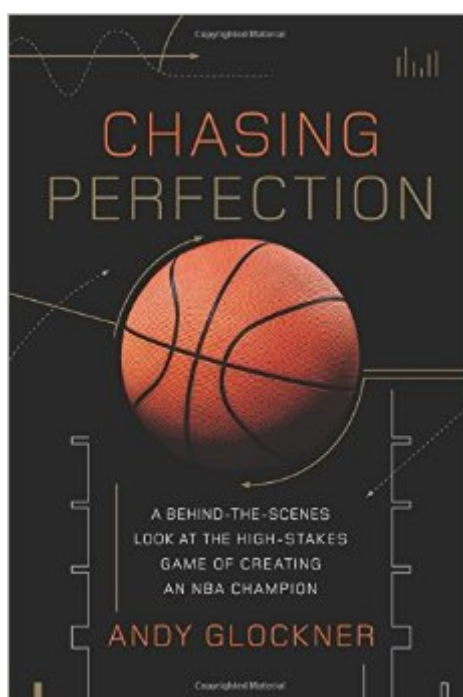


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Chasing Perfection: A Behind-the-Scenes Look At The High-Stakes Game Of Creating An NBA Champion



Synopsis

Chasing Perfection goes behind the scenes of the multi-million dollar, high-stakes world of basketball player development, research and analysis, and the often secretive, cutting-edge methods that NBA franchises use to turn less-expensive, supporting players into vital parts of championship teams. NBA superstars push as close to perfection as we're likely to see, but they are few and far between. The farther you get from the league's top echelon of talent, the more it's up to the players and their teams to develop and utilize their strengths while diminishing and masking their weaknesses as much as possible. There are no perfect basketball players, but there are plenty of perfected ones, who start with a basis of skill and physical ability and then are refined further and further in order to move closer and closer to their absolute potential. In Chasing Perfection, national sportswriter Andy Glockner reveals that, though the concept of player improvement is as old as basketball itself, the current era of Big Data analytics in the NBA is transforming that process more quickly and aggressively than anything we have seen before. Players are learning more and more about themselves through video and data visualization, seeing how things like diet and sleep can impact their performance, and learning how having healthy joints and role-specific workout plans are lengthening and improving their careers. Teams are internalizing the same lessons, as well as figuring out how to better implement optimal on-court strategies, how to refine their approaches to player acquisition and how to gauge the varying values and success rates of different, crucial team-building strategies. It's an absolutely fascinating time to be a fan, as the marriage of basketball and technology is bringing two of our most popular and competitive worlds together in compelling fashion. Using the 2014-15 NBA season as a prism to explore this mesh of sport and science, Glockner offers detailed perspective from NBA players, coaches, team management, and media, offering a comprehensive insider's view of how analytics are shaping the basketball we watch, and how those who are lagging behind in the technology race already are feeling the competitive hit.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

Andy Glockner's book is a "behind the scenes look at the high stakes game of creating an NBA champion." It delves into the fairly recent evolution of statistics (big data analytics) and its impact on professional basketball. How is the NBA-- a league of big money and big outcomes -- using this potentially massive amount of data to its advantage? Is it the players, the coaches, the teams, the front offices looking to benefit? How can big data and statistics fit into the traditional paradigm of the NBA as we know it? I nabbed an advanced copy of this book, because I'm a sports fan and a big NBA fan. I thought the book was going to take a look at the 2014/2015 season and how stats impacted it, but I don't feel that it exactly delivered on its promise. That's not to say it's not a good read. It's certainly enjoyable if you like basketball, particularly the NBA. If you're a fan of statistics and numbers related to your sports, you'll love the book, as it's chock full of data. In fact, so much that it reads like a term paper sometimes. My biggest issue, in fact, was that it was almost a little too dry and statistics heavy, with an outline that jumped around in organization, making it hard to follow and stay engaged. Still, the book is extremely well-researched and you'll pick up a lot of good tidbits to impress fellow sports fans. Overall, it was amazing to read about the impact of statistics on the NBA and how what would take the video and tape guys hours (probably days ages ago) can now be compiled in seconds by companies with algorithms and computer programs. Glockner introduces to us to several of these firms, including SportsVU, and does a good job explaining their evolution. (Perhaps too good a job - it gets to be a bit much at times.

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