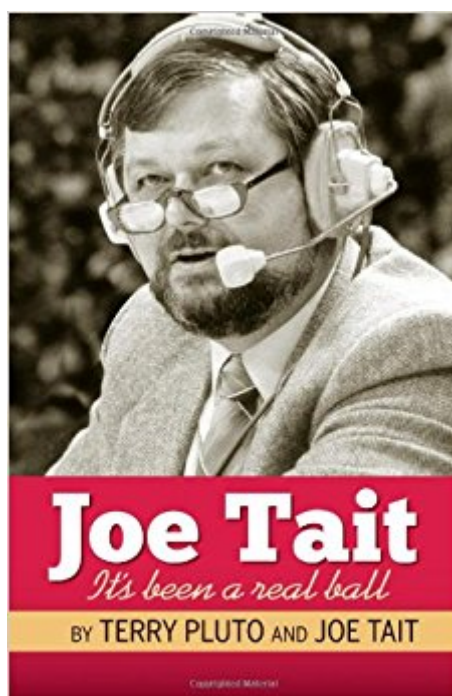


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# Joe Tait: It's Been A Real Ball: Stories From A Hall-of-Fame Sports Broadcasting Career



## Synopsis

An easy, fun book to read and will surely bring back good memories for Cleveland sports fans who listened to Tait's trademark calls since 1970. 20SecondTimeout.com Joe Tait is like a family friend to three generations of Cleveland sports fans. This book celebrates his Hall-of-Fame broadcasting career with stories from Joe and dozens of fans, media colleagues, and players. He was the Voice of the Cleveland Cavaliers. But to fans, Joe was also one of us. Cavs basketball, Indians baseball, or Mount Union football, he made the game come alive, and wasn't afraid to speak his mind—even when it might get him in trouble with the coach or the owner. In high school, Joe loved sports but wasn't always good enough to make the team. Then he discovered play-by-play announcing. Combining two passions, he began to carefully build a broadcasting career that would eventually touch the lives of countless other sports fans. Pluto weaves a roughly chronological narrative that hits the highlights of a long career. It also uncovers some touching personal details. For example, one chapter describes how Joe's father, a stern man with a deep-rooted distrust of black people, came to become good friends with Cavaliers center Nate Thurmond, to Joe's surprise and delight. With fans, Joe was often more popular than the players on the court—especially during the Cavs' dimmer days. When notoriously incompetent team owner Ted Stepien fired Joe in the 1980s, fans protested and staged a rally in his honor. When new owner Gordon Gund took over the team, the first thing he did was hire Joe back. "He is the franchise," Gund said. "To have a basketball team in Cleveland, you have to have Joe Tait." His work inspired a generation of young broadcasters. Language he invented became part of the common broadcast language in Northeast Ohio. "Left to right on your radio dial . . . Wham, with the right hand . . . It's a beautiful day for baseball! . . . To the line, to the lane . . . The stories in this book will make fans feel like they're sitting alongside Joe enjoying a play-by-play recap of the remarkable career they shared together.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

Tait comes across in print just as he did when doing Cavaliers games: he's honest, unpretentious, and at times funny. Pluto deftly balances Joe's life as a broadcaster with the events happening around him, and the result is a memoir that reads like his sports history books. (Ryan Richards [letsgotribe.com](http://letsgotribe.com) 20111120)The book is just a delight. While it covers much of Joe's life biographically, it is just as much a book of Cleveland sports history from 1970 to 2011 as anything else. I guarantee you will not be able to put it down. (Tim Lones [clevelandclassicmedia.com](http://clevelandclassicmedia.com) 20111115)Honest, interesting, and thoroughly entertaining. (Brendan Bowers [StepienRules.com](http://StepienRules.com) 20111111)A wonderful tribute to a true icon in the business that is sports media. (Don McCormack [Ashtabula Star Beacon](http://Ashtabula Star Beacon) 20111214)A fun, eclectic read telling a variety of stories from Joe's life on and off the radio. (Aaron Dorksen [Daily Record](http://Daily Record) 20120124)

The first book about the fan-favorite Cavaliers broadcaster, who retired in May 2011. Authorized autobiography with Joe Tait's involvement.

Joe Tait is a legend among radio play-by-play broadcasters. I was hoping for a more thorough approach to his bio than I received from this book, which appeared to rely in equal parts on interviews with and background information about Tait, balanced (somewhat to the book's detriment) by comments from others who were in many cases nothing more than fans of Tait. It was repetitive and choppy in delivery.

Terry Pluto is one of the great sports authors, Joe Tait was one of the great sport announcers and when the two combined to write this book it resulted in a great sport biography.

GOOD BUT NOT THE TYPE OF BOOK THAT REALLY HOLDS YOUR INTEREST. WOULD NOT RECOMMEND BUT BASKETBALL FANS MAY LIKE IT BETTER

Always great writing by Pluto

My husband loved this!!

Few announcers in the modern era are as beloved as Joe Tait, the long time broadcaster of the Cleveland Cavs until his retirement last Spring. Tait working a game by himself had a rhythm and style all its own, a delight to listen to whether you were in Ohio or somewhere across "the 38 states and half of Canada" that the WWWE signal carried. This book tries to capture that magic, and it is a laudable effort, but it doesn't quite get there although I was rooting for it until the very end. I believe part of the difficulty, as least for me, is that I couldn't escape the sense that to capture Tait best is to listen to Tait. The oral is not the same as the written. At times, you're left wondering if Tait is narrating a chapter or if Terry Pluto is reporting. Pronoun consistency in trying to eliminate that confusion could have been better. BUT, those criticisms aside, it doesn't take away from the warmth of re-living old stories with the voice of your youth and adulthood. This is a history of the Cavs and Indians of the 70s and 80s particularly that will bring a smile to your face. Tait and Pluto genuinely like each other, and there is a feel-good aspect to the entire book. The best chapter by far (and worth the price of the book) is on Ted Stepien, or as he was nicknamed by Tait's fellow broadcaster Pete Franklin, "T.S." as in "Too Stupid." T.S. was hands down the worst owner ever in sports, and Tait only could endure one year of his meddling ownership before exile in Chicago. Thankfully to thousands of listeners, Tait returned triumphantly two years later with the Cavs being sold to Gordon Gund and Gund rehiring him. Also quite appealing are the chapters describing the humbleness of the 1970s NBA as seen through the lens of Tait working for the woeful expansion Cavs, a team so bad that like "Plan 9 from Outerspace" it became a classic. There are also stories from the early Cavs days of sharing rooms with the players, a salary of \$100 per game, and the joy of the Miracle at Richfield. Given the wrestling over how to split billions of dollars in the current NBA lockout, it would do well for both sides to take a few hours and read how it used to be and to be thankful.

Joe Tait was an icon if you were a sports fan in Cleveland during those early 70's, he was the "VOICE". Cav's and old Cleveland Barons hockey you knew you had the radio on the right station when you heard his voice. He was also a common man who always took the time to speak to fans, he even called our home in the late 70's when we inquired about "The Miracle at Richfield" wondering if it was ever going to be put on video tape in those days....It was like the President calling...lolA fine book, could not put it down. Sit back with your favorite beverage and some snacks...Enjoy

I really enjoyed this book! I am an avid Cleveland Indians, Browns and Cavaliers fan and, of course love Joe Tait. There were so many interesting details in his book that I had never heard before.

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