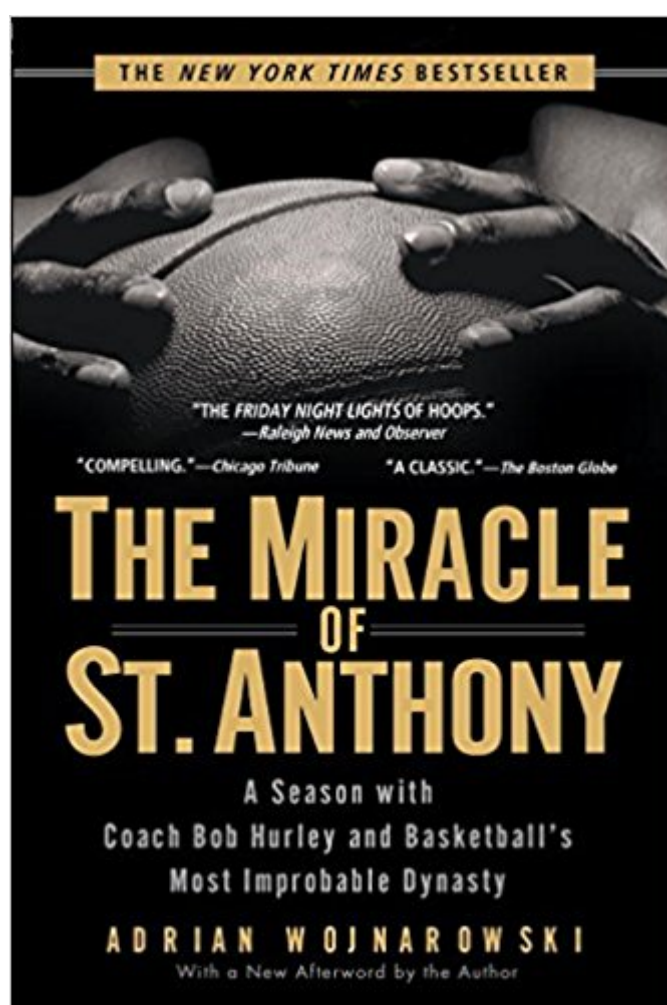


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# The Miracle Of St. Anthony: A Season With Coach Bob Hurley And Basketball's Most Improbable Dynasty



## Synopsis

In a city mired in endless decay, where the youth suffer through all the horrors of urban blight, hope comes in a most unassuming form: a tiny brick schoolhouse run by two Felician nuns where a singular basketball genius takes teenagers from the mean streets of Jersey City and turns them into champions on the hardcourt. Coach Bob Hurley had been working miracles at St. Anthony High School for over thirty years, winning state and national championships and offering his players rescue from their surroundings through college scholarships, when he met his most dysfunctional team yet. In *The Miracle of St. Anthony* Adrian Wojnarowski follows Hurley through a gripping and heartrending season as he struggles to lead a troubled team to glory through his unparalleled understanding of the game and his ceaseless determination to see no more children lost to these streets. In *The Miracle of St. Anthony*, acclaimed sports journalist Adrian Wojnarowski follows Hurley through a gripping and heartrending season, as he struggles to lead a troubled team to glory through his unparalleled understanding of the game and his ceaseless determination to see no more children lost to the city streets.

## Book Information

Paperback: 390 pages

Publisher: Avery; Reprint edition (January 19, 2006)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 1592401864

ISBN-13: 978-1592401864

Product Dimensions: 5.4 x 0.9 x 8 inches

Shipping Weight: 12.6 ounces (View shipping rates and policies)

Average Customer Review: 4.6 out of 5 stars 72 customer reviews

Best Sellers Rank: #139,387 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #46 in Books > Sports & Outdoors > Coaching > Football (American) #67 in Books > Biographies & Memoirs > Sports & Outdoors > Basketball #93 in Books > Biographies & Memoirs > Sports & Outdoors > Football

## Customer Reviews

The Bob Hurley profiled here isn't as well known to the average sports fan as his son, Bobby, the Duke University basketball superstar. But the elder Hurley's profile should rise quickly, thanks to sportswriter Wojnarowski's fine and detailed look at the "miracle" Hurley has achieved as coach for more than 30 years of the men's basketball team at St. Anthony's High School in Jersey City, NJ. Wojnarowski provides an excellent look at the phenomenon of the school itself, which Hurley and

two Felician nuns managed to keep open even after it lost funding from the church, educating "the poorest of the poor" (more than 50% of the students' families lived below the poverty line). He delivers a finely etched portrait of Hurley, whose passion and drive enabled him to construct "a national powerhouse program out of an enrollment that struggled to stay at 200" and keep the school's decade-long streak of 100% college acceptance. But Wojnarowski's main focus is on the 2003-2004 season, in which a varsity team that Hurley considered "the most academically, athletically and socially underachieving in St. Anthony basketball history" overcame its "dysfunctional" nature and had an undefeated season. Wojnarowski's sensitive, insightful look at the social backgrounds and emotional development of the varsity players-and Hurley's remarkable understanding of them-will keep readers riveted throughout this book, which is one of the best recent pieces of sports journalism. Copyright © Reed Business Information, a division of Reed Elsevier Inc. All rights reserved. --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

In 31 years as head basketball coach at St. Anthony High School in Jersey City, New Jersey, Bob Hurley has won 22 state titles. One might expect St. Anthony to be a sprawling urban campus with thousands of students from which to cull elite basketball players. On the contrary, it's a tiny school, constantly on the edge of bankruptcy and held together by a determined band of Felician nuns. Nearly all of Hurley's players have attended college, many on basketball scholarships. New Jersey sportswriter Wojnarowski chronicles St. Anthony's 2003-04 season, which began with a group of players Hurley categorized as undermotivated and unfocused. They weren't for long. The season was a success, and the four seniors all accepted scholarships to Division I basketball programs. This inspiring account of good people making a difference one step at a time stands as a compelling counterpoint to Ian O'Connor's *The Jump* (p.1129), in which basketball talent is exploited at various levels for the profit of all but the player. Wes Lukowsky Copyright © American Library Association. All rights reserved --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

I've bought this book several times and gave them out as gifts. Terrific story of an excellent, my way or the highway coach, whose demanding ways turn young boys into men looking forward to successful futures. A must read for basketball fans and coaches of all sports. Also a should-read for the helicopter parent who thinks sports should only involve fun and positive reinforcement principles. Coach Bob Hurley is one of a dying breed of excellent coaches, who coach with a tough love edge, and who demand kids to grow up fast.

Adrian Wojnarowski's "The Miracle of St. Anthony: A Season with Coach Bob Hurley and Basketball's Most Improbable Dynasty" is one of the best sports and leadership books I have read this past year. St. Anthony's is a private Catholic High School in Jersey City, NJ, with 230 students (120 boys). Students come from an area where 16% pass the HS proficiency test and where the local drug-infested, back-sliding culture has a hold on the kids. Despite its size and location, St. Anthony's basketball teams have gone undefeated four times, have won two USA Today national titles, and 24 New Jersey Parochial state championships. The basketball program has developed 200 college players, including 5 who went on to the National Basketball Association. St. Anthony's is a special and safe place under Srs. Felicia and Alan and legendary Coach, Bob Hurley - the streets stop here. Their focus in athletics and academics has been to help kids get to the finish line. They share a collective value that there is no shortcut to success. While Sister Felicia and Sister Alan play prominent roles in the success of St. Anthony's, "The Miracle of St. Anthony" is mostly about Bob Hurley and the class of 2004 - the most athletically and socially underachieving team in St. Anthony's history. Yet, under Hurley's coaching leadership, the team went undefeated, winning the NJ State Championship and was named by USA Today as the top high school team of the year. Hurley struggles with the problems of the inner city and sees the potential in these kids that they do not see in themselves. He has always been a disciple of John Wooden... fundamentals, well-conditioned, team play, and defense...and he has always been a no-nonsense driver. He creates an expectation of performance and accountability that the kids will not find anywhere else in their lives, and helps them out the door to life with values and a voice to become the best they can. And despite his daunting ways, the kids respect Hurley and when returning after graduation, they always come home to the warm embrace of family. The relationship changes from tough task master to a friend. "St. Anthony's" covers the entire basketball year from pre-season preparations to the championship game. Wojnarowski provides the ups and downs of the season - injuries, players leaving the team, tough wins, and all the key relationships that makes St. Anthony's the special place it is. This is a great read for anyone interested in coaching, leadership, and basketball.

I can't believe I hadn't read this book before. I must have been living under a rock somewhere. Without question the best basketball book I have ever read. This is a must read for any basketball fan whether high school, college or NBA. This is more than a basketball story however. Adrian Wojnarowski has captured the true spirit of the lives of everyone. It is almost like you know the players, coaches and Nuns personally. Coach Bob Hurley and Sister Alan come to life to show what giving of oneself is really like. Tom Moretto Denver, CO.

This tops my list of sports books. Before Adrian Wojnarowski owned the NBA beat, he spent a season with a high school basketball dynasty in Jersey City, NJ. There is no reason for the school to exist, but Bob Hurley Sr. has built a nationally dominant program and St. Anthony goes on. Wojnarowski captures the leadership of Hurley - a one-man stand for the greatness of kids who might not have another shot. With complete access, Wojnarowski uses the season as the main thread, but you come away with a picture of Jersey City, a small Catholic high school in the inner-city, and the people who support and make up the Friars hoops team. I consistently give two books to people, *The Four Agreements* and *The Miracle of St. Anthony*.

This book is a testament to all those high school basketball coaches, who dedicate their lives to teaching kids to succeed in life through the discipline they endure while being coached by a tough coach. I read this book, and it brought back so many memories of growing up in Hudson County, NJ in the 1980s and playing for one tough basketball coach, Hank Morano, from Emerson High School in Union City, NJ. In fact, Coach Hurley mentions coach Morano in his book, when he yells at his players for not knowing the name of the coach for a high school team that was so eager to play them. He goes on to mention all the high school coaches of north Jersey and then south Jersey and is upset that his kids don't even bother to learn the names of the coaches from other schools. I remember coach Hurley very well. In 1982 we competed against St. Anthony for the county title, and we lost by 2 points at the St. Peter's college gym. We went on to win the state sectional title in 1982 and again in 1983. I went to coach Hurley's summer basketball camp in Pennsylvania twice, and his week long camp at St. Peter's college. There are so many names in the book that I remember from growing up. Too many to mention here. It was great to read this book, and if you grew up playing high school basketball, you would also enjoy this book. R. Lorenzo, Esq. Miami, FL.

I love basketball and have been a big Duke fan even before my brother graduated from there in 1988. Bobby Hurley is our favorite player. He is our favorite because, like him, we played point guard, not real tall, white, quick and thought we lived to play the game. From the book and not just the Bobby part we were not even close to being committed. This is my second read and it is also from a parents view. As a parent, the consistency, or lack of in many players but what coach Hurley provided, is all important. Coach Hurley's days never ended and seasons ended but the next was immediately after. And you have the challenges of the school and the Sisters. Health, not wealth, helping kids and more it is the life many of us lead. Good way to approach life, as a person or a

parent.

Great book about a great recruiter.

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