

## ***Journal of Issues in*** **Intercollegiate Athletics**

### **Money Players: A Guide to Success in Sports, Business and Life for Current and Future Pro Athletes**

By Marc Isenberg. Published 2007 by A-Game LLC, P.O. Box 34867, Los Angeles, CA 90034 (189 pages)

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In *Money Players: A Guide to Success in Sports, Business and Life for Current and Future Pro Athletes*, Marc Isenberg attempts to provide a comprehensive analysis of the experiences surrounding current and future professional athletes. The author provides a well written and compelling examination of the critical issues surrounding the nature of athletes, sport business executives and sports media. The primary focus of this publication is on the issues and experiences associated with the journey towards professional sports. The book is intended primarily for current or future professional athletes, as well as those who potentially benefit from an association with such athletes. This includes parents, friends, advisors, agents, lawyers, investment advisors and anyone associated with an athlete's progression towards professionalism. The author has written several manuscripts dealing with the business of sports. Isenberg has assembled in this text a consortium of highly regarded athletes, agents and sport leaders who extensively explore and expand on past and present issues associated with the nuances of sport-business management.

The book identifies relevant issues, provides answers and questions the process of the professional athlete. He provides positive insight along with solutions/prescriptions for many of the problems associated with this process. This includes the business aspects, agents, collegiate rules, decision making, the draft, building your team (staff), process of turning professional, influence of friends and family, retirement, investing, insurance, taxes and estate planning, gambling and performance enhancing drugs, player associations, owners, media, community relations and transition to successful post sport retirement careers.

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The book is divided into seven parts and consists of 23 chapters. It is methodically outlined and articulates multiple strategies to assist future players in navigating the process of turning professional. The book is written in an easy format and has a smooth flow while being informative and compelling. The first section is titled: The Fundamentals. Isenberg identifies the key components of how to be successful as a professional athlete and how to maximize the window of opportunity. He further expands on focusing on three areas: athletic, social and financial. One critical aspect of the successful athlete is building a great team of professional advisors who will work for the athlete's benefit. This chapter also addresses the importance of controlling what can be controlled to enhance opportunities.

Part two is titled: Journey to the Promised Land. Chapter two discusses the role of college and its ability to provide a springboard for long term success. The pre-professional financial considerations are reviewed. Chapter three addresses rules and the differences between college and professional systems. Chapter four discusses the decision making process involved in deciding whether to turn professional or stay in school. Chapters five, six and seven discuss selecting an agent, details of how the draft works for the each specific sport, as well as how to work or manipulate the draft to maximize the athlete's worth.

Part three is titled: The Business of Your Life. Chapter eight discusses how to get started towards analyzing the business aspects for setting the foundation in life. Chapter nine focuses on how to build a team and what to look for in the process. Chapters 10 and 11 discuss the importance of taking the appropriate time, making sound and rational decisions along with the importance of controlling emotions. Several case studies are presented to illustrate how many past athletes have been taken advantage of by multiple schemes and bad business transactions.

Part four is titled: Money Matters. Chapters 12 – 15 discuss the financial concerns related to a professional athlete. The emphasis of chapter 12 is on understanding the nature of financial intelligence. Saving, debt, pension plans and compounding of interest are discussed. Tax deductible and tax deferred savings are presented for analysis. Chapter 13 provides information concerning investing. The notion of not losing the money invested is discussed. This chapter focuses on the types of investments, risks, timing, fees and making money make more money. Chapter 14 and 15 focuses on insurance, taxes and estate planning.

Part five is titled: Body and Mind Matters. Chapter 16 addresses decision making, and the impacts, of bad decisions. Chapter 17 comprises an overview of the impacts of gambling and performance enhancing drugs.

Part six is titled: Today's Big Dollar Era of Professional Sports. Chapter 17 comprises an overview of the impacts of gambling and performance enhancing drugs. Chapter 18 features information on the history of players and owners as well as athletes being viewed as property by past owners. Chapter 19 provides important information regarding specific players associations and their services. Rookie orientations, collective bargaining agreements and how to get involved

as a professional player. Chapter 20 formalizes the author's perspective on players and their relationships with the owners -including the role of owners and players within the business model.

Part seven is titled: Beyond the Field. Chapters 21-23 focuses on how to relate with the media and fans. Involvement with the community is covered in chapter 22 and transitioning from the field to main stream society rounds out the final chapter in the book.

This book is an excellent resource for persons involved with elite athletes as well as those student-athletes who have potential to play at the professional level. Its use of both experiential testimony and practical case studies makes it a prime textbook for athletes, individuals involved in practical applications, parents, administrators, coaches and faculty members. Clinicians may also find this book a fruitful asset to their knowledge base concerning practical applications associated with elite athletes. Although the book lacks theoretical constructs, it is based on experiential case work and may prove to be positively insightful. "Money Players" is based on powerful messages from professional athletes, business executives and the sports media. In conclusion, this book is insightful, informational, practical, and could be considered a valuable asset for those involved with high profile athletes.