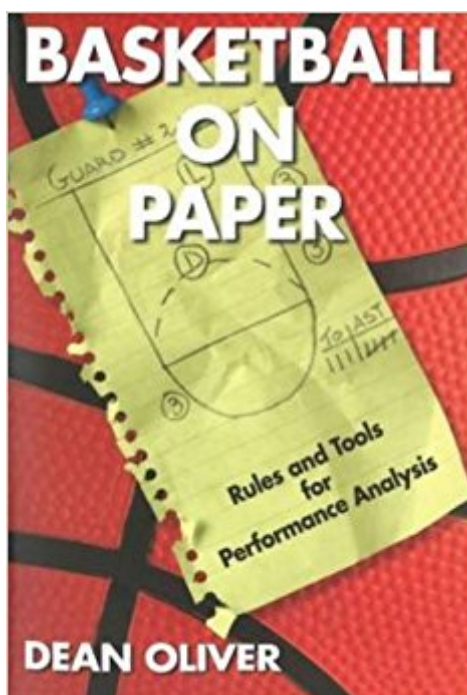


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# Basketball On Paper: Rules And Tools For Performance Analysis



## Synopsis

Journey "inside the numbers" for an exceptional set of statistical tools and rules that can help explain the winning, or losing, ways of a basketball team. *Basketball on Paper* doesn't diagram plays or explain how players get in shape, but instead demonstrates how to interpret player and team performance. Dean Oliver highlights general strategies for teams when they're winning or losing and what aspects should be the focus in either situation. He describes and quantifies the jobs of team leaders and role players, then discusses the interactions between players and how to achieve the best fit. Oliver conceptualizes the meaning of teamwork and how to quantify the value of different types of players working together. He examines historically successful NBA teams and identifies what made them so successful: individual talent, a system of putting players together, or good coaching. Oliver then uses these statistical tools and case studies to evaluate the best players in history, such as Magic Johnson, Wilt Chamberlain, Bill Russell, and Charles Barkley and how they contributed to their teams' success. He does the same for some of the NBA's "oddball" players-Manute Bol, Muggsy Bogues, and Dennis Rodman and for the WNBA's top players. *Basketball on Paper* is unique in its incorporation of business and analytical concepts within the context of basketball to measure the value of players in a cooperative setting. Whether you're looking for strategies or new ideas to throw out while watching the ballgame at a sports bar, Dean Oliver's *Basketball on Paper* will give you amazing new insights into teamwork, coaching, and success.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

"At the risk of succumbing to hyperbole, Basketball on Paper is a revolutionary strike for statistical analysis of the game of basketball. . . . There has never been a basketball book quite like [it].""The must-read hoops numbers book.""Statistics guru Dean Oliver . . . is to the NBA what Bill James is to baseball.""Excellent writing. There are a lot of math guys who just rush from the numbers to the conclusion. . . . Dean is more than that; he's really struggling to understand the actual problem, rather than the statistical after-image of it. I learn a lot by reading him.""Oliver's book provides an insightful framework for basketball. . . . This book is a unique and surprisingly practical addition to a coach's library.""A revolutionary strike for statistical analysis of the game of basketball."

Basketball stats and strategy for coaches and fans alike. --This text refers to the Hardcover edition.

While Oliver's methods and approaches are all applied to the NBA game in this book, they nevertheless can be applied in whole to the collegiate game. After reading "Basketball on Paper" over the last year and watching the 2009-2010 college basketball season, I can truly say that this book has revolutionized how I view a basketball game -- all for the better. Without giving away key premises, Oliver truly dives deep into the fundamentals of how a basketball game works to determine tools to evaluate how teams and players do just past the final score. Typical cliches are challenged -- some proven, some shown to be irrelevant -- as he puts a statistical and logical argument behind why the proposed approaches are superior. And I agree with his results. After focusing on them over the past year, I can truly say that this book has helped me further understand how and why a team wins just behind the final score. Diving into the box score alone can reveal hidden gems that you might not have thought about otherwise. If you're a stat nut, a basketball fanatic, or some sort of a combination of the two, this book is a definite must read. Considering that this is one of the greatest books I've ever read, I'd say it is worthy of a five star rating.

Service by was perfect, on time and brand new condition. The book is interesting as I expected, and I believe Oliver adds some wit and humor that helps in the drier sections, but the book tends to get a little listy. For example, it will show you the scorer's sheet for an entire game, when maybe only a half is necessary. Or it will give you the top 30 offenses of all-time, when a list of ten might be more manageable. There are also some typos in the book that the editor should not have missed. All in all though, it's a great purchase and a very educational and interesting read.

As a statistician, and someone who also loves sports, I have totally enjoyed the "new" statistical

approaches to sports stats, from tversky to moneyball to learning you should never punt. Sports arguments are often a lot more fun these days (e.g., 90 percent of the ESPN analysis on NBA draft night is how well the players scored the ball in college, when that appears statistically to be only a minor indicator of professional success. The problem I have with much of the literature aimed at the general public though, is that it over simplifies the problems, and all too often takes away the argument by assumption. John Maynard Keynes taught us that the big problem with statistics is not the methods, it's having no way to validate the numbers we put in. So here we have an assumed method of picking the best offensive and defensive teams in history, no discussion of why most of those teams did not win a championship, no discussion of alternative methods. We get probabilities of winning streaks, but only a couple paragraphs on problems with those stats. (player injuries as the only example.). What about the fact that NBA teams almost always lose the second game of back to back road games? What about teams tanking at the end of the season to improve draft position? I appreciated large parts of this book, but also found myself deeply frustrated with it at points. There are better books out there for people who want to get started on modern sports statistics.

Dean Oliver's *Basketball on Paper* is a must read for coaches and those interested in statistics. This book provides a significant amount of information leading to the genesis of sports analytics in basketball. A book about statistics I thought might be difficult to read but I found the flow to be quite easy and enjoyable

If you are into a technical, mathematical analysis of basketball teams, then this book is a right fit for you. The author Dean Oliver is a genius with his presentation of various factors and rankings regarding teams and players from not only a current aspect but from also a historical perspective. This book obviously took a tremendous amount of time to produce with all of the ratings and graphs and formulas. Well worth the price and better yet well worth my own time to digest this book in its entirety.

I have been using the formulas and ideas presented in Dean Oliver's book for the past three years. I was never a math fan, but my spreadsheets for calculating basketball statistics are the most complicated I have ever created and it was this book that started my obsession. The book inspired me with a fascination over a new way to look at the game and the players that bring it to life. Mr. Oliver's work was just a starting point and over the past few years I have added other formulas and

other mathematical approaches to looking at the game, but I would not have gotten anywhere without this book. It is an essential tool in my toolbox for evaluating and enjoying the game of basketball.

I got this book to understand the logic behind a variety of nba stats, and I ended up learning quite a bit more. Was a surprisingly excellent read all the way through.

This book gave me a much better insight in basketball statistics and how it can and will affect the outcome of the game.

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