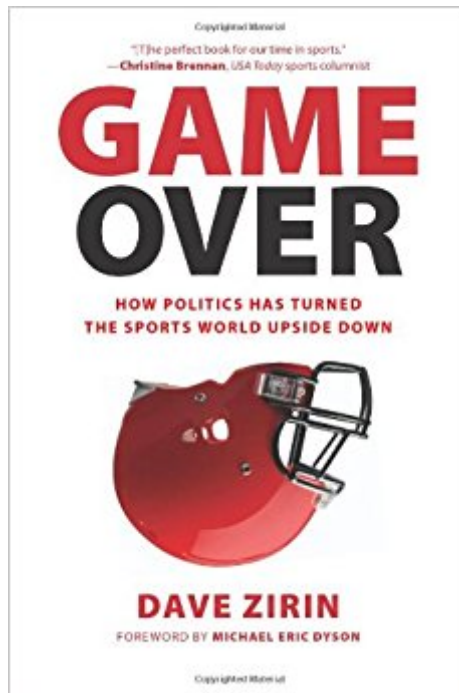




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# Game Over: How Politics Has Turned The Sports World Upside Down



## Synopsis

Sportscaster Howard Cosell dubbed it "rule number one of the jockocracy": sports and politics just don't mix. But in *Game Over*, celebrated alt-sportswriter Dave Zirin proves once and for all that politics has breached the modern sports arena with a vengeance. From the NFL lockout and the role of soccer in the Arab Spring to the Penn State sexual abuse scandals and Tim Tebow's on-field genuflections, this timely and hard-hitting new book from the "conscience of American sportswriting" (*The Washington Post*) reveals how our most important debates about class, race, religion, sex, and the raw quest for political power are played out both on and off the field. *Game Over* offers new insights and analysis of headline-grabbing sports controversies, exploring the shady side of the NCAA, the explosive 2011 MLB All-Star Game, and why the Dodgers crashed and burned. It covers the fascinating struggles of gay and lesbian athletes to gain acceptance, female athletes to be more than sex symbols, and athletes everywhere to assert their collective bargaining rights as union members. Zirin also illustrates the ways in which athletes are once again using their exalted platforms to speak out and reclaim sports from the corporate interests that have taken it hostage. In *Game Over*, he cheers the victories but also reflects on how far we have yet to go. Combining brilliant set pieces with a sobering overview of today's sports scene in Zirin's take-no-prisoners style, *Game Over* is a must read for anyone, sports fan or not, interested in understanding how sports reflect and shape society—and why the stakes have never been higher.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

Short of wearing out the subject of politics in sports (Bad Sports, 2010, and A People's History of Sports in the United States, 2008), sports analyst Zirin focuses here on the pushback by athletes and fans around the globe against injustices they see, whether in sports alone or on the larger political stage. For example, the NBA's Phoenix Suns changed their name to Los Suns for their 2010 Cinco de Mayo game versus the San Antonio Spurs to express their solidarity with Arizona's Hispanics over the state's tough anti-immigration laws. The NFL Players Association stood against Wisconsin governor Scott Walker's efforts to strip collective bargaining rights from public workers there. And there was worldwide support of South African runner Caster Semenya, who won silver in the women's 800-meter event at the 2012 London Games, over questions regarding the legitimacy of her stated gender. Other subjects include the Penn State scandal, the public reaction to Linsanity, and the continued objectification of women in sports. Readers who have responded to Zirin's other highly engaging books will find more of the same here. --Alan Moores

“A damning indictment of all that is corrupting sports and a song of praise for athletes standing up for human rights and decency.” —Kirkus  
“In his enlightening essay collection, Nation columnist and author Zirin (Welcome to the Terrordome) employs common sense and research to show that politics and sports are entangled, whether it's members of the Green Bay Packers supporting the collective bargaining rights of Wisconsin's public workers or the Phoenix Suns donning “Los Suns” uniforms to protest Arizona's controversial, immigrant-obsessed law, SB 1070. . . . Zirin steadfastly demonstrates how the games we watch are not just an escape from the everyday: they are a reflection that provides a perfect opportunity for protest and change.” —Publishers Weekly

Smart and thought-provoking, Game Over continues to stay relevant in its commentary on social activism and sports today. I'm following Zirin's work more closely because of this book.

If you like sports and your politics lean left you HAVE to be reading Dave Zirin's work. One of the most interesting sports writers we have today.

Zirin digs deep enough into sport as business to show, among many topics, the manipulation of the public in subsidizing the owners long before the first tickets are sold.

A great read, even if you are not into sports. Very sad to read how the Olympics affects neighborhoods and countries' economies, and the behind-the-scenes politicking. I will never contribute or encourage the Olympics in the USA again. I pray the Sochi Winter Olympics of 2014 will not turn violent.

I am an avid sports fan and have read some of Zirin's earlier stuff. This book was by far is best though. I kept wanting to read more! I especially loved the last few chapters. I highly recommend this book to anyone who is a sports fan... whether you're into politics or not... it is a great read.

Insightful and thought provoking. A very good look into the world of sports and how "business" can influence even the most basic decisions.

Very informative book, it opens your mind to various social issues that protrudes the world of sports while altering your reality at the same time

"Game Over" by Dave Zirin offers a penetrating critique of the corporate sports industry and its relationship with international struggles against injustice, discrimination and inequality. The articles were written over the past three years and have been updated with fresh commentary and analysis. Full of novel insights into the politics of sport, this highly original, thoughtful and timely book will interest sports and non-sports fans alike. 'Foreward: Scribes and Superheroes' by Michael Eric Dyson lauds Mr. Zirin for his work demonstrating why we need to go beyond the sports page to understand the significance of competitive sports to our contemporary lives. The Introduction, 'Pre-Game' introduces us to the problem of the athletic-industrial complex and how the wall between sports and politics has been breached of late. In the ten chapters that follow, Mr. Zirin explores these issues with remarkable skill and acuity. 'Occupy the Sports World' compares and contrasts the NBA and NFL players associations' various responses to owner lockouts with lessons learned from the Occupy movement. 'Soccer and the Arab Spring' highlights the critical role of soccer fan activism in the struggle for democracy in the Middle East. 'Today's World Cup and Olympics: Invictus in Reverse' discusses how mega sports projects are deployed as a form of shock doctrine to remake urban landscapes into corporate-friendly zones of spectacle and consumption. 'Zombie Teams and Zombie Owners' lambastes the shameless sports franchise owners who have grown rich from public subsidies while many host communities suffer through hard times. 'Here Come Los Suns' heralds the principled stand of the Phoenix Suns against Arizona's draconian anti-immigrant

laws; while chastising Major League Baseball for failing to move the 2011 All-Star game out of the intolerant state. 'Joe Paterno' is a cautionary tale about a sports program that overtook and ultimately ruined the integrity of an institution that was supposed to be dedicated to education, not amusement. 'The NCAA's Whiff of the Plantation' rips the NCAA for its unconscionable exploitation of student/athletes for the benefit of corporations and institutions. 'Sexuality and Sports' is a powerful, extended essay on changing attitudes and what still needs to change; including brief histories on women, men and gays in sport; how the modern athlete was modeled to be an agent of militant American empire; and other interesting revelations. 'Racism Today in Sports' remonstrates against the latent racism that still exists in hockey and other sports while applauding the remarkable breakthrough achieved by Jeremy Lin. 'Post-Game' reflects on the political and cultural significance of sport and encourages us to stand up for what's right. I highly recommend this outstanding book to everyone.

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