



Playing Ball with the Boys: The Rise of Women in the World of Men's Sports

Betsy Ross

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The use of female sideline reporters is the fastest-growing new aspect of televised broadcasts of professional and college football. Names like Suzy Kolber, Erin Andrews, and Andrea Kremer are now as well known as any of the men in the booth. In recent years women have been sports columnists and reporters, talk-show hosts, even coaches and team administrators. And yet there has never been a book about this phenomenon.

Former ESPN news anchor Betsy Ross fills this void with *Playing Ball with the Boys*, a fascinating, behind-the-scenes look at the emerging role that women play in sports broadcasting and reporting as well as in the business of sports. Ross interviews a number of the biggest names—from Kolber and Kremer to USA Today columnist Christine Brennan and Lesley Visser and many others—who offer first-hand accounts of the struggles and the triumphs of women playing what has always been a man's game.

She provides a history of this unique facet of the sports world, from pioneering female newspaper sports reporters to the celebrated breakthrough into televised sports by former Miss America Phyllis George, who is interviewed in the book. Ross covers the controversial moments, from locker room confrontations between players and female reporters to the infamous sideline interview in which Joe Namath attempted to kiss Suzy Kolber during a live broadcast.

Readers also learn of women who played pro sports on male teams or coached men's teams. They meet a woman who runs a professional baseball team and another who is a team doctor.

Through this tale, Ross weaves her own story, recalling how she went from a small town in Indiana to the anchor's chair at the largest sports network in the world, ESPN. She explains what it's like for a woman to succeed in the male-dominated world of sports broadcasting.

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