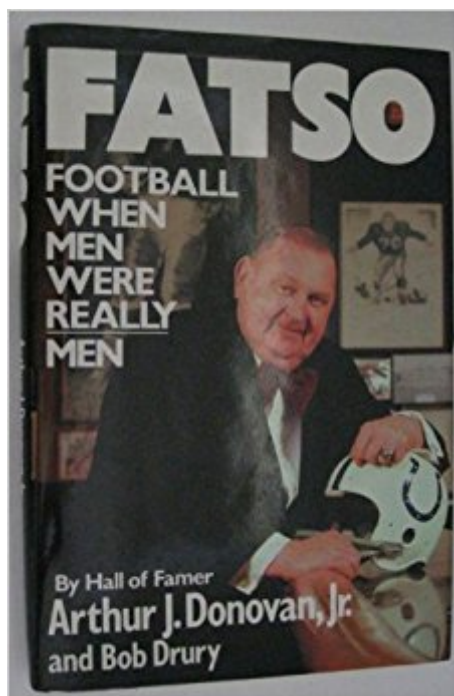


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# Fatso: Football When Men Were Really Men



## Synopsis

AUTOGRAPHED, stated First Edition with full numberline. Price-clipped dustjacket shows light wear but no chips, tears. Hardcover. Boards are clean and square. Binding is sound and pages are unmarked. Great gift for the football fanatic. Collectible.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

The 340-pound Donovan was a professional football player in the 1950s, when the league was taking shape and the game was particularly attractive to players who enjoyed mayhem. Such a player was Donovan, born in the Bronx, son of a famous boxing referee of the '30s and '40s. He and New York Newsday staffer Drury here present a picture of the sport when annual pay ranged from \$5,000 to \$20,000, and there were only 12 teams with 33 players to a team, so everyone lived in fear of being cut. Donovan began his pro career with inferior teams like the New York Yankees and the Dallas Texans, both now defunct, but ended his playing years with the great Baltimore team of the late '50s, joining such stars as Johnny Unitas and Alan Ameche. His autobiography is an entertaining bit of sports nostalgia. Copyright 1987 Reed Business Information, Inc.

A few months ago, just after his death from complications caused by kidney failure, I read Alex Karras' autobiography "Even Big Guys Cry". Although he had retired shortly before I became interested in pro football, I decided to give his book a read, and found it book interesting as it described how the game was played in the late 50's through the 60's. Although Karras's career began only a few years before Art "Fatso" Donovan's ended, Karras mentioned Donovan as one of the best defensive tackles of the era. I had known of Art as a wisecracking, football commentator

and I hadn't realized how good he was when playing. So, I decided to also read Donovan's autobiography. I found "Fatso" to be pretty funny, and like Karras' book, it gave me into a view into football as it was back then. Football, when Donovan played, was not the entertainment behemoth that it is now, and the first three NFL teams he played on actually folded. Art's book is not as introspective as Karras' book is, but it's probably more entertaining, and is chock-full of stories and anecdotes about the players and coaches that Art played for, with, and against. Donovan could take a joke, and while he could be brutal on the field if he had to, he typically didn't try to intentionally injure other players and was well known for his good humor and good naturedness. Art is pretty opinionated, though, and pretty much tells it as he saw it. If you're looking for a lighthearted book on pro football from the 50's, this is a very good book. While it's not going to go into any great depth about the sport as a whole, it does give you an insider's look at what it was like to play the game then. Four stars.

Fatso is one of the most enjoyable books I've ever read. It will never be confused with fine writing, but if you like football, sports, or just a good laugh, you'll like it. Art Donovan was ending his pro football career about the time that I first got interested in the sport as a kid, in the mid 1960s. So many of the characters were familiar to me: Weeb Eubank, Johnny Unitas, and Don Shula, to name a few. But I never saw or heard of Donovan until one night when he was on the David Letterman show in the early 1990s. Here was this huge guy with a thick New York accent, telling some of the funniest stories I'd ever heard. He really should have started a career as a stand-up comic after retiring from football. The book is jammed with colorful stories about life on and off the football field, in training camps, practices, during games and after curfews. Lots of alcohol was consumed, many punches were thrown, and practical jokes were frequent. My favorite story is about an eating contest between several Baltimore Colts that ends with one putting saccharine in his tea because he was watching his weight. If you were an NFL fan during the 50s, 60s, or early 70s, you're going to love it.

This NFL dinosaur gave me more laughs and inside stories than I could ever find in some Prima Donna's book. From being the son of a famous fight referee to giving NFL opponents "the business" at the bottom of a pile this is one awesome book. When I was in Jr high I loved the Baltimore Colts and Johnny U. I grew up in Wash. State so it was not a proximity thing. It was TV that introduced me to them. As I got older Bert Jones took over and then then the dastardly act of moving them to Indy happened. I feel so sorry for those Baltimore fans as I still have that sick feeling in my gut about my Sonics being ripped out of Seattle for OKC and Cleveland watching their team set up shop in Miami.

Seeing your team leave town is as rough as it gets! I saw the Baltimore Colts Marching Band drum at the HOF in Canton. They can never remove the memories. I took a picture of that drum and look at it all the time. This book allows you to relive the glory days before all the nonsense of relocation took place. Art is so funny and it is a rib tickler to read. I saw Art on TV with Johnny Carson and Johnny held this book up. I said 'I'm going to get that book" and I did. Great buy and read! PS Art had Johnny laughing so hard he lost it!

You have seen him on David Letterman and he tells the same stories there that he tells in this book - they are always funny. Maybe one third of this book is actually about football and the glory years with the Baltimore Colts, the rest are related to football or his life before. Make no doubt about it, Mister Donovan is a funny story-teller. As a former sports reporter and Marylander I relate so much to this book. The thing that you truly relate to is Donovan's warmth. He is a personality without parallel on or off the field. It is like hanging out with your uncle and listening to the old-school stories. Some of the stories like "the sports jacket that keeps returning," are a scream. Others are somewhat contrived, like the play where one of his friends utters the line: "I come to fill you hole with soap." I can forgive Art for his reuse of an old joke, given what the rest of the book has to offer. One of the better off-beat stories about sports in the glory years.

Excellent book about the way the NFL used to be

I was a tremendous Baltimore Colt fan growing up. My first two football cards I ever purchased were the 1961 Gino Marchetti and "Big Daddy" Lipscomb. I like this book because he named names. I look at Bobby Layne a little different. It was an interesting read but chronologically he bounced around. I guess that's the way "Fatso" talked. Still a must read for any "Baltimore" Colt fan.

This was a fun book to read, particularly if you are of an age to remember the days when Unitas played for the Baltimore Colts. I am of that age and found the book extremely entertaining. Hard to put down and try to do something else (honey does for my wife) Would highly recommend this book.

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