



Mathletics: How Gamblers, Managers, and Sports Enthusiasts Use Mathematics in Baseball, Basketball, and Football

By Wayne L. Winston

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Mathletics is a remarkably entertaining book that shows readers how to use simple mathematics to analyze a range of statistical and probability-related questions in professional baseball, basketball, and football, and in sports gambling. How does professional baseball evaluate hitters? Is a singles hitter like Wade Boggs more valuable than a power hitter like David Ortiz? Should NFL teams pass or run more often on first downs? Could professional basketball have used statistics to expose the crooked referee Tim Donaghy? Does money buy performance in professional sports?

In *Mathletics*, Wayne Winston describes the mathematical methods that top coaches and managers use to evaluate players and improve team performance, and gives math enthusiasts the practical tools they need to enhance their understanding and enjoyment of their favorite sports--and maybe even gain the outside edge to winning bets. *Mathletics* blends fun math problems with sports stories of actual games, teams, and players, along with personal anecdotes from Winston's work as a sports consultant. Winston uses easy-to-read tables and illustrations to illuminate the techniques and ideas he presents, and all the necessary math concepts--such as arithmetic, basic statistics and probability, and Monte Carlo simulations--are fully explained in the examples.

After reading *Mathletics*, you will understand why baseball teams should almost never bunt, why football overtime systems are unfair, why points, rebounds, and assists aren't enough to determine who's the NBA's best player--and much, much more. In a new epilogue, Winston discusses the stats and numerical analysis behind some recent sporting events, such as how the Dallas Mavericks used analytics to become the 2011 NBA champions.



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Editorial Review

Review

"Sports fans will learn much from probability theory and statistical models as they abandon empty clichés (time to throw momentum out of the informed fan's lexicon) and confront institutionalized injustices (such as those built into the protocols for selecting a national champion in college football and for seeding the NCAA's basketball tournament). A rare fusion of sports enthusiasm and numerical acumen."--**Booklist**

"Who is Wayne Winston? Maybe we should begin by telling you who he is not. He is not some barstool fan or uninformed sportswriter who fuels his opinions with information gleaned from SportsCenter highlights or newspaper box scores. He is a professor of decision sciences at Indiana University's Kelley School of Business, and until this year was the statistical guru for the Dallas Mavericks. He is author of the book *Mathletics*, which explains what statistics really tell us about sports."--**Ken Berger, CBSSports.com**

"[A] terrific read for anyone trying to model markets statistically and make trading decisions based on statistical data. . . . Reading Winston's book is a mind-opening experience."--**Brenda Jubin, Reading the Markets blog**

From the Back Cover

"Winston has an uncanny knack for bringing the game alive through the fascinating mathematical questions he explores. He gets inside professional sports like no other writer I know. *Mathletics* is like a seat at courtside."--**Mark Cuban, owner of the Dallas Mavericks**

"Wayne Winston's *Mathletics* combines rigorous analytical methodologies with a very inquisitive approach. This should be a required starting point for anyone desiring to use mathematics in the world of sports."--**KC Joyner, author of Blindsided: Why the Left Tackle Is Overrated and Other Contrarian Football Thoughts**

"People who want the details on the analysis of baseball need to read *Mathletics*. This book provides the statistics behind *Moneyball*."--**Pete Palmer, coeditor of The ESPN Baseball Encyclopedia and The ESPN Pro Football Encyclopedia**

"Winston has brought together the latest thinking on sports mathematics in one comprehensive place. This volume is perfect for someone seeking a general overview or who wants to dive into advanced thinking on the latest sports-analytics topics."--**Daryl Morey, general manager of the Houston Rockets**

"*Mathletics* offers insights into the mathematical analysis of three major sports and sports gambling. The basketball and sports bookies sections are particularly interesting and loaded with in-depth examples and analysis. The author's passion seems to jump right off the page."--**Michael Huber, Muhlenberg College**

"I really enjoyed this unique book, as will anyone who is a serious sports fan with some interest in mathematics. Winston is very knowledgeable about baseball, basketball, and football, and about the mathematical techniques needed to analyze a multitude of questions that arise in them. He does a very good job of explaining complex mathematical ideas in a simple way."--**George L. Nemhauser, Georgia Institute of Technology**

About the Author

Wayne L. Winston is the John and Esther Reese Professor of Decision Sciences at Indiana University's Kelley School of Business. His many books include Operations Research: Applications and Algorithms. He has been a consultant to major corporate and sports organizations, including USA Diving and the Dallas Mavericks.

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Molly Wilson:

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