



The Perfect Game: How Villanova's Shocking 1985 Upset of Mighty Georgetown Changed the Landscape of College Hoops Forever

Frank Fitzpatrick

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Critically acclaimed veteran sportswriter Frank Fitzpatrick takes readers courtside for one of the greatest upsets in college basketball history, the 1985 Villanova/Georgetown national championship showdown

A veteran Philadelphia Inquirer sportswriter and Pulitzer Prize finalist, Frank Fitzpatrick has long followed and covered Villanova basketball. In all that time, nothing compares with the Wildcats' legendary 1985 upset of Georgetown—a win so spectacular and unusually flawless that days after its conclusion, sports columnists were already calling it "The Perfect Game."

The game, particularly its second half, was so different from what observers expected—so different, in fact, from what anyone had ever seen that a shroud of myth almost immediately began to envelop it. Over the years, the game took on mythological proportions with heroes and villains, but with a darker, more complex subtext. In the midst of the sunny Reagan Administration, the game had been played out amid darker themes—race, death, and, though no one knew it at the time, drugs.

It was a night when the basketball world turned upside down. Villanova-Georgetown would be a perfect little microcosm of the 1980s. And it would be much more. Even now, a quarter-century later, the upset gives hope to sporting Davids everywhere. At the start of every NCAA Tournament, it is recalled as an exemplar of March's madness. Whenever sport's all-time upsets are ranked, it is high on those lists, along with hockey's Miracle on Ice. Now, through interviews with the players and coaches, through the work of sociologists and cultural critics, through the eyes of those who witnessed the game, Fitzpatrick brings to life the events of and surrounding that fateful night.

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