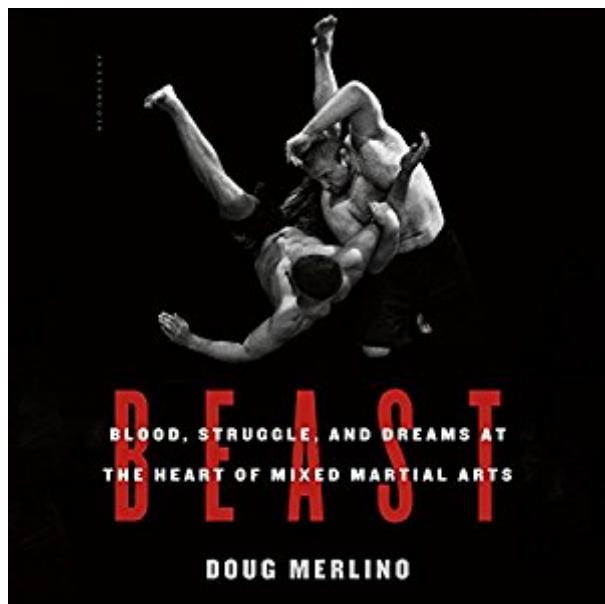


The book was found

Beast: Blood, Struggle, And Dreams At The Heart Of Mixed Martial Arts



Synopsis

Mixed martial arts is America's fastest-growing sport - around the country, new gyms open their doors as enthusiastic viewers tune in to UFC matches. Although some dismiss it as brutal combat, its fighters are among the most dedicated athletes in any arena. But MMA also takes a heavy toll on the body, and it's a rare fighter who can earn a living in the sport's top ranks. Beast follows four high-level fighters at one of the sport's elite gyms, Florida's American Top Team. Doug Merlino had unprecedented access, training alongside the men for two years, traveling to their matches, and eating in their homes. Mirsad Bektic, a young Bosnian refugee who started in karate as a boy in Nebraska, dreams of stardom. Jeff Monson, a battered veteran at 41, is an outspoken, tattooed anarchist enjoying a bizarre burst of celebrity in Russia. Steve Mocco is a newcomer - a former Olympic wrestler from a close-knit, intellectual family. Finally there's Daniel Straus, who, from a life short on opportunity, fights his way up to title contention. All will experience electrifying highs and career lows, and Merlino takes us along every step of the way while also examining the history, culture, business, and meaning of professional cage fighting. An audiobook for both the uninitiated and the hardcore fan, Beast offers a fascinating journey into an often misunderstood world.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

Been a fight fan for over 30 years, have many patients and friends for the last 15 years that have fought at the highest levels in both MMA and boxing. I am currently on medical staff for one of the largest second tier mid-western MMA promotions in the country. This book is by far the best detailed

telling of not only the MMA environment, but also about the type of men that choose to fight, that I have ever read. The way Beast chronicles the four fighters in the book, provides a very detailed window into the " who fights " and " why fights" is second to none in any trade publication I have read or any documentary I have ever watched. Fighters at the level this book follows; are NOT what the typical lay person would envision, sacrifice more than most people could comprehend to achieve the goals and dreams, and most often live a quiet extremely dedicated family oriented home life. Doug Merlino captured the truths I speak of in a manner that would make the most seasoned fighters or their coaches think Doug has been around the fight game his whole life. I couldn't put Beast down once I cracked open the binding, and I am sure anyone (fight fan or not,) who chooses to pick up a copy of Beast and take a quick look inside, would have a hard time putting it down or back on the book store shelf same as I did.

Beast covers the lives and personalities of four MMA aspirants, each with a different background and goals in their desire to achieve success in a brutal sport. The sacrifice, hard work and dedication it takes to achieve even a modicum of success in the sport is revealed through the four men whose lives he follows. It's also clear one has to be wired a little different to train so assiduously for a sport that is brutal and physically debilitating. I also liked the interludes where the author fills those not as familiar with MMA on the history of the sport dating back to the Gracie family and jiu jitsu in Brazil to the early days of the no-holds barred and controversial rise of the sport. A very interesting read.

I liked this book. I've followed MMA for years, and although not a meathead (as the author refers to some fans) I'm definitely not just a casual observer. I enjoyed the concept of the book, and the fighters that the author chose to follow were diverse and interesting. There were candid insights on the struggle of what it takes to participate in a very violent sport. The last third of the book the author chose to do a little history lesson on the UFC which seemed just slightly out of place, but I understand the perceived need to include it. Overall I would say this book is probably better suited for the more hardcore fan, but it is definitely well worth the read.

This is a very compelling book, giving the reader a vivid glimpse into the lives, trials and tribulations of 4 fighters from American Top Team, one of the premier Mixed Martial Arts gyms in the world. This is an absolute must read for any true MMA fan or those interested in what it really takes to be an elite and professional athlete.

Entertaining backstories on fighters as they prepare themselves for fights. Well written, some good insights, and personalities. Would have benefited from following the fighters a little longer, but very good regardless.

Enjoyable read. Following Jeff Monson while reading is exhausting (like watching an inevitable train wreck).

Thanks!

They say it takes years of work to be an overnight success. This book takes us behind the curtain into just how much work and sacrifice it takes to follow your dream. It is also a stark reminder that for everyone we see who "makes it", there are countless others working their butts off just to have that shot. I also enjoyed the author's own journey into a subculture he had not experienced before and how it changed some of his preconceived notions. The example I liked best was how much fighting, and learning it was more about discipline than violence, helped him deal with the BS his family was putting him through after his father passed away. Who would have thought that learning to fight would help be a path to inner peace? A great read.

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