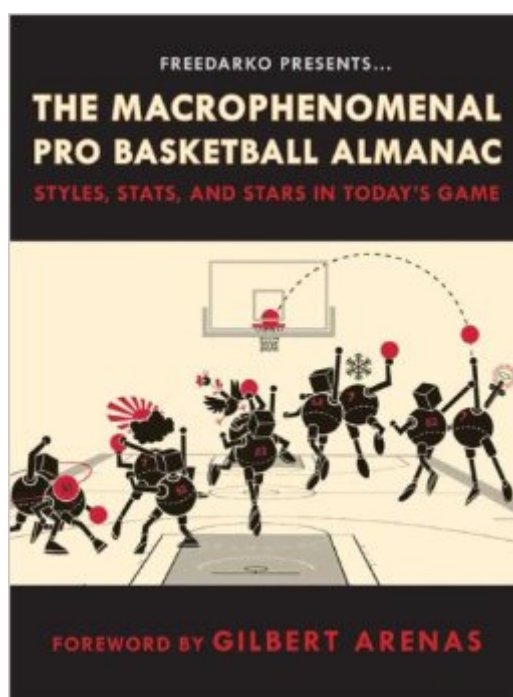


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FreeDarko Presents: The Macrophenomenal Pro Basketball Almanac: Styles, Stats, And Stars In Today's Game



Synopsis

Unlike regimented football or stats-happy baseball, The National Basketball Association is above all else a league of characters. Over the course of a season, games are, of course, won or lost, but for millions of devoted fans, the final result is almost incidental to the way the league's best players perform on - and off - the court. This book is the indispensable companion to today's game - a roundball Rosetta Stone that hilariously decodes the trends and tendencies of this enormously popular game. The NBA of the moment is a league of hugely charismatic celebrities, crackling aesthetic intrigue, socio-political undercurrents, and raw humanity: every Kobe Bryant pump-fake or LeBron James dunk symbolizes the changing landscape of professional sports and holds within it a Shaq-sized load of meaning. Fans who know the sport recognize how much more there is to basketball than, well, basketball. The Macro-Phenomenal Pro Basketball Almanac is a brilliantly illustrated guide to this tumultuous and exciting landscape. It explains what each player--from Tim Duncan and Gilbert Arenas to Amare Stoudemire and Lamar Odom--reveals, through their play and conduct, about who they are and, more importantly, who the fans want them to be. Like the game it celebrates, The Macro-Phenomenal Pro Basketball Almanac is simultaneously authentic and cerebral, funny and accessible, wholly original, and always entertaining.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

I might as well just come out and say it: I'm an NBA fan, through and through -- rabidly, almost, it's kind of insane. I wasn't for awhile. I grew up living and dying with the Lakers, but somewhere between the second and third titles of the Shaq/Kobe era, I just lost interest. Politics, art, activism, music, and other interests took hold, and I thought I was leaving behind a banal, childish fixture for

more sophisticated tastes. And while it wasn't the FreeDarko collective or their fabulous blog that brought me back into basketball (how THAT happened, I'll never figure out), they were responsible for convincing me that the NBA, despite its clamoring for mainstream appeal and the obsessive attempts to ingratiate itself to corporate America through not just its business model, but the leagues entire culture -- despite standing for so much that I am against, it was this group of writers that taught me that this sport is worthwhile. That not only is basketball sophisticated, it's fun. The Macrophenomenal Almanac analyzes the league as it was meant to be seen -- in terms of the players, and is complemented perfectly by beautiful illustrations and graphs, and the purely genius "style guide". Thus, the authors spend a full chapter each on several of the most interesting, meaningful players in the game. And meaningful is of their own definition -- meaning in terms of symbolism, not wins and losses, which is why there is a chapter on Stephon Marbury, who for all his talent and ability may never play another game in his career, simply because he's such a nutjob, and not on more "deserving" players like former MVP's Dirk Nowitski or Shaquille O'Neal.

This is not your father's basketball book. It is definitely "new school." It's tough to know where to begin when describing "The Macrophenomenal Pro Basketball Almanac," which isn't really an almanac. But for starters, take a look at the cover if you can. It's an example of the illustrations that grace the pages; they make sense once you read the text. From there, you should know that this is written by the team that brings you the Free Darko blog, a smart look at the NBA written with plenty of wit and attitude. The premise here is that the NBA should be celebrating individuals and their styles, that teams have become a lot less relevant (to some, maybe irrelevant). The authors take a look at 18 players and group them into six categories. For example, "Destiny's Kids" are LeBron James, Chris Paul and Amare Stoudemire, which sounded about right at the time of publication. The "Phenomenal Tumors" refer to the biggest cancers in the league: Ron Artest, Vince Carter, and Stephon Marbury. Each player gets about 8 to 10 pages, complete with a description of "spirit animal" (Tim Duncan gets the Nurse shark, for example). Some players receive unique statistical breakdowns, such as proof of Lamar Odom's diversified talents or of Marbury's effect on his old teams and his new teams over the years. Every player gets a couple of illustrated pages devoted to style with witty symbols. Kobe Bryant's initial fakes are depicted by replacing Bryant's head with an abacus in order to show his calculating nature. (Honest, it works.) In between the categories are little sidebars. Two are particularly noteworthy. The authors go through the 2000 NBA Draft, which in hindsight was a rather large waste of time for all concerned.

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