

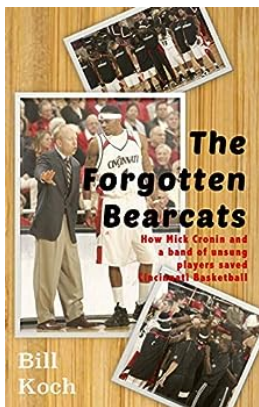
How Mick Cronin And Band Of Unsung Players Saved Cincinnati Basketball

When Mick Cronin took over as the head coach of the Cincinnati Bearcats men's basketball team in 2006, the program was at a crossroads. The once-proud basketball program had fallen on hard times, both on and off the court.

Attendance was dwindling, and the team seemed to lack the energy and drive that had been the hallmark of Cincinnati basketball in the past.

However, Cronin, a passionate and hardworking coach, was determined to turn things around. He knew that rebuilding the program would not happen overnight, but with the right players and a cohesive team, he believed Cincinnati basketball could reclaim its former glory.

Cronin had a vision for the team - one that emphasized hard work, grit, and determination. He wanted players who were willing to put in the extra effort, both on and off the court. This led him to recruit a group of unsung players, who may not have been highly touted or recruited by other programs, but possessed a strong work ethic and a never-give-up attitude.



The Forgotten Bearcats: How Mick Cronin and a band of unsung players saved Cincinnati

basketball by Bill Koch (Kindle Edition)

★★★★☆ 4.3 out of 5

Language : English

File size : 605 KB

Text-to-Speech : Enabled

Screen Reader : Supported

Enhanced typesetting : Enabled

Word Wise : Enabled

Print length : 133 pages



One of the first players Cronin recruited was Deonta Vaughn, a point guard from Indianapolis. Vaughn was a talented player, but had been overlooked by many major programs. Cronin saw something in him, recognizing his potential to be a leader on the court and a catalyst for change for the Cincinnati basketball program.

Under Cronin's guidance, Vaughn flourished. He became the team's leading scorer, averaging over 16 points per game during his freshman season. Vaughn's determination and dedication to improving his game set the tone for the rest of the team.

Another key player in the revival of Cincinnati basketball was Yancy Gates, a powerful forward from Cincinnati. Gates had the size and strength to dominate in the paint, but his work ethic and attitude had been questioned in the past. However, Cronin saw the potential in Gates and believed he could be a game-changer for the team.

Cronin worked closely with Gates, pushing him to become a more disciplined player both on and off the court. The hard work paid off, as Gates transformed into a reliable scorer and dominant rebounder. His physical presence in the paint became a key factor in the team's success.

As the years went by, Cronin continued to recruit and develop talented players who shared his vision for Cincinnati basketball. Players like Sean Kilpatrick, a shooting guard with a deadly three-point shot, and Gary Clark, a versatile forward

known for his defense and rebounding, joined the team and made significant contributions.

Together, this band of unsung players led by Mick Cronin turned Cincinnati basketball into a force to be reckoned with. They brought back the energy and passion that had been missing for so long, reinvigorating the fan base and putting the program back on the map.

They embraced the underdog mentality, using it as motivation to prove their doubters wrong. They worked tirelessly in the gym, constantly improving their skills and pushing each other to get better. They played with heart and determination, never giving up until the final buzzer sounded.

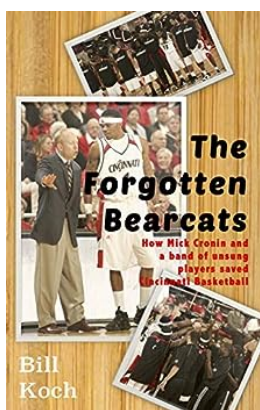
The hard work and dedication of these unsung players paid off. Cincinnati basketball experienced a renaissance, making multiple NCAA Tournament appearances and winning conference championships. The team became known for their toughness and grit, earning the respect of opponents and fans alike.

Mick Cronin's impact on Cincinnati basketball cannot be overstated. His ability to find and develop talent, along with his relentless work ethic, transformed the program into a success story. He instilled a winning culture that still resonates today, even after his departure to UCLA.

While many college basketball programs rely on highly recruited superstars to lead their teams, the story of Cincinnati basketball's revival serves as a reminder that success can be achieved by a band of unsung players who are willing to work hard and embrace their roles.

So, the next time you watch a Cincinnati basketball game, remember the journey that Mick Cronin and his band of unsung players took to save the program.

Remember the energy, the passion, and the never-give-up attitude that reignited the spirit of Cincinnati basketball.



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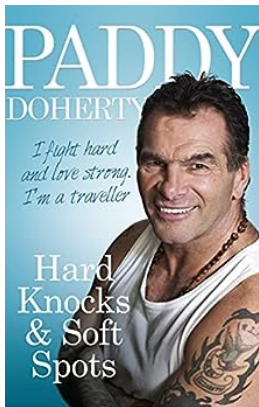
“The Forgotten Bearcats: How Mick Cronin and a band of unsung players saved Cincinnati basketball’ is the story of Cronin’s determination to put the program back on solid ground after it had reached one of the lowest points in its history in 2006, a year after Bob Huggins was fired. It’s also the story of his players, mostly junior college transfers, who agreed to play on Cronin’s first Cincinnati team under trying circumstances, absorbed the unavoidable losses, and helped to create the culture of hard work, defense and rebounding that has defined the Bearcats under Cronin. When Cronin took over, he inherited an angry fan base, a depleted roster, and a program that had been penalized by the NCAA for the poor academic performance of its players. It fell to Cronin and his staff to quickly assemble a roster, improve the academic situation and somehow try to be competitive in the Big East Conference, one of the the most competitive leagues in the country. Twelve years later, thanks in large part to the foundation those

players laid, the Bearcats have played in eight straight NCAA Tournaments and produced back-to-back 30-win seasons, re-establishing Cincinnati basketball as one of the top programs in the country.



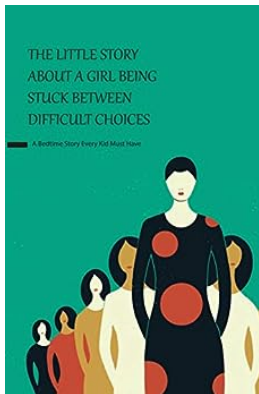
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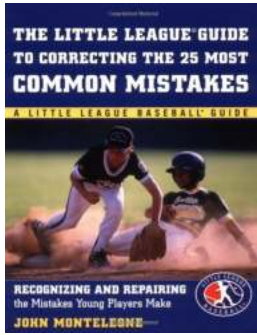
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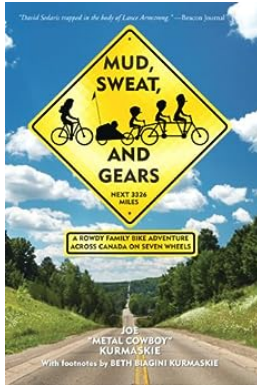
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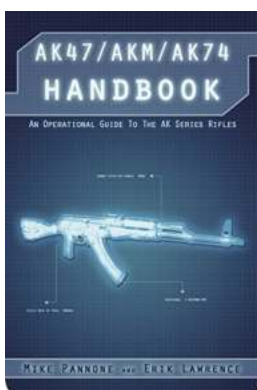
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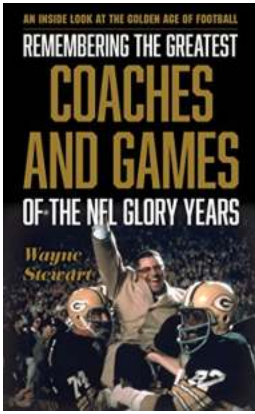
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