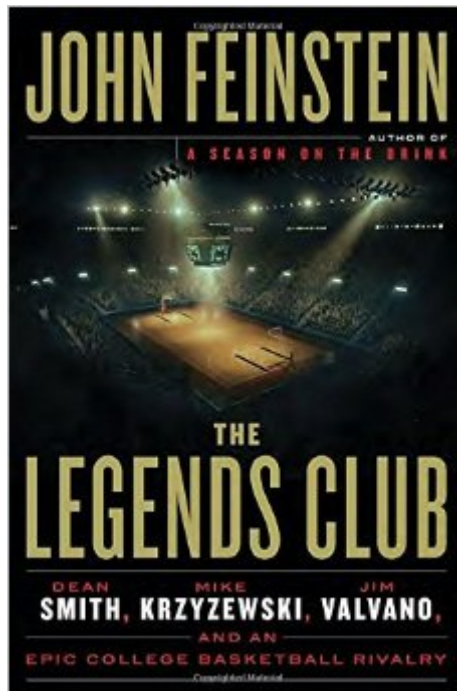


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The Legends Club: Dean Smith, Mike Krzyzewski, Jim Valvano, And An Epic College Basketball Rivalry



Synopsis

The riveting inside story of college basketball's fiercest rivalry among three coaching legends—University of North Carolina's Dean Smith, Duke's Mike Krzyzewski, and North Carolina State's Jim Valvano—by the king of college basketball writers, #1 New York Times bestseller John Feinstein. On March 18, 1980, the immensely powerful Duke basketball program announced the hiring of its new coach—the man who would resurrect the team, restore glory to Duke, and defeat the legendary Dean Smith, who coached down the road at UNC Chapel Hill and had turned UNC into a powerhouse. Duke's new man was Mike Krzyzewski. The only problem was, no one knew who Krzyzewski was, he had a so-so record in his short time as head coach of Army, and worst of all, no one could even pronounce his name. The announcement caused head scratches . . . if not immediate calls for his head . . . and on this note his career at Duke began. The table was set nine days later, when on March 27, 1980, Jim Valvano was hired by North Carolina State to be their new head coach. The hiring didn't raise as many eyebrows, but with the exuberant Valvano on board, two new coaches were now in place to challenge Dean Smith—and the most sensational competitive decade in history was about to unfold. In the skillful hands of John Feinstein, this extraordinary rivalry—and the men behind it—come to life in a unique, intimate way. The Legends Club is a sports book that captures an era in American sport and culture, documenting the inside view of a decade of absolutely incredible competition. Feinstein pulls back the curtain on the recruiting wars, the intensely personal competition that wasn't always friendly, the enormous pressure and national stakes, and the battle for the very soul of college basketball allegiance in a hot-bed area. Getting to the roots of the NCAA goliath that is followed religiously by millions of fans today, Feinstein uses his unprecedented access to all three coaches to paint a portrait only he could conjure. The Legends Club is destined to be one of Feinstein's biggest bestsellers.

Book Information

Hardcover: 416 pages

Publisher: Doubleday (March 1, 2016)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 038553941X

ISBN-13: 978-0385539418

Product Dimensions: 6.5 x 1.4 x 9.6 inches

Shipping Weight: 1.5 pounds (View shipping rates and policies)

Average Customer Review: 4.4 out of 5 stars See all reviews (223 customer reviews)

Best Sellers Rank: #11,424 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #3 in Books > Sports & Outdoors > Basketball > Coaching #7 in Books > Biographies & Memoirs > Sports & Outdoors > Basketball #13 in Books > Sports & Outdoors > Miscellaneous > History of Sports

Customer Reviews

John Feinstein's "The Legends Club" will be required reading in North Carolina, recommended reading in the 'old ACC' (before the conference went nuts and added fifteen or twenty new teams), and on the bookshelves of college basketball junkies. But readers of Feinstein will recognize "The Legends Club" as more of the same for Feinstein, a sportswriter who gives a great anecdote but is as tough as cotton candy on his subjects. Perhaps it shouldn't be a surprise, but "The Legends Club" is hagiography of the highest order for the three coaches he focuses the book on - North Carolina State's Jim Valvano, North Carolina's Dean Smith, and Duke's Mike Krzyzewski ("Coach K"). Full disclosure - I am a graduate of both North Carolina ('93) and Duke ('96) and a college basketball fan. So I am extremely familiar with the territory Feinstein covers. Feinstein writes about the white-hot rivalry of these three coaches, each united by an unyielding drive to win and yet as different as different can be. The oldest, Dean Smith, brought a rigid sense of justice and liberalism to the game, but was also incredibly competitive and sensitive to every slight. He built the most admired college basketball program in a basketball-mad part of the country. Coach K came in to coach Duke, North Carolina's top rival, with no pedigree but with a genius for the game - and a chip on his shoulder equal to Dean's. And then there was Coach Valvano, the funniest guy in every room he walked into but also a basketball savant, but who was also restless as a national title-winning coach (still asking himself 'what will I be when I grow up?').

At its best, sports is a world of camaraderie, fellowship and shared memories often outliving the participants. At its worst, it's a world of greed, cheating and manipulation. For two decades, John Feinstein has chronicled the sporting world for good and evil in a string of bestselling sports books. Golf and college basketball are his areas of expertise, but his nonfiction writings include 24 books that also cover college and professional football, as well as major league baseball. THE LEGENDS CLUB is the story of a college basketball rivalry among three college coaches, two of whom would occupy positions on the Mt. Rushmore of college coaches and one who is revered and recalled by many for his humor and coaching ability but whose career sadly was shortened by scandal and cancer. Dean Smith was the legendary head basketball coach at North Carolina; Mike Krzyzewski, the coach at Duke; and Jim Valvano, the coach at North Carolina State. Smith was already an iconic

figure at North Carolina when, in a span of 10 days, Duke hired Krzyzewski and State brought on Valvano. The three schools were located within miles of each other and played in the same Atlantic Coast Conference, a college basketball hotbed. For a decade, the three coaches were intense rivals on and off the court. They recruited the same players, played each other multiple times each season, and battled the same pressures endured by many coaches in college basketball. Feinstein paints a vivid portrait of the three men. On the pages of THE LEGENDS CLUB, the multi-million-dollar industry that is "March Madness" and college basketball come together to reveal the best and the worst of the game. From his previous books on college basketball, Feinstein was well-acquainted with the three coaches he chronicles here.

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