Sport is an extraordinarily important phenomenon that pervades the lives of many people and has enormous impact on society in an assortment of different ways. At its most fundamental level, sport has the power to bring people great joy and satisfy their competitive urges while at once allowing them to form bonds and a sense of community with others from diverse backgrounds and interests and various walks of life. Sport also makes clear, especially at the highest levels of competition, the lengths that people will go to achieve victory as well as how closely connected it is to business, education, politics, economics, religion, law, family, and other societal institutions. Sport is, moreover, partly about identity development and how individuals and groups, irrespective of race, gender, ethnicity, or socioeconomic class, have sought to elevate their status and realize material success and social mobility.

Making March Madness provides a detailed and nuanced examination of the early years of college basketball and its various postseason championship tournaments. Written by Chad Carlson, an assistant professor and basketball coach at Hope College, the book chronicles in a very interesting and engaging fashion the history of the National Collegiate Athletic Association and National Invitation Tournaments, and other college championships. Based on a combination of primary and secondary source material, Carlson successfully places college basketball in proper historical context and connects it to larger issues in college sport more generally and American society at large. Nowhere in the book is this perhaps more evident than in the discussion on the widespread gambling and point-shaving scandals that
rocked college basketball in the mid-twentieth century. We are provided a fresh look at those individuals involved in the scandal and how leaders in college basketball responded to one of the most embarrassing moments in the history of college sport. There are fresh insights, however, on a host of other topics that readers will find interesting, illuminating, and thought provoking.

David K. Wiggins