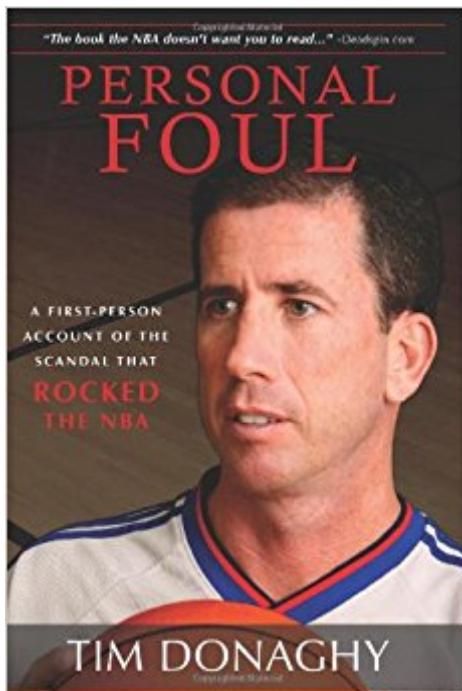


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Personal Foul: A First-Person Account Of The Scandal That Rocked The NBA



Synopsis

The media has speculated and sports fans have debated, but until now no one has known the real story. Personal Foul takes an in-depth look at former NBA referee Tim Donaghy and the betting scandal that rocked professional basketball. Containing never-before-seen documentation and correspondence between the league office, referees, coaches, players and owners, this is the decisive book that reveals exactly what was done and how it all happened. Which games were affected and how? Is it true that referees targeted particular players? Just how much did the NBA know and when? How did the mafia get involved? Personal Foul answers all of these questions and more. Thrilling and poignant, Personal Foul takes the reader on the journey of one man wrestling his own demons and shines a light on a culture of gambling and "directive" officiating in the NBA that promises to change the way sports fans view the game forever.

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Customer Reviews

This is the memoir of disgraced former NBA referee Tim Donaghy. As most basketball fans know Donaghy pleaded guilty in federal court in 2008 to conspiracy to engage in wire fraud and transmitting wagering information through interstate commerce. Donaghy delivers to the reader a no-holds-barred indoctrination of how a boy who not only grew up loving sports and dreaming of playing or refereeing in the NBA one day... but also looked up to his Father whose life as a high school and college referee was the embodiment of integrity. When Tim fulfills his childhood dream of becoming an NBA referee... he exalts in the fame and fortune that this position provides. He gets

to rub shoulders with the likes of Jack Nicholson... Spike Lee... and countless other celebrities... in addition to having superstars like Michael Jordan, Shaquille O'Neal, Kobe Bryant... et al... currying to win favor from him... whether real or imagined... or what lies in between. In a painful self-evaluation the author paints a self-portrait of a man who literally became a degenerate gambling addict. In addition to contacts with childhood friends who became involved in organized crime and started "working" Donaghy for predictions of who would win specific NBA games... Donaghy slowly but inexorably... couldn't live without gambling. "MAKING 35 TO 40 BETS PER WEEK ON FOOTBALL, BASEBALL, BASKETBALL, AND HOCKEY, WE CONTINUED TO GAMBLE ON GOLF AT THE COUNTRY CLUB, CARDS IN THE BACK PARLOR, AND BLACKJACK IN THE CASINOS." Despite being a husband and Father of four young daughters... he lied to his wife and went to Atlantic City for binges at the casinos while telling his wife he was elsewhere. But what was at the absolute despicable core of his illegal and immoral activity... was the inside information...

If you love watching the NBA and want to continue enjoying it while living in denial, don't read this book. If you want to know the truth about all the things you've wondered and feared while watching strangely refereed games, this book confirms them and then some (you Suns fans had a championship stolen from you in 2007, not to mention all you poor Sacramento fans). The amazing thing about Donaghy's tell-all is how simple and straightforward the whole process was. Donaghy's formula was almost foolproof: by knowing which referees would be refing each game (and, from experience, know which referees disliked or favored specific players and coaches), by tracking the late-breaking directives from NBA management (which teams the refs were supposed to "crack down" on in order to extend series or help major-market teams win over small-market teams) and by keeping an ear to word from ballboys and mascots, etc., as to which players were sick or injured, Donaghy was able to pick winners about 80 percent of the time. Now that last part (listening to mascots) is innocent, but the first two are complete and indefensible indictments of the NBA under David Stern. This is a league rotten perhaps not to its core (the players and coaches play and coach their hearts out) but certainly in the upper echelons, which makes it all the worse. Under Stern, marketing and profits have made the teams' performances more or less irrelevant, and Donaghy documents the corruption in convincing detail. No wonder Stern fought like hell to block this book. The book bogs down when Donaghy talks about his personal path to gambling addiction and so forth, and you can basically skim through and skip those chapters.

The story of a good man gone bad. The story of years and years of hard work, down the drain. The

story of bad decisions resulting in the rebirth of a new person. The story of the internal struggle between good and evil. The story of Tim Donaghy is both riveting and life changing through all the stories he personally relates to the reader. Growing up in small-town Pennsylvania, it seemed as if Donaghy would never amount to anything. Through hard work and many trials, Donaghy finally made it to the National Basketball Association and was able to run with the big dogs and superstars. In a reasonable amount of time, Donaghy was introduced into the wrong crowds and gambling habits mixed with poor situations, created a recipe for absolute and total disaster. In the end, he realized honesty was the best shot and although the mistakes he made were not reversible, he can still find the strength and faith to live each day to the fullest and be the role model he used to be for his daughters. The second I turned the first page of Donaghy's book, I could not stop turning the pages. I read the book for three days straight trying to progress through all stages of Donaghy's life that he was so willing to share with the public and more importantly, the reader. The experiences Donaghy shared about various NBA players such as Shaquille O'Neal, Michael Jordan, and Kobe Bryant showed that he was not the only one in the NBA that was at fault. Donaghy also discussed various superstars like Jack Nickolson and how they were relentless on the referees.

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