



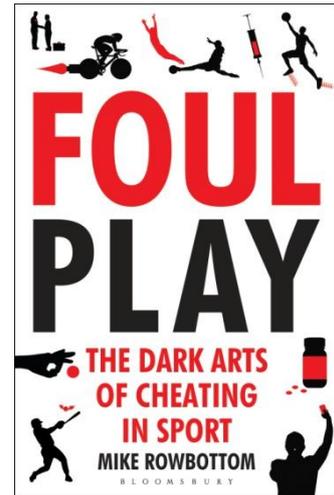
B L O O M S B U R Y

# FOUL PLAY

The Dark Arts of Cheating in Sport

By Mike Rowbottom

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Since sporting contests began there have been rules. There have also been competitors for whom rules are there to be broken. Or, maybe just bent a little. From doping to sledging, fixing to time-wasting, diving to intimidation, cheating appears across all sports, and ranges from minor infringements to criminality. But, what motivates someone to cheat, and where do you draw the line between fair play, and foul?

In his book **FOUL PLAY**, Mike Rowbottom, offers an inside track on the dark arts employed in sport to gain an unfair advantage – whether on the football pitch or rugby field, the tennis court or athletics track, the golf course or bowling green, or even on the Subbuteo table.

He looks at the different forms of cheating and considers the sometimes thin line between wrongdoing and acceptable practise. Ball tampering and bribery may be against the rules, but what about undermining your opponent through sledging and other mind games? Doping is considered one of the scourges of modern sport, but what about training at high altitudes to increase red blood cell count which is considered within the rules?

Rowbottom examines Maradona's infamous 'Hand of God' incident; rugby union's 'Bloodgate' scandal; the match fixing of Hanse Cronje; the multiple drug misdemeanours of Lance Armstrong, and athlete, Marion Jones; and many more who have fallen foul of the law in sporting terms, and sometimes in legal terms, too.

And, it's not just recent sporting contests that are affected. Rowbottom cites the dodgy dealings of the Ancient Greeks who frequently paid off competitors to secure victory, and the wily cunning of W G Grace, who once clocked up multiple runs with the ball lodged in his shirt, claiming he would have been out for handling the ball had he tried to remove it.

**FOUL PLAY** is a revealing, entertaining, and often shocking, account of cheating in sport, providing all the evidence you'll ever need that the sporting world is often anything but.

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