

The Physics of Basketball

By John J. Fontanella

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Forget Newton's apple. It's a basketball that provides the ideal focus for physics. Layups, stuff shots, treys, hang time--the entire wonderful game of hoops yields its kinetic secrets to Fontanella's careful but entertaining application of mathematical science. Whether looking at a Steve Nash bounce pass, a Peja Stojakovich jump shot, or a Gus Johnson slam, Fontanella teases out explanatory formulas and geometry. Sometimes the analyses serve a chiefly theoretical interest: by probing the dynamics of microcracks, for instance, Fontanella explains when and why a backboard will shatter. But as a former college player himself, Fontanella recognizes the value of science that translates into on-court techniques. Anyone who wants to get better at launching treys or shooting free throws will find finely calibrated advice here. Some readers may find the mathematics a bit stiff, but all will relish the piquant anecdotes that accompany the numbers. What fan doesn't enjoy revisiting Michael Jordan's 1982 nothing-but-net game winner against Georgetown? An unusual book, certain to attract both the sports fan and the armchair scientist. Bryce Christensen

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Editorial Review

From [Booklist](#)

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Review

The Physics of Basketball takes the game to a whole new level.

(Bill Ingram, Executive Editor, Basketball News Services *Hoopsworld.com*)

An unusual book, certain to attract both the sports fan and the armchair scientist.

(*Booklist*)

Perfect physics aid for basketball fans.

(Ken Zetie *Physics Education*)

Fontanella writes with humor and feeling.

(Earl Kelly *Annapolis Capital*)

He merges teaching about physics with tips on how to improve the game... With Fontanella's guidance, much is learned about physics, basketball, and the scientific method. Highly recommended.

(*Choice*)

The Physics of Basketball bridges the gap between sports science and coaching by introducing many practical ideas that have likely never been considered... recommended reading for all basketball coaches.

(Steve Watkins *International Journal of Sports Science & Coaching*)

A unique approach to the fundamentals of basketball. This book is a must read for any player, coach, or spectator.

(Morgan Wootten, all-time winningest high school basketball coach, hall of famer, and the Naismith Foundation's "Coach of the Century")

We analyze and overanalyze the game from so many different angles that it is hard to find a new one. John Fontanella has done just that, breaking the game down in a very interesting way.

(Brenda Frese, Head Coach, University of Maryland (2006 NCAA Champions))

John Fontanella, whose success as a shooter approached perfection, has applied physics to the everyday world of basketball. It will tremendously enhance the game that he loves. I highly recommend his book for coaches, players, and fans who want an insightful understanding of the science of shooting a basketball.

(Dr. C. Ronald Galbreath, Women's Basketball Coach, Geneva College)

About the Author

John J. Fontanella is a physics professor at the United States Naval Academy.

Users Review

From reader reviews:

Justin Fernandez:

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