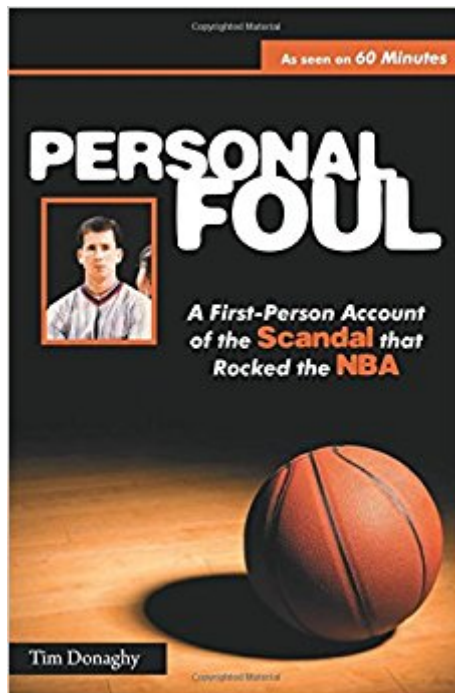




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# Personal Foul: A First-Person Account Of The Scandal That Rocked The NBA



## Synopsis

The media has often 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. This is the decisive book that reveals exactly what was done and how it all happened. Which games were affected and how? Did referees target particular players or teams? Just how much did the NBA know and when? How did the mafia get involved? The book answers all of these questions and more. Thrilling and poignant, *Personal Foul* takes readers 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. The book also includes a foreword by Phil Scala, the FBI Special Agent who worked the Gambino case.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

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. --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

Born in Havertown Pennsylvania, Tim Donaghy loved the game of basketball ever since he could remember. He received his love for the game from his father Gerry Donaghy, who had officiated at high school and collegiate level games for over thirty years. Since he lived so close to Philadelphia, he naturally became a 76ers fan. Some of his favorite players were Doug Collins and Mike Dunleavy. Donaghy attended Cardinal O'Hara High School in Springfield, Pennsylvania where he played competitively during his four years spent there. Following high school, Donaghy graduated from Villanova University with a liberal arts degree in 1989. Although Donaghy had a degree after his graduation, he became unsatisfied with the direction in which his career was headed. One night while sitting at the kitchen table with his parents, his mother suggested that he look into a career in the NBA. It was all the motivation that he needed, and began to pursue his new found dream job. Later as Tim Donaghy perfected his skills as a referee through training camps, he was noticed by the NBA supervisor of officials Darell Garretson. This eventually led to Tim Donaghy's start in the CBA, the NBA's official minor league. He officiated for three years in the CBA. Before his fourth year Donaghy was called to officiate in the NBA. From 1994 to 2007 Tim Donaghy worked for the NBA, officiating in 772 regular-season games and 20 playoff games. Donaghy was a participant in the NBA's Read to Achieve program, for which he participated in an event at the Universal Charter school during the 2002 NBA Finals. His uniform number was 21 --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

As a huge fan of NBA basketball, many things in this book merely confirmed what I already knew. The officiating in the NBA is often biased and the outcome of the games is quite often controlled by the officials. They have favorite players and favorite coaches and don't mind helping them win if they can do it without blatantly making calls in their favor. Anybody that has followed the NBA saw the favoritism for the Miami Heat in 2012 and 2013. I think Tim Donaghy got caught up in something and didn't know how to get out. Once he was caught, he did the right thing by confessing to his part and learning a lesson from his mistakes. I wish, as he states at the end of the book, there was a way to control the bias by referees. While the gamblers, Vegas and organized crime love crooked referees, most fans just want a fairly called game. Nothing is more frustrating than to watch a team play so hard to have a win snatched from them by a referee. It happens way too much.

great book, read it cover to cover. I loved reading about the game they played where the first ref to call a foul in a game has to buy dinner. LOL. I loved the break down of notable refs, and their tendencies, who they loved, who they hated. As an NBA fan, this is a must read because we see these refs every game, and we've always made note of their reputations, but this makes it all make sense.

I usually don't read this type of autobiographical book, but this turned out to be a great read and a very important one for NBA fans in general. This book was written by Tim Donaghy, a veteran NBA referee whose gambling habits took the best of him in a wild roller-coaster that eventually led him to bet on NBA games which he himself worked in (he strongly claims that he didn't fix these games, but only had a good idea which team has the edge). This book is so important and mind opening experience, at least for me, as you read a genuine story about how a man who had it all: one of the best jobs in the world, over \$250K salary and a great family. Still, having too much free time in his off-season led from harmless gambling with his country club buddies, through once in a while visits to casinos, gambling on other sports events and eventually to gambling on the NBA. This guy did not need the money, as he says the motivation for gambling was the rush and adrenaline, which apparently was lacking from his daily lives. I guess that he has some bad personality traits that allowed him to be sucked into that rabbit hole, but this book should serve as a warning sign to everyone. Even the rational, educated, well paid guy can under some circumstances be sucked to the dark side of gambling. The book takes us from the start of his gambling habits, through the investigation and up to the jail time. For the NBA fans I can say that you get a lot of information about huge problems in the fairness of the competition. Nothing that cannot be fixed, or that caused me to stop watching and attending games, but still a lot of information that is kept in the back of my mind when I follow games. For example, I was amazed to discover how Michael Jordan influenced the new referees in the games by bribing them fair and straight with free signed memorabilia. I was also amazed to discover the amount of nepotism that is widespread in the referee community. Another interesting stuff for NBA fans can be found in chapter 5 where he talks about different players and their personalities: for example, it was surprising to find Gary Payton in the top 5 list of the most "hated" players in the NBA. The only down point that I can find is that NBA fans who are looking for more beef about fixed games and wrong relationships will not get a lot more than what was already published in Tim's TV interviews (which all can be found on his personal website). To sum up, a highly recommended book which is both very informative to sports fans, and at the same time tells an interesting story that teaches the reader some important lessons about life in general. I would

strongly recommend getting this books to teenagers who follow the NBA (and are reading books) for the same reasons presented above.

Tim Donaghy is worth reading. Forget about what he did. He admits his mistake. What is important is what he has to say about the integrity of NBA officiating. If you watch as many games as I do, then you know that refs are not merely incompetent. They are willfully changing the outcomes of games on a regular basis. Sure, Tim Donaghy bet on NBA games, but that does not mean that he is lying when he tells us that refs make sure that games are kept close and that certain teams are all but guaranteed a win. There were no surprises in Donaghy's book, just justification for what we have long suspected. Donaghy named a few names, but he could have named many more. I suspect that many of you who read this could add to Donaghy's list, too...and provide examples! Most of what Donaghy writes about has the ring of truth because we have seen honest officiating compromised over and over again! Buy this book! You won't be disappointed.

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