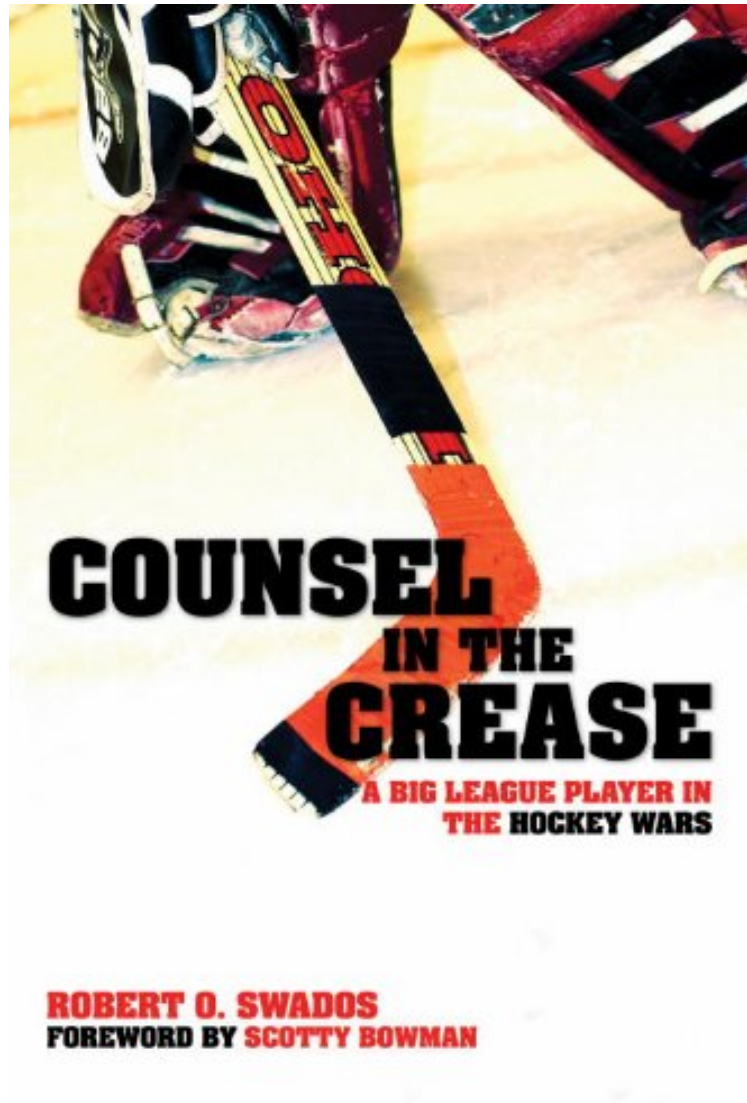


(Mobile pdf) Counsel in the Crease: A Big League Player in the Hockey Wars

Counsel in the Crease: A Big League Player in the Hockey Wars

Robert O Swados

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#4001593 in Books Prometheus Books 2005-10-03 2005-10-03Original language:EnglishPDF # 1 9.30 x 1.31 x 6.32l, 1.72 #File Name: 1591023556492 pages | File size: 41.Mb

Robert O Swados : Counsel in the Crease: A Big League Player in the Hockey Wars before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Counsel in the Crease: A Big League Player in the Hockey Wars:

1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. Quite flawed but interestingBy WDX2BBThe usual disclosure here: I worked indirectly for Bob Swados when we were both connected with the Sabres in the 1980's and 1990's, and interviewed him with I was covering the team after that. Therefore, I had the chance to know him a bit ... and therefore I was very interested to hear him write at length at his hockey career.At length. There's an appropriate phrase. Swados

writes for 450-plus pages here, plus notes and index. The book itself is an interesting mix, at times fascinating, at times surprising. If nothing else, his voice shines through -- no softening ghostwriter here. Swados is one of those "behind the scenes" characters that doesn't get the spotlight too often but is involved in the inside of pro sports. He worked on Buffalo's proposed team in the Continental League in baseball around 1959 or so, and then moved on to the hockey business in the late 1960's. He was in the middle of the awarding of an NHL franchise to Buffalo in 1969, and stayed active with the team for about 30 years. Swados also served as league secretary. Two elements shine through in this book. The first is that Swados is a very intelligent man, knows it, values brainpower, and doesn't mind telling you about it. Not all of America's top lawyers came out of Harvard, although you'd think so after reading this. There's a little arrogance in the mix. For example, Swados writes about the time he had to actually stand in line in Ottawa at the will call window to get his playoff tickets, as if the experience was beneath him. On the other hand, those qualities probably are desirable in a good lawyer; confidence is kind of nice. The other element is less desirable. There are a great many factual errors and mistakes in this book. The team started play in 1970, not in 1969 as was written. The arena opened in 1996, not 1997. The Nordiques were not in the NHL in the early 1970's. It's Bryan Trottier, not Brian. You get the idea, and it does hurt the book's credibility a bit. There also are some editing oversights, such as facts are essentially repeated -- sometimes within a few paragraphs. This book obviously was written over a long period of time -- there's a reference to writing a chapter in 2001 -- and another outside read would have been nice. With that out of the way, there's a lot to like about this book, and not just because Swados doesn't use too much legal lingo along the way. A variety of stories come out about Buffalo sports history that fill in the gaps in public knowledge. For example, I always wondered why the baseball Bisons moved from homey Offermann Stadium to ugly War Memorial Stadium. Swados reveals that the Bills were coming to town, and the city didn't want to fix up the old Rockpile for seven dates a year -- plus the Continental League wanted a good-sized facility if it ever got off the ground. There's plenty more. Norty Knox tried to prevent Punch Imlach from drafting Tony McKegney for all the wrong reasons. The Sabres deliberately offered Ted Nolan a bad, short contract in the hopes he'd go away and the team would get a fresh start. There's also a complete version of the Adelpia takeover and subsequent bankruptcy, the best and clearest treatment of the subject I've seen anywhere. More importantly, Swados gives his views on a variety of local and national issues surrounding the game. It's fair to say he worked in the best interests of Western New York, the NHL and the Sabres at all times, and his view that hockey was headed for a financial trainwreck as early as the early 1990's was backed up by recent events that led to the year-long lockout. This may not be of great interest to those outside of Buffalo, although there are some sections on the NHL that will attract a national audience. Closer to his home, though, Swados has written a book that, flaws and all, certainly demands attention be paid to it.

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. good book
By 5480 guyinsightful book on hockey from 15 or so years ago. liked the local angle on buffalo sabres at that time and place.
8 of 11 people found the following review helpful. Where's The Fact Checker???

By Taro Tsujimoto
Good grief Robert, who was your fact checker?? Understandably this book was written by an aging old employee of the Sabres so a pass is given to him on his recollection of facts but GEEZ somebody at the publishing company should have checked this over before releasing this. Where do I begin? OK, Joe Daley was NOT traded for Roger Crozier...that was Tom Webster, Pat Lafontaine did not suffer his concussion against the Bruins, it was the Penguins, the Atlanta Flames entered the NHL in 1972 not 1974, the Capitals entered in 1974 not 1972, Floyd Smith was not the coach when Tony McKegney was drafted, Swados says he attended a game at the Copps Coliseum in Hamilton in 1981 and then in the next paragraph he says the building didn't exist in the early 1990's, which is it? Gil Perreault was not drafted in the Fall of 1969, Willie O'Ree was long out of the NHL (1960-61) when the Knox's had Oakland Seals ties, the Sabres did not play their first game in 1969, Dave Forman died in 1987 so how did you call him and ask for advice in the 1990's? The Buffalo Braves did not make the playoffs in the first 3 years etc. Facts like this should have been checked by SOMEBODY! All this and I'm only half way through the book. I'm all for telling the TRUE story of the Buffalo Sabres but find somebody who knows what's going on. What's Paul Wieland doing these days? John B.

In his diverse, exciting, and very active forty-five-year legal career, spent mainly in the world of professional sports, attorney Robert O. Swados has worn many hats: owner, league executive, counsel, and franchise builder. In this wide-ranging and good-humored memoir, Swados offers many behind-the-scenes insights into the players, coaches, executives, and owners who have created today's sports entertainment industry. Swados describes his early involvement in professional sports through his efforts in the 1960s to bring a Major League Baseball franchise to his hometown of Buffalo, NY. The deal was so close that a New York Daily News headline erroneously announced that new franchises would go to San Diego and Buffalo. But things really got interesting when in 1969 Swados helped Seymour Knox III and Northrup Knox to establish the Buffalo Sabres. Thus began an exciting thirty-year journey through the ups and downs of the National Hockey League. As part owner, vice chairman, and counsel of the Sabres, Swados has had many opportunities to "score from the crease," and sometimes the action behind the scenes is just as rough and tumble as that on the ice. He tells many fascinating tales about his dealings with winning coaches including Scotty Bowman, with General Managers Punch Imlach and John Muckler, with owner John McMullen, and with

commissioners John Ziegler and Gary Bettman, among others. He also talks frankly about the impact of Adelphi's bankruptcy on the fate of the Sabres and about the obsessions and frustrations of the 2004 NHL lockout. Perhaps no one in professional sports has had such an engaging and productive view. For hockey fans in the U.S. and Canada, especially Buffalo Sabres fans, and anyone interested in the business of bigtime sports, Robert Swados's entertaining and informative story is a must-read.

From Publishers Weekly: Reading attorney Swados's fascinating if overlong autobiography of his half-decade of legal battles is rather like reading the full transcript of federal prosecutor Patrick Fitzgerald's recent indictment of vice-presidential aide "Scooter" Libby. Initially, both seem interminably meticulous accounts of relatively simple events, yet readers who stick with them until the end are greatly rewarded, since each author uses an obsession with detail in a sophisticated way to reveal the complexity behind his subject. In Swados's case, the bulk of his career was as counsel to various professional baseball and hockey organizations, and most of his book covers his single-minded efforts to bring sports franchises to the Buffalo, N.Y., area. But starting with an account of his WWII experience liberating Dachau when he was in the army, he begins a theme of unremitting conflict in which most incidents in the book are described in military terms, as wars Swados must win. One of his major battles was establishing the Buffalo Sabres in the National Hockey League, and fans of that team will thoroughly enjoy Swados's insider views of the Sabres and its various owners. General hockey fans will be enlightened by Swados's insights into the sport's various financial and legal imbroglios. (Jan.) Copyright Reed Business Information, a division of Reed Elsevier Inc. All rights reserved. "A lively set of insights on the sports world as a whole makes Counsel in the Crease a highly recommended pick indeed." - Internet Bookwatch "Swados's Buffalo love seeps from every page. The book covers everything a Sabres fan could desire. It's all here. Written with wit, warmth, and an often surprising level of honesty, the book is a success for hockey freaks and even those with just moderate interest in the game. For a long-time Sabres fan, Counsel in the Crease is damn near un-missable, offering some of the juiciest views of the franchises' backroom dealings a fan will ever see." - Buffalo Spree "...an in-depth, detailed look at the Sabres' franchise through the eyes and ears of Swados.... pro-Buffalo, pro-Sabres, pro-Knox group, a man who spills his blue and gold blood all over these pages. He takes the reader into the board rooms, into the locker rooms, into negotiations, everywhere but in the faceoff circles and the corners of the rink... This is the definitive history - or at least one version - of the first 35 years of the Sabres' franchise, told as oral history, by a man who was there. Many of the principals from the first 30 years of the franchise have taken these conversations and negotiations to their graves; Bob Swados has made sure the history will survive... this is a fascinating read for those who want to hear one man's version of what happened in the board rooms and behind the scenes." - The Buffalo News "[Swados] uses an obsession with detail in a sophisticated way to reveal the complexity behind his subject.... fans of [the Buffalo Sabres] will thoroughly enjoy Swados's insider views of the Sabres and its various owners. General hockey fans will be enlightened by Swados's insights into the sport's various financial and legal imbroglios." - Publishers Weekly About the Author Robert O. Swados is presently of counsel for Phillips Lytle LLP, a leading Buffalo law firm, and an officer for the Buffalo Sabres Hall of Fame and Foundation. He has been a member of the Hall of Fame since 1995 and chairman of its selection committee since 2001.