

Sins of a Southern Sportscaster

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Phil Schaefer

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Acknowledgements

After years sitting behind a typewriter, and later at a computer keyboard, when it came time to write this book, I decided the best way to put my thoughts on paper was by longhand. That meant someone would have the terrible task of trying to decipher my small handwriting. Thank goodness, my wife Karen was patient enough to put the book on the computer. Friend Carol Purviance also spent a lot of time trying to figure out what I had written.

Before, and after, my writing on this project began, I had several conversations with Bill Lampton to pick his brain about publishing. Dave and Lynn Wright were also most helpful. Dave and I met at the Masters well over forty years ago. He is a long-time radio personality in Columbia, South Carolina. His wife Lynn has written and published several children's books. My editor, Barbara Stone, was recommended to me by Dave. Book publishing has filled much of the last twenty years of her life, and she was able to handle many of the details necessary to get the project off the ground.

I sincerely appreciate the comments made for the back cover by athletes for whom I feel so much respect. Jeff Blausen is always fun to be around. I can still recall the amazing bruises on his arms and legs when he played shortstop. Phil Niekro has consistently been there when asked. Knucksie showed up for all the Huntington's Disease charity shows, proving he is a Hall of Famer both on and off the field. I enjoy talking football with Fran Tarkenton, who is the smartest quarterback to ever play in the NFL. Even the late, great Vince Lombardi could never figure out

how to defend the former UGA signal caller. I followed Kevin Butler's career in high school, college, and the pros. Later, we worked together on his charity golf tournament for HD. I was fortunate to get to know Jack and Barbara Nicklaus while we were in college. I consider Jack the greatest golfer ever, for a number of reasons: ability, concentration, competitiveness, grit, and class.

Dale Murphy impressed me from day one. He is a superstar and, yet, just a down-to-earth person. We still talk baseball and politics, even though he lives in Utah. It was an honor to have him write the foreword for my book. Blausen, Niekro, Butler, Tarkenton, Nicklaus, and Murphy have helped me with my charity fundraising endeavors. Their friendship means the world to me.

A special thanks to my little wife, Karen, not only for her patience, but for her support and assistance in making *Sins of a Southern Sportscaster* a reality.

Last, but not least, I wrote this book to share my story with my children and grandchildren.

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Foreword

In *Sins of a Southern Sportscaster*, Phil Schaefer shares with us an eyewitness account of the great events that have shaped the sports landscape of the Southeast for the past forty years. This part of the United States was, at one time, considered untapped territory for expansion in the world of sports. The 1960s saw the Braves move from Milwaukee, the Falcons come on the scene as an NFL expansion franchise, the National Hockey League come to town, and the NBA move the Hawks from St. Louis to Atlanta. Atlanta also became regular tour stops for the PGA, the LPGA, and the Senior Tour. And through it all, Phil Schaefer was there.

Phil came to Atlanta by way of Ohio State, where he was a popular sports broadcaster for five years. He was soon hired by WSB-Radio in Atlanta, “The Sports Voice of the South,” and was here to watch as the sports explosion began. He did play-by-play for the Atlanta Hawks during the Pete Maravich years, was the voice of the Georgia Bulldogs basketball team as they made a trip to the Final Four in 1983, and was color man for the Bulldogs football team when they won the National Championship in 1980 with a young freshman named Herschel Walker. Phil watched Hank Aaron break Babe Ruth’s homerun record, and his documentary on the slugger helped WSB win a coveted Peabody Award. He interviewed countless golfing greats including Bobby Jones and Ohio State classmate Jack Nicklaus and was there through the Braves’ incredible rise to prominence under the direction of Bobby Cox.

In this thoughtful and inspiring book, Phil Schaefer helps us relive the memories of these and many other exciting moments in southeastern sports history. There is no one more qualified to chronicle these events than Phil. He brought them to us the first time and now he brings them back to life for us again, this time from an insider's perspective.

Phil's love for sports is only surpassed by his love for his family and his fellow man. For many years, Phil has organized fundraisers for the Huntington's Disease Foundation. Because of him, hundreds of thousands of dollars have been generated for research and support of this wonderful cause. His tireless efforts have blessed the lives of so many. I feel privileged to call him a friend.

Dale Murphy