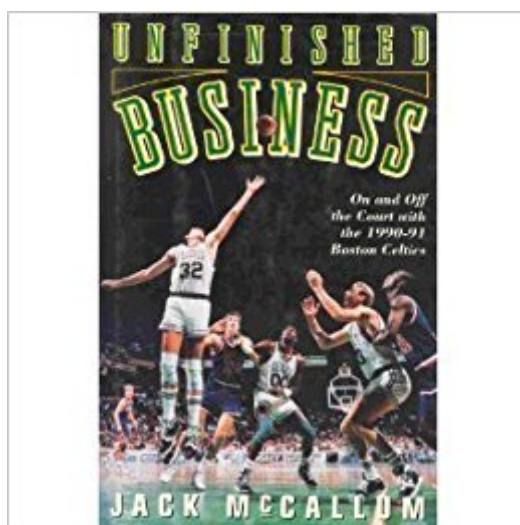


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Unfinished Business: On And Off The Court With The 1990-91 Boston Celtics



Synopsis

On and Off the Court with the 1990-91 Boston Celtics. For the Boston Celtics, the 1990-91 season started perfectly: Larry Bird, Kevin McHale and Robert Parish could do no wrong; the younger players, Dee Brown and Brian Shaw, played like veterans; and Chris Ford's innovative coaching seemed marked by genius. But as the season wore on, things began to unravel: McHale and Parish suffered injuries - and then Bird's back went. - In Unfinished Business Jack McCallum chronicles this crucial and exciting year in the history of one of the most successful sports franchises ever.

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Customer Reviews

On and Off the Court with the 1990-91 Boston Celtics. For the Boston Celtics, the 1990-91 season started perfectly: Larry Bird, Kevin McHale and Robert Parish could do no wrong; the younger players, Dee Brown and Brian Shaw, played like veterans; and Chris Ford's innovative coaching seemed marked by genius. But as the season wore on, things began to unravel: McHale and Parish suffered injuries - and then Bird's back went. - In Unfinished Business Jack McCallum chronicles this crucial and exciting year in the history of one of the most successful sports franchises ever.

One of the few definitive accounts of the great "Big Three"-era Celtics teams of the '80s and early '90s. This thoughtful and balanced snapshot into the fall of a great NBA dynasty is in turns thrilling and thought-provoking. The reader sees how intelligent and hilariously sarcastic McHale was, both on the court and in the locker room; the tactiurn and even surly Chief, always the first one dressed and out after the game; Walton was an earnest and devoted disciple of the game, as practiced at the peak of execution by those hard-working and talented Celts teams. But the lynchpin of the

Celtics franchise and of this book was Larry Bird, the enigmatic teammate and vicious competitor who no one can truly claim to fully know. McCallum's reputation was well-earned as a hard-working and honest journalist of the highest ilk. He does himself proud here, with a balanced and unsparing look into the Celtics' locker room and board room, and considers the stark future of the franchise.

After the Boston Celtics suffered a surprising first-round playoff exit at the hands of the New York Knicks in 1990, the team came to the realization that it was time to make significant changes if the team hoped credibly to compete for one more title before the retirements of Larry Bird, Kevin McHale, and Robert Parish. In "Unfinished Business," Jack McCallum tracked the Celtics' attempt to rebound in 1990-91, from the draft and the hiring of Dave Gavitt in the summer through the playoffs the next spring. McCallum recalls how new coach Chris Ford retooled the team, injecting an element of speed and a running game with younger players like Dee Brown, Brian Shaw, Reggie Lewis, and Kevin Gamble. The author shows how the team jelled on the court and relates some of the off-the-court stories of that season, and notes that the team had a fresher, hipper image as a result of adding the younger players, culminating in Brown's memorable win in the Slam Dunk Contest that year. For the Celtics, the season was one of change off the court as well as on--McCallum discusses the retirement of radio announcer Johnny Most and the advent of halftime promotions at Boston Garden. The author marches through the regular season month by month, noting that the changes made to the team worked spectacularly early on--the Celtics jumped out to a 29-5 start and were seen as possible championship contenders. At the time, I was living in North Texas and got to see Bird, McHale, and Parish play in person when the Celtics came to Dallas in December 1990. Despite the team's great start, though, injuries set in late in the season and the team finished with a 56-26 record. McCallum does a good job covering the team's two playoff series--the intense, entertaining, and memorable first-round win over the Pacers, and the competitive second-round series in which the Celtics fell to the Pistons. The deciding Game 5 against the Pacers, a 124-121 nail-biter in which Bird returned from a second-quarter injury to play spectacularly, might have been the most compelling game in Bird's last three seasons. For the Celtics, the 1990-91 season might have been more interesting than any other from 1988-89 through 2006-07, and "Unfinished Business" is a solid look back at that campaign.

I've previously read *07 Seconds or Less* and like that book, author Jack McCallum hits this one right out of the park. Celtics fans or any basketball fan will thoroughly enjoy this book as it chronicles a year in the life of the famed Boston Celtics. It gives an insider's look at what was being said

behind the scenes which most fans will not know learn from simply watching the games then or reading the sports pages of a newspaper. Celtic Pride in action was highlighted by Larry Bird's famous comeback from injury suffered during the most crucial of times, the playoffs. With Bird leading them, the Celtics were able to finish off the upstart Chuck Person and his Indiana Pacers. The book allows us to have a closer look into the lives of the players both on and off the court and learn things not known by those outside the team. truly a gem of a book for Celtics fans and anyone who follows the game of basketball.

The "Big Three" trio of Larry Bird, Kevin McHale and Robert Parrish produced one of the most unforgettable dynasties in NBA history, under the watchful eye of Red Auerbach. The author, Jack McCallum, chronicles a Bird's-eye view of the end of this great run of the Boston Celtics. At times interesting and hilarious, McCallum both tells the stories of these colorful personalities and probes the psyches of the 1991-92 Celtics. The big three uses up most of the ink, but there are also the stories of rookies Dee Brown and Brian Shaw, and many of the reserves, as well. The Celtics go through the majority of the season looking like contenders for the Championship, but ultimately must rely on the aging Big Three to push them over the top. Unfortunately, their bodies don't cooperate. And yet, one can see the nuances of the personalities of these NBA superstars and appreciate Bird and McHale's leadership, and very different humor. Bird can be side splitting, such as when he is lying on his stomach on the sidelines to take pressure off his back, and reaches over to untie Chuck Person's shoelaces during an inbound, or when he slides Johnny Most's cigarettes over to the scorer's table and out of reach as he is checking into the game, leaving the close to dementia Most screaming into the microphone for his smokes. McHale is equally humorous, but with a more down to Earth, thoughtful brand of hilarity. Really, almost another epoch of NBA basketball, and a time gone by, but really a fun, interesting read.

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