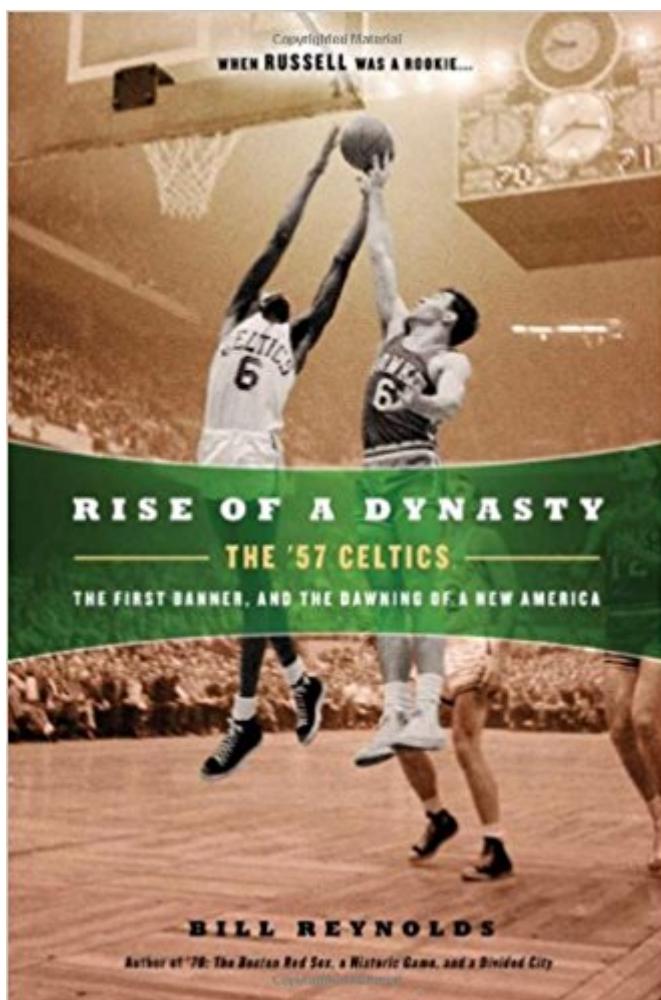


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Rise Of A Dynasty: The '57 Celtics, The First Banner, And The Dawning Of A New America



Synopsis

On a fateful day in 1957, the country saw the Boston Celtics and the St. Louis Hawks face off in one of the most dramatic NBA games in history. But the score at the final buzzer told only part of the story. Celtics rookie Bill Russell, traded by the Hawks because of his race, emerged as a new sports hero. Boston's coach Red Auerbach went on to become the ultimate winner and builder of championship teams. And the city of Boston and its beloved Celtics had their first NBA championship-and the makings of a dynasty. --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

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Customer Reviews

Bill Reynolds is an award-winning columnist for the Providence Journal and the co-author of the New York Times bestseller, *Success Is a Choice*. He is also the author of '78, *Cousy*, and *Fall River Dreams*. --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

In 1957, professional basketball was still in its infancy, struggling to be taken seriously. It was seen as a minor sport with poor attendance. "To say that the NBA was ragtag was an understatement," writes author Bill Reynolds. NBA play was usually rough and fights were common. Play tended to be half-court and there were no jump shots. Few players shot more than 30 percent. The 1957 NBA championship series went to seven games as the all-white St. Louis Hawks battled the Boston Celtics with rookie Bill Russell, who would become the league's first black superstar. Game Seven was the first NBA championship game televised. A thrilling 125-123 overtime Celtics' win before a

huge television audience helped spark interest in the NBA. The 1957 Celtics with Coach Red Auerbach, Bob Cousy, Bill Sharman, Bill Russell, Tommy Heinshon and Ed MacCauley won the first of 11 championships in 13 seasons. Auerbach, Cousy and Russell changed the game is played in their own ways. Auerbach, hired in 1950, was all about winning. He didn't care who he alienated as long as he won. He was a master manipulator who never motivated players the same way. His only goal was to make the group better, whatever it took. Cousy, a showman and master ballhandler, was credited with saving the NBA in its early years. He was a popular Everyman, a rags-to-riches story and a Holy Cross graduate who was a fan favorite. Cousy wanted to win as much as Auerbach. Russell was a combination of size and athleticism never seen before in the NBA. He turned defense into an art form. One scout said, "He can't shoot at all, but he's the best player I've ever seen." He came to win and the only statistic he cared about was whether his team won. While the Celtics-Hawks championship series is the anchor for the book, Reynolds spends most of his time discussing the 1950s era, the fledging NBA and the impact of Russell on the NBA. He paints interesting portraits of the individual Celtics and Hawks. You don't have to be a Boston Celtics fan to enjoy this book. I think any NBA fan will appreciate how Coach Auerbach and the Celtics built the foundation of a dynasty.

I love basketball history and appreciate the asides given in the book. But too often, Reynolds repeats himself. The same points about Cousy, Russell, and Auerbach are touched on without delving into those issues further. It was an enjoyable look at basketball history, but it could have been more. Occasional factual errors also hurt the book.

Bill Reynolds tells a great story, not just of the epic April 13, 1957 double overtime game between the Celtics and the Hawks, but he does an incredible job of telling what the NBA was like back then, what the US was like in the mid-fifties and he also does a great job of delving deeply into the persona of Russell, Cousy and Auerbach. As someone who sat on the end of the Hawks bench as their 14 year old water boy that day, I can tell you that Reynolds also did a fantastic job of telling the story of the game and everything around it.

Well worth a read by any Boston sports fan, young or old. The Celtics glorious run of titles began in '57 and author Reynolds does a terrific job of bringing to life larger than life heroes like Russell, Cousy, and Auerbach. I have read just about all the books on the Celtics and this one ranks up there with any of them. Interested readers may want to check out "The Short Season" and

"Unfinished Business" on different Celtic dynasty teams, books I think highly of as well. Recommended for all Boston sports fans and a very good intro to sports history for the younger fan.

I bought this book for my husband who is a huge Celtics fan. He really liked it.

I bought this for my husband - a lifelong Celtic fan - as a Christmas gift. He finished the book Christmas Day!!!

It's not that the book isn't great. It's written well, he definitely is beyond educated to write it...but it's not what I expected. Let's be honest when you see the title of this book you expect it to be about what? For me I expected it to be about the Celtics and the making of the season and then the season and in the end? The Championship/Series. However, he adds a lot more insight than I expected. Some of this is good. I enjoy the tangents about Cousy and Heinsohn. I enjoyed learning about the history of Boston (enough so I might read a book about it separately as it is my home city) But in this book the focus seems off. My explanation for this is that he doesn't seem to have a true priority for what he wants to discuss. He talks about the Celtics, but also about the forming of basketball and the origin of the original Knicks, Madison Square Garden and random black teams from the early 1900's. It's all fascinating stuff, but it doesn't feel relevant towards the story. Perhaps the proper way of saying this is that there is too much history and not enough focus on the championship season. The section about Russell and the discrimination he faced and the relationship with Red I enjoyed that immensely. Learning about Cousy, Heinsohn and even how the city generally disregarded the Celtics because of other hero's such as Agganis and Ted Williams was interesting as well and seemed to pertain to the story. But overall the book is good, not great because of a lack of focus. I would absolutely recommend it to any Celtics fan interested in the history. Heck, I'd recommend it to any fan of the city of Boston. But, is it a sports book? Or is it a history lesson of Boston that has to do with the Celtics? I think it's the latter, and to be honest that's kind of disappointing.

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