

Chasing Perfection: A Behind-the-Scenes Look at the High-Stakes Game of Creating an NBA Champion

By Andy Glockner

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Chasing Perfection **goes behind the scenes of the multi-million dollar, high-stakes world of basketball player development, research and analysis, and the often secretive, cutting-edge methods that NBA franchises use to turn less-expensive, supporting players into vital parts of championship teams.**

NBA superstars push as close to perfection as we're likely to see, but they are few and far between. The farther you get from the league's top echelon of talent, the more it's up to the players—and their teams—to develop and utilize their strengths while diminishing and masking their weaknesses as much as possible. There are no perfect basketball players, but there are plenty of *perfected ones*, who start with a basis of skill and physical ability and then are refined further and further in order to move closer and closer to their absolute potential.

In *Chasing Perfection*, national sportswriter Andy Glockner reveals that, though the concept of player improvement is as old as basketball itself, the current era of Big Data analytics in the NBA is transforming that process more quickly and aggressively than anything we have seen before. Players are learning more and more about themselves through video and data visualization, seeing how things like diet and sleep can impact their performance, and learning how having healthy joints and role-specific workout plans are lengthening and improving their careers. Teams are internalizing the same lessons, as well as figuring out how to better implement optimal on-court strategies, how to refine their approaches to player acquisition and how to gauge the varying values and success rates of different, crucial team-building strategies.

It's an absolutely fascinating time to be a fan, as the marriage of basketball and technology is bringing two of our most popular and competitive worlds together in compelling fashion. Using the 2014–15 NBA season as a prism to explore this mesh of sport and science, Glockner offers detailed perspective from NBA players, coaches, team management, and media, offering a comprehensive insider's view of how analytics are shaping the basketball we watch, and how those who are lagging behind in the technology race already are feeling the competitive hit.

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