

Crazy Basketball: A Life In and Out of Bounds

Charley Rosen



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Commentator, analyst, author, and all-around pro basketball presence, Charley Rosen may seem like a natural, sprung upon the sports scene with the NBA in his blood. Phil Jackson, Rosen's longtime collaborator, might agree; after all, he attributes the statement on a plaque on his desk to Charley: "Basketball isn't just a metaphor for life—it's more important than that!" And yet how Rosen arrived at his present position comfortably overseeing basketball at its finest is a story as unexpected as it is delightful, documenting basketball travels as unlikely as they are nomadic and eclectic.

Rosen's story begins during his undergraduate days at Hunter College, where his basketball exploits were equally triumphant and embarrassing, including a pickup game against Wilt Chamberlain. Things really got interesting when he made his way into the Continental Basketball Association (CBA), the breeding ground for nothing less than the second-best gathering of basketball players in the world. In the circus that was the CBA, Rosen found his place alongside Phil Jackson, then the newly hired coach of the Albany Patroons. Life in the CBA, as Rosen tells it, was never dull, with players doing illegal substances on van rides through snowstorms and teams financed by porn producers. His journey from the CBA to a desk at Fox Sports is a one-of-a-kind basketball story—only to be believed in the words of the guy who actually lived it.

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