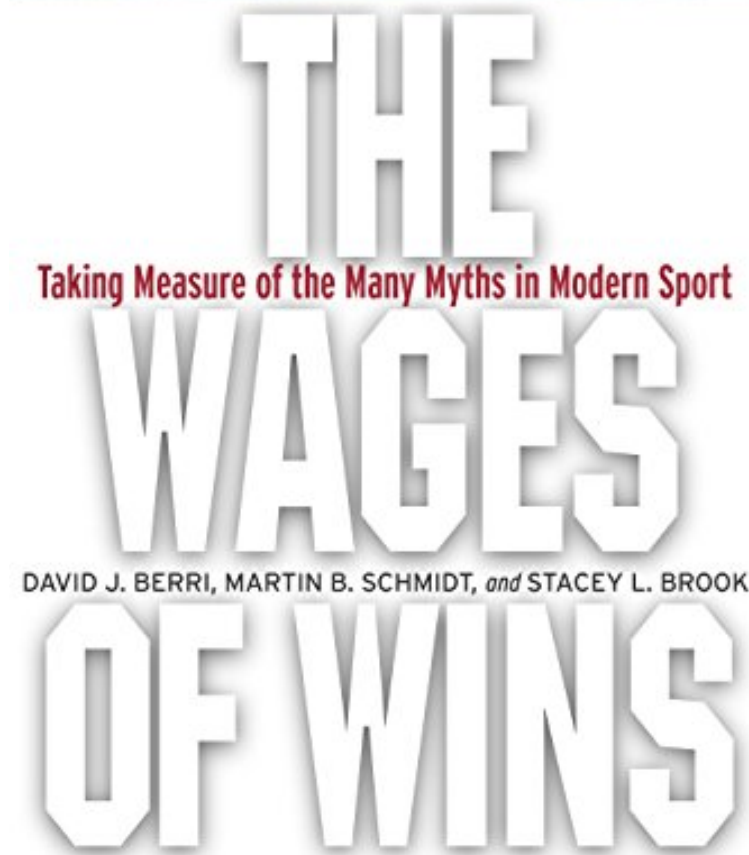
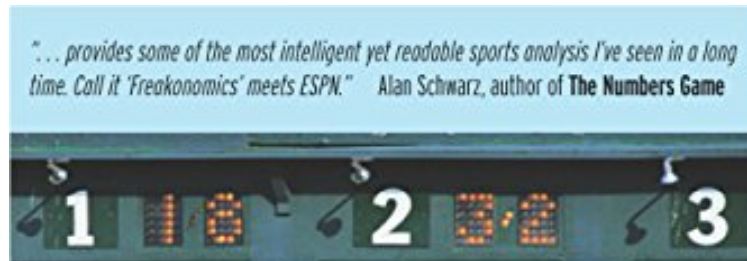


(Read download) The Wages of Wins: Taking Measure of the Many Myths in Modern Sport

## The Wages of Wins: Taking Measure of the Many Myths in Modern Sport

David J. Berri, Martin B. Schmidt, Stacey L. Brook  
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David J. Berri, Martin B. Schmidt, Stacey L. Brook : The Wages of Wins: Taking Measure of the Many Myths in Modern Sport before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised The Wages of Wins: Taking Measure of the Many Myths in Modern Sport:

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. From outside the boxBy WDX2BBFor a while, "The Wages of Wins" was on a path to be one of the best sports economics books in years. It was making interesting points that were sure to be influential assuming the right people read it, and did it in a most readable way.The book gets off the tracks

about halfway through, particularly when it veers away from economics. So this is liable to be the most mixed review on the Web site. The authors, all associate professors of economics at universities, set out to knock down some of the "myths" of pro sports. Some of those myths include: teams that pay the most win the most; labor problems can cause long-term impact to sports, the best basketball players score the most, and baseball has a competitive balance problem. The trio of authors go about the business of shooting them down. Some of their conclusions are eye-opening. Whenever a pro sports is on the verge of having a labor stoppage, there are cries that the fans will be driven away for good. Yet, attendance always has quickly rebounded to pre-stoppage levels (sometimes, there isn't even a drop right away). The NHL in 2005-06 is the most recent example of that, although it did install some new rules to open up the game. That makes sense, actually; sports fans as a group (there may be individual exceptions) aren't going to deprive themselves of following games when they become available. With all of the cries that baseball is a rich team's game, the authors come up with stats to show that baseball really isn't that uncompetitive. What's more, if the Yankees are thrown out of the equation, money isn't as nearly as important as good management when it comes to winning. (In other words, the Kansas City Royals aren't necessarily doomed to failure.) In fact, baseball is far more competitive than the NBA, in which a relatively few teams keep winning championships, in spite of a salary cap designed to level the playing field. The authors attribute this to a very small number of talented big men, who have a disproportionate effect of the game. In other words, wins tended to follow Shaquille O'Neill around. Once the book gets away from economics and competition, it isn't nearly as interesting. The authors come up with a formula for rating individual players. I've read other such attempts to do this, and I've never read one that is particularly handy or interesting. This part of the book bogs down pretty quickly. However, the book does make a couple of very good points in the midst of player rating discussion. The authors found that NBA teams tend to pay the best scorers the most money, even if they aren't the best players. Allen Iverson of Philadelphia was the poster boy for this theory; Iverson misses too many shots and isn't contributing in other ways besides points, but still gets big checks. The authors also argue that the best players, even Michael Jordan, aren't at their best in the playoffs. Their performance level drops off. This matches what might be thought but rarely articulated. After all, the best teams are in the playoffs, so it should be tougher to perform well. Not too many players can "elevate their games" in such situations. This book has a fun writing tone, as the authors are quick to make fun of their backgrounds along the lines of, "Yes, we're just silly economists, but ..." I'd bet they'd be an interesting group for a television interview. "The Wages of Wins" seems to be getting a little traction in the sports community, based on some good reviews. Berri, Schmidt and Brook seem to have advanced some arguments nicely and changed the discussion for good in some cases. They even avoid complicated math, using endnotes and a Web site for that. It made me wish that they had stuck to economic issues all the way through, instead of veering into basketball player rankings halfway through.

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. A Must for any Sports Fan! By Andres Alvarez  
The reality is this belongs on the book of every sports fan. All of us have believed so many things about sports for years. We've believed work stoppages drive fans away, or that Michael Jordan was the reason the Bulls were the greatest team ever. Lost in these narratives are the nitty gritty science and economics that show how sports really tick. Dave, Martin, and Stacey delve deep into sports' underbelly to reveal what you've been missing.

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. This book is the difference between TV's 'experts', and actual experts who study sports  
By Mark S  
One of my favourite books about sports - for the thinking fan only! Do not buy if you're more interested in NFL players getting arrested than the optimal distribution economic assets!

**\*\*Named one of Princeton University's Noteworthy Books in Industrial Relations for 2006\*\*** Arguing about sports is as old as the games people play. Over the years sports debates have become muddled by many myths that do not match the numbers generated by those playing the games. In *The Wages of Wins*, the authors use layman's language and easy to follow examples based on their own academic research to debunk many of the most commonly held beliefs about sports. In this updated version of their book, these authors explain why Allen Iverson leaving Philadelphia made the 76ers a better team, why the Yankees find it so hard to repeat their success from the late 1990s, and why even great quarterbacks like Brett Favre are consistently inconsistent. The book names names, and makes it abundantly clear that much of the decision making of coaches and general managers does not hold up to an analysis of the numbers. Whether you are a fantasy league fanatic or a casual weekend fan, much of what you believe about sports will change after reading this book.