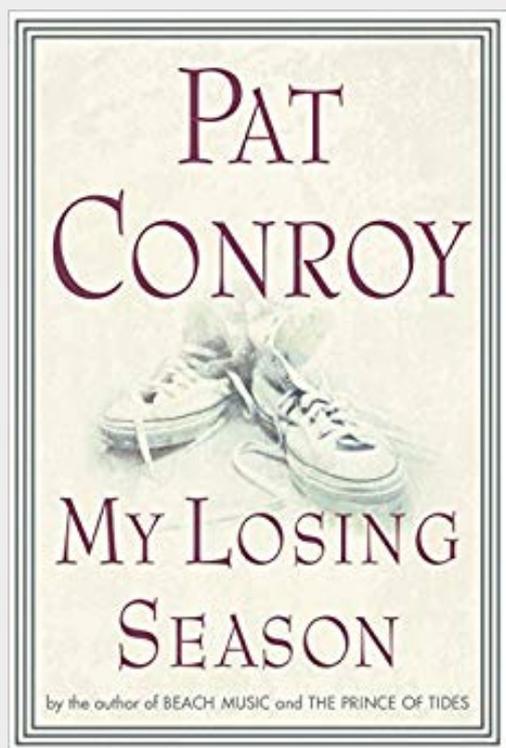


My Losing Season by Pat Conroy



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NEW YORK TIMES BESTSELLER • A deeply affecting coming-of-age memoir about family, love, loss, basketball—and life itself—by the beloved author of *The Prince of Tides* and *The Great Santini* During one unforgettable season as a Citadel cadet, Pat Conroy becomes part of a basketball team that is ultimately destined to fail. And yet for a military kid who grew up on the move, the Bulldogs provide a sanctuary from the cold, abrasive father who dominates his life—and a crucible for becoming his own man. With all the drama and incandescence of his bestselling fiction, Conroy re-creates his pivotal senior year as captain of the Citadel Bulldogs. He chronicles the highs and lows of that fateful 1966-67 season, his tough disciplinarian coach, the joys of winning, and the hard-won lessons of losing. Most of all, he recounts how a group of boys came together as a team, playing a sport that would become a metaphor for a man whose spirit could never be defeated. **Praise for *My Losing Season*** “A superb accomplishment, maybe the finest book Pat Conroy has written.”—*The Washington Post Book World* “A wonderfully rich memoir that you don’t have to be a sports fan to love.”—*Houston Chronicle* “A memoir with all the Conroy trademarks . . . Here’s ample proof that losers always tell the best stories.”—*Newsweek* “In *My Losing Season*, Conroy opens his arms wide to embrace his difficult past and almost everyone in it.”—*New York Daily News* “Haunting, bittersweet and as compelling as his bestselling fiction.”—*Boston Herald*



Reviews of the [My Losing Season](#) by Pat Conroy

1. Ericaz

I love Pat Conroy. I mourn his death and wish he could have lived another fifty years, bringing us his gorgeous prose. *My Losing Season*, his memoir of the 1966-67 Citadel basketball team on which he played as a senior at that institution is classic Conroy. I have to admit, not knowing the game of basketball very well, I got bogged down just a bit as he described each of the games of that season. But the book is more about him and the human condition than it is about a game. Filled with Conroy's wonderfully evocative metaphors—nobody is better at them—the book proposes the idea that perhaps we learn more from our failures than our successes. As we get to know his team members and his irascible coach, we want to reach out to each. And as Conroy fills us in at the end of the book on these characters thirty years later, we share their triumphs and tribulations in life. And, of course, hovering over it all is Conroy's abusive father and long-suffering mother. We grow to understand these two, but I personally never grew to like the man, although Conroy says he came to love his dad unconditionally in the man's later years. Perhaps that acceptance, for me, is for another book, and hopefully Conroy accomplished that in *The Death of Santini*, the sequel to his novel *The Great Santini*, which featured a leading character very much like, but different somewhat, his real father Don Conroy. We shall see, as I've just ordered that book. But with Conroy's death, we are deeply cut; no one can fill his shoes, so we must be content with the body of work he left us.

2. Endieyab

If the reader is familiar with Mr. Conroy's work then you know much of his material is taken from his horrible childhood. His 6'4", physically and verbally abusive, Marine dad made his and his siblings' lives a living hell. The memoir reinforces the highly dysfunctional nature of his family as well as life at the draconian Citadel in the mid-1960s. The core of this book is about how basketball was an integral part of the author's identity from age 9 until he graduated from the Citadel. Also, besides his teammates, his college coach, Mel Thompson, plays a big part in this story. Mr. Thompson was still alive when the author's book was published and if the former coach read the sucker, I can't imagine he was too pleased with the depiction of him.

The book, however, is not just a story about basketball, but Mr. Conroy's wonderful game descriptions took me back to when I used to play. Their second game against VMI, which went into four overtimes, was an especially edge-of-your-seat chapter. The book has a lot of heart. The dialogue between the players sounds very authentic. I felt it had the right balance of suspense, insight and humor by the brutally honest Mr. Conroy. At the ripe age of 51, I still don't understand the coaching approach of using fear and intimidation to guide players. These sort of a-holes view sports as war and they're the tin-pot dicators on massive ego trips. Mr. Conroy also shows how insecure people like Mel Thompson leave lasting scars on many players well into their golden years. Instead of helping shape boys into men, they hinder such development because they themselves have never grown up. Mr. Conroy's coming-of-age story is a truly wonderful memoir for anyone who enjoys or enjoyed basketball.

3. skyjettttt

"My Losing Season" is a powerful book that uses the author's losing 1966-1967 basketball season at The Citadel to explore whether one learns more from winning or from losing. From the opening line, "I was born to be a point guard, but not a very good one," to the end, Conroy has a gift for memorable, descriptive writing.

I should preface my review by stating I don't enjoy basketball, which includes playing it growing up and now watching it live or on TV. In High School P.E., they nicknamed me "The Foulster" because I never made the

transition from football where it is a good thing to knock people down and take the ball away! With that said, I thoroughly enjoyed this book because it is so much more than a story about the game of basketball. This is a memoir of Pat Conroy's life from the time he first picked up a basketball at age nine to his adult years where he became a successful writer. But even more than that, it is a compelling story about endurance, hustle, and following one's dreams.

While I felt great distress as Pat Conroy described his violent upbringing at the hands of an abusive father, I thrilled in the way God always seemed to provide for Pat. I also valued the lessons Pat learned from his losing season, the special memories he shared with his teammates, and how that season impacted all the players.

4. Hiclerlsi

Pat Conroy has a new fan in me. I played college basketball and thought I'd enjoy reading about the sport in this book. It's a great book even if it had been about a losing tiddlywink season. He eloquently describes the life lessons he learned from his losing season. This book is a classic and has inspired me to read all of Conroy's other books.

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