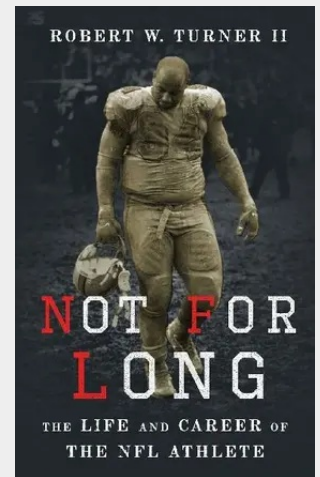


NOT FOR LONG C

The NFL is the most popular professional sports league in the United States. Its athletes receive multi-million dollar contracts and almost endless media attention. The league's most important game, the Super Bowl, is practically a national holiday. Making it to the NFL, however, is not about the promised land of fame and fortune. Robert Turner draws on his personal experience as a former pro and interviews with over 120 current and former NFL players to get behind the bravado and reveal what it means to be an athlete in the NFL and why so many players struggle with life after football. Without guaranteed contracts, the majority of players are forced out of the league after a few seasons. Over three-quarters of retirees experience bankruptcy or financial ruin, two-thirds live with chronic pain, and too many find themselves on the wrong side of the law. Robert Turner argues that the fall from grace of so many players is no accident. The NFL, he contends, is a total institution, powerfully determining their experiences in and out of the league. The labor agreement provides little job insecurity and few health and retirement benefits, and the owners refuse to share power with the players, making change difficult. Even more, the entire process of becoming an elite football player--from high school through the pros--leaves athletes with few marketable skills and little preparation for their first Sunday off the field. With compassion and objectivity, Not for Long reveals the life and mind of the NFL athlete and provides a guide on what reforms and policies might help players transition successfully out of the sport.

Drawing on personal experience as a former pro and interviews with over 14 current and former NFL players, Robert Turner gets behind the bravado to reveal what it means to be an athlete in the NFL and why so many players struggle with life after football.

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