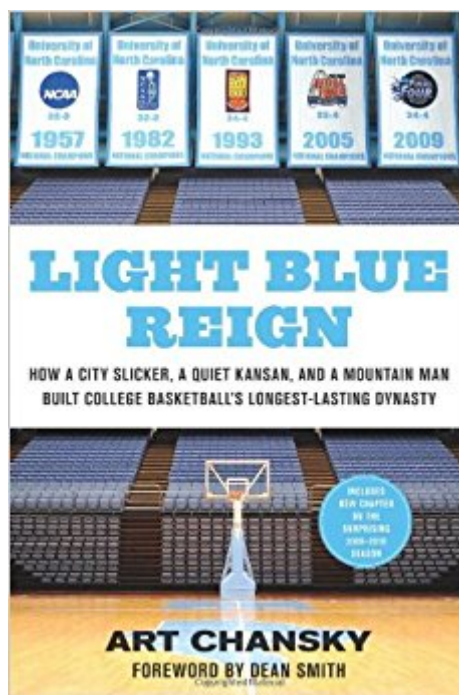




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Light Blue Reign: How A City Slicker, A Quiet Kansan, And A Mountain Man Built College Basketball's Longest-Lasting Dynasty



Synopsis

The 2010 NCAA college basketball season marks the 100th anniversary of North Carolina basketball. The Tar Heels have earned top-five rankings in preseason polls four of the last five years, twice at #1. But they weren't always seen as a power-house team. Their strength has been decades in the making. *Light Blue Reign* documents the building of a program, a behind-the-scenes, far-reaching, wide-angle perspective on one of the most formidable college basketball teams in the country. Art Chansky, a sportswriter who has covered basketball on Tobacco Road for more than 30 years, uses first-hand accounts from interviews with people who were present during the fifty-year dynasty to construct an intimate, detailed narrative of what it was like to play and work for the three Hall of Fame coaches who defined this era of success.

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Customer Reviews

The University of North Carolina basketball team, 2009 national championship winners, owns more victories over the past 50 years than any other college team. In this history, UNC alum and veteran sportswriter Chansky (*Blue Blood*) explains how the Tar Heels got there through the well-researched stories of three disparate coaches. Until the arrival of coach Frank McGuire in 1953, the big men on UNC's campus were football players. A well-coiffed Irish-Catholic charmer from the streets of New York City, McGuire set high standards for his players on and off the court, leading the Tar Heels to a 32-0 season en route to the 1957 national championship. Dean Smith (a liberal Baptist from Kansas) and Roy Williams (a broken-home survivor from the Appalachian

Mountains who recently published his own memoir) continued the winning tradition, and the relationship among all three continued to grow until McGuire's 1994 death. Drawing on published and personal interviews with coaches, players and fans, Chansky is well-read but far from impartial, and presumes his readers feel the same; accordingly, this should make an ideal gift for any Tar Heels alum. Copyright © Reed Business Information, a division of Reed Elsevier Inc. All rights reserved.

“As with all of Chansky's books, this one is well-researched and highly anecdotal. Chansky knows UNC basketball as well as anyone, and his storytelling gift brings the characters in his books to life.”
—The News & Observer (North Carolina) --This text refers to the Paperback edition.

Words and tales from an insider. If you are a true blue Tarheel" your education isn't complete without this book.

Art Chansky is perhaps the most insightful writer of UNC literature. He has not failed to deliver in this endeavor. Good perspective on three very different personalities.

Interesting reading!

The North Carolina Tar Heels are one of the most successful college basketball programs in the land. There are of course many ways to decipher which program or team is the greatest ever... and the author massages history to present a book that constantly summarizes that North Carolina's is by far the greatest. To a lot of fans the final crown should be placed on the head of the team that has won the most National Championships and that is by far UCLA with eleven. Kentucky has seven and Indiana and North Carolina have five each. But if the reader can put the championship total discrepancy aside... the more salient subject that the author accurately portrays is the unmatched growth of a "TAR HEEL FAMILY"... that was started by the "dressed-to-the-nines" street wise in life and basketball... inimitable... New York Irishman Frank McGuire. Frank was one of thirteen children who grew up Fatherless when his New York cop Dad died at an early age. His life was built around sports and he became the coach of St. Johns University in New York which became one of the greatest basketball teams in the country. In fact McGuire led them to the NCAA championship game. A point well made in the book is that he also accomplished this with North

Carolina when he won it all with his undefeated North Carolina team in 1957. The 1957 championship is still mentioned as one of the greatest upsets in history as Carolina beat the all-time-all-time great Wilt Chamberlain and his Kansas team in triple overtime to win the NCAA Championship. As of this writing there are only two other coaches in history that have led two different schools to the NCAA Championship game... and they are Larry Brown (UCLA & Kansas), Roy Williams (Kansas & North Carolina). Since Larry Brown had played college ball at North Carolina for McGuire and the immortal coach, Dean Smith, who was handpicked (from Kansas) by McGuire as an assistant and an eventual replacement... all three coaches have ties to the North Carolina family... and that is the essence of this book. (It should be noted that Coach McGuire also coached the St. Johns baseball team to the NCAA Championship game.) The biographical coverage of Coach McGuire is fascinating and how his street moxie created what was known as the "UNDERGROUND RAILROAD" in which he recruited the heart of North Carolina's teams from New York. One of his best teams starting lineup was known as "Four Catholics and a Jew"... the Jewish ballplayer from New York was Lennie Rosenbluth who not only had the highest individual season scoring average in North Carolina Tar Heel history... but he also holds the career record for highest Carolina scoring average also. The author tells Dean Smith's life story as well as current coach Roy Williams and current Bobcats coach Larry Brown's. The method in which the author keeps jumping back and forth between coaches and simultaneously changes time stamps becomes very confusing at times. One second you're in the middle of 1990's Carolina history with one coach and then you blink your eyes and you're back in 1962 with another. This happens constantly throughout the book and makes it hard at times to continue a seamless reading flow. It's wonderful for any sports fan to learn of the respect between these different generations of coaches as they always remain in contact and always help out each other... each other's families... and each other's players and associates. This is what is most clearly defined without a doubt in this book... that the North Carolina family truly endures. Also covered is the overall growth of the ACC as a powerful organization and the yearly recruiting wars which North Carolina seems to be dominating. Any basketball fan will enjoy this book... but every basketball fan including even the most fanatical Carolina fan will get confused at times as dates... places... and coaches... overlap... go forward... go back... and forth... at times in an incomprehensible manner.

nice, feel good. very fast, receive it next day. good quality with low price. This is a gift for someone that is studying to become a chef. I did take it out of the box and it is a very nice product. The weight and handle are very good for cutting and even my smaller hands felt comfortable with the size. send

it to my teacher as a gift,

One of the best college basketball books I've read in years -- and I've read them all. Beginning with the author's "Ten What-Ifs of Carolina Basketball" I started to wonder if this unlikely dynasty might be based on as much *luck* (or happenstance) as anything else? The book details the lives of three legendary coaches (Frank McGuire, Dean Smith and Roy Williams) and their uncanny connections that have sustained the most consistently successful college basketball program of the last half century. The author tells all the story of all three coaches factually and, at times, vividly as he melds a timeline of historical events and behind-the-scenes insider accounts of the coaches, players, recruits, and fans. This book should be on the must-read list for all Tar Heels and serious basketball fans. It's informative, entertaining, and authoritative (which is not a surprise, really) since the author has been covering Carolina basketball for over thirty years. Highly recommend.

By far one of the best books I have ever read concerning the Tar Heel Basketball lineage. Very descriptive and detailed in it's description of collage basketball as a whole. Good Reading.

I can recommend this book to serious college basketball fans and fans of sports lit, but it is by no means the definitive work on the UNC basketball program; that book has yet to be written. The writing in this one is at times ponderous and meandering, and disappointing. And fans of the history of the game of basketball may wonder how Roy Williams, with his two National Championships but limited impact on the game itself, deserves equal billing with the great Dean Smith, one of the most important coaches and sports figures of the twentieth century. Williams has built on the program that Coach Smith built. Just because they each coached two NCAA champs doesn't mean they are equal in the eyes of history. Williams is a hugely successful coach but Dean Smith is a legend. Recommended but there are better basketball books out there to be read.

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