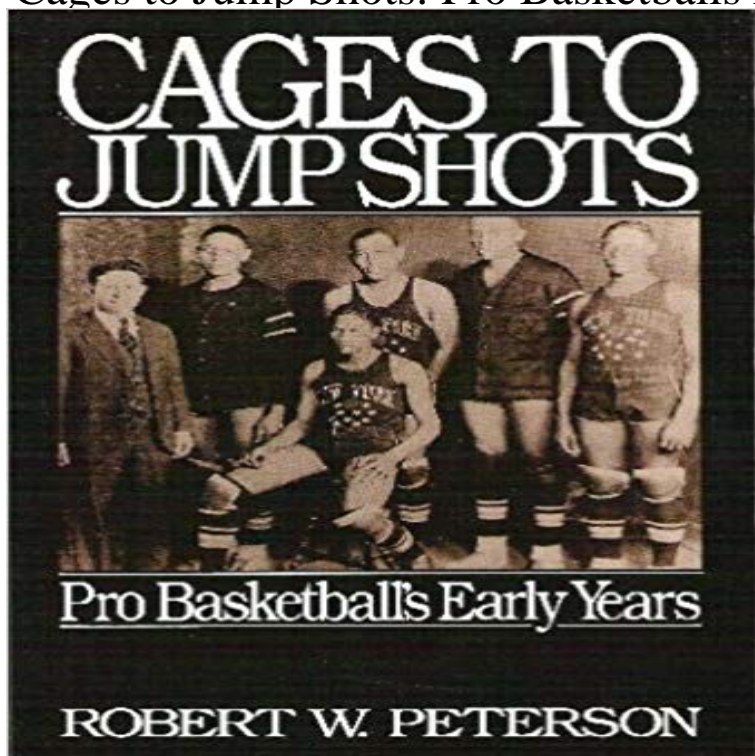


## Cages to Jump Shots: Pro Basketballs Early Years



In *Cages to Jump Shots*, Robert Peterson--one of America's foremost writers on sports history--paints a vibrant portrait of how this sport gained its place in American life. He traces it from the day in 1891 when the father of the game, James Naismith, drew up the first rules, through the early barnstorming professional teams playing in gaslit social halls, to the advent of NBA games in Madison Square Garden. His richly detailed account brings to life every aspect of the changing game and the society that grew to love it: the players, the fans, the owners, the officials, the rules, techniques, and equipment. Peterson draws on interviews with old players to recreate the experience of this dramatically evolving sport, as it went from a brutal, slow-moving game (with a sewn leather ball, underhand set shots, center jumps after every score, and a wire or rope cage around the court) to the high-scoring contests that emerged in the 1950s, with the start of the team foul limit and the 24-second shot clock. Along the way, he illuminates the impact of a changing society, such as the YMCAs early hopes that basketball would foster Christian values, the indignities suffered by black teams in a segregated society, and the influx of Jewish players during the Depression. Peterson brings the story up through the founding of the NBA and its final success in overtaking the popularity of college basketball. Lending a lively and perceptive voice to the story of America's most popular sport, Peterson offers a unique and vivid look at a fascinating side of American life.

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