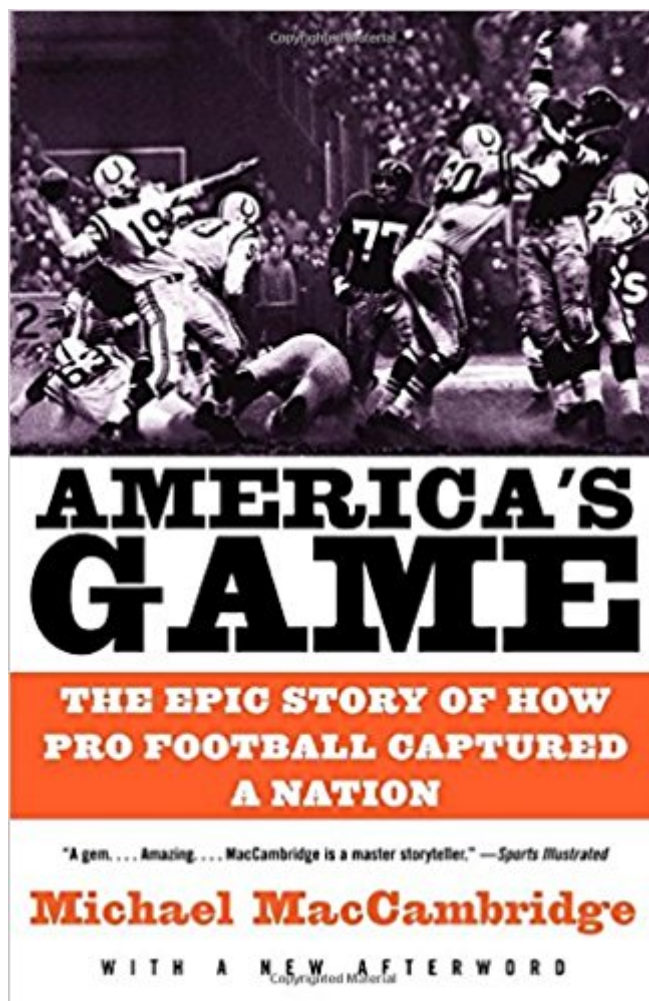


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# America's Game: The Epic Story Of How Pro Football Captured A Nation



## Synopsis

It's difficult to imagine today when the Super Bowl has virtually become a national holiday and the National Football League is the country's dominant sports entity but pro football was once a ramshackle afterthought on the margins of the American sports landscape. In the span of a single generation in postwar America, the game charted an extraordinary rise in popularity, becoming a smartly managed, keenly marketed sports entertainment colossus whose action is ideally suited to television and whose sensibilities perfectly fit the modern age. *America's Game* traces pro football's grand transformation, from the World War II years, when the NFL was fighting for its very existence, to the turbulent 1980s and 1990s, when labor disputes and off-field scandals shook the game to its core, and up to the sport's present-day preeminence. A thoroughly entertaining account of the entire universe of professional football, from locker room to boardroom, from playing field to press box, this is an essential book for any fan of America's favorite sport.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

MacCambridge's sweeping history of pro football starts just before WWII, when the National Football League was still largely a regional organization, and ends with Janet Jackson's wardrobe malfunction at Super Bowl XXXVIII. Though there are plenty of vivid descriptions of remarkable games, what sets this chronicle apart from a slew of other recent football books is the depth and breadth of its stories about players, coaches and owners. The centerpiece of this personal approach is the extensive portrait of the career of Pete Rozelle, who became the NFL's commissioner at 33 and initiated many of the measures that ensured the sport's cultural ascendancy, including a

television deal that distributed revenue equally among all teams. MacCambridge (*The Franchise: A History of Sports Illustrated Magazine*) zeroes in on two sideline projects that might have made the greatest difference in football's rise over baseball: NFL Properties, which brought a consistent standard of excellence to fan paraphernalia; and NFL Films, which solidified the myth of the game as an epic struggle through the instantly recognizable narration of John Facenda. MacCambridge also considers the sport's track record regarding race relations, noting that the NFL's first black players were on the field months before Jackie Robinson, while highlighting the roles played by great African-American athletes like Paul Younger and Jim Brown. Though some fans may be disappointed that their favorite teams and players aren't extensively covered, this magisterial history is a fitting acknowledgment of the sport's legacy. Copyright © Reed Business Information, a division of Reed Elsevier Inc. All rights reserved. --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

**\*Starred Review\*** Football is the professional sport of choice in America today, evidenced by the fact that its championship game, the Super Bowl, is an undeclared national holiday. MacCambridge, author of the extraordinarily informative and very entertaining *The Franchise: A History of Sports Illustrated* (1997), picks up the struggling National Football League immediately after World War II, when the team owners were a ragtag collection of squabbling entrepreneurs. The owners pulled together somewhat to squash a rival league and usurp its best team, the Cleveland Browns, but the NFL's ascendancy really began in the 1950s, coinciding with the growth of television.

MacCambridge tracks the history in a thoroughly readable narrative, devoting plenty of space to the 1958 overtime championship game between the Baltimore Colts and the New York Giants--a game that mesmerized a national television audience and created the momentum that would carry the league--under the visionary leadership of commissioner Pete Rozelle--through the merger with another rival, the American Football League, and the start of the Super Bowl phenomenon.

MacCambridge also offers revealing profiles of the front-office figures who played key roles in the growth of the league--Rozelle, Paul Brown, Al Davis, and Lamar Hunt--as well as gleaning the insights of former players and coaches such as Jim Brown, Bill Walsh, and John Madden. This is a classy, carefully researched, and very enlightening overview of a uniquely American sports enterprise. Wes Lukowsky Copyright © American Library Association. All rights reserved --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

Started this book before Super Bowl LI and finished a week after, so the timing was perfect for

context and history. The author did an amazingly comprehensive job, and it falls right in line with his biography of Chuck Noll. The details and timing get a little overwhelming at times and I suppose I would have liked to see the work completed in each decade with an end of chapter bullet list of the big changes during the respective 10-year spans. I found myself looking back at chapters to fully connect the dots. But overall...a good, long read and sets the stage for the author to start writing 2006-2020 for the next look inside. Wayne

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Just finished MacCambridge's book this week. Simply, incredible. Mac does the AFL justice with his seminal background investigation into Hunt, Adams and the nascent beginnings of the new league, which in my estimation was the basis for the success of the NFL today. After you have read this book, watch the new AFL Documentary, FOOTBALL IN COLOR, narrated by Peter Coyote, as a companion peiece to this fine book.

The content is excellent. This review is poor because the Kindle version isn't very well done. The Kindle version doesn't even include the actual cover photo from the book, nor does it even include the full title of the book anywhere in the front matter. There are no images in the Kindle version, so if there were any in the hard copy version, you're really going to lose out. What you will get that probably isn't in the hard copy are randomly hyphenated words, such as bale-fully rather than balefully. Kindle has been around long enough that the full fidelity of the original book should be a given in a \$9.99 e-book.

Very informative history of how football became "America's Game." The history is extensive, but in my opinion is necessary in order understand how football got so popular. Some may find so many details exhausting to read, however it provides a complete picture. I will add this too: I found the historical details to be very entertaining. This book outlines and analyzes teams, leagues and games that shaped the game we enjoy today. This is a must read for a true fan of the game.

An amazing book overall. It is a great history of the game that really gives insight on how the NFL came from an also-ran league to the top sports league in America and eventually the world. If you are a big fan of the NFL, I highly recommend this book as you will have a much greater appreciation of what the game has become and hopefully will remain.

There's a lot of information collected in this book and obviously the complete history of every team cannot be included, but major events are covered in great detail. This book was a big help in my research paper on the history of the NFL in Los Angeles and contains some of the most detail you will read as to why so many NFL teams have relocated.

Maccambridge presents the history of the NFL in a straightforward chronological fashion that takes the reader into the locker room and the board room. The development of pro football into America's premier sport is a fascinating story. If you've ever wondered how the National Football League went from an association of small clubs to the monolith that now dominates the American sports landscape, read this book.

the best football book I have every read. Am a book reader of non fiction. I have a nice collection of sports books. This book takes you back to the founding fathers of the game until 2004 when the book published. It brings you inside the game, and how it operates. Halas, Mara , Rooney, Bidwell. The family of these men still own the teams that they started. Great stories about Paul Brown, Lombardi, Bill walsh. As great a coach as Lombardi was, Paul Brown was way ahead of his time. Great book for any football fan

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