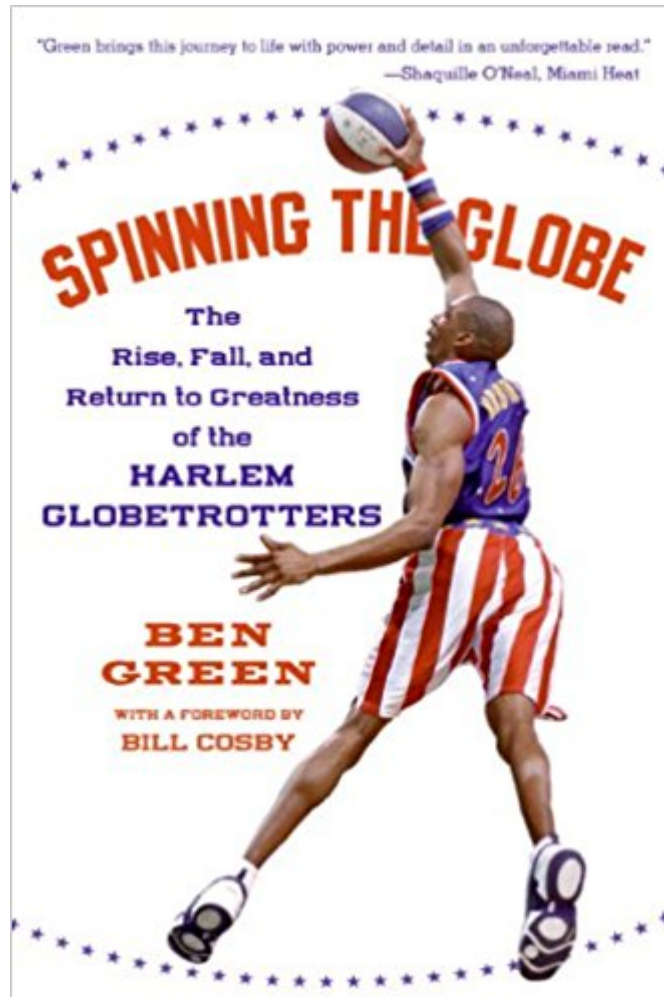


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# Spinning The Globe: The Rise, Fall, And Return To Greatness Of The Harlem Globetrotters



## Synopsis

Before Wilt Chamberlain, Bill Russell, Julius Erving, or Michael Jordanââbefore Magic Johnson and Showtimeââthe Harlem Globetrotters revolutionized basketball and spread the game around the world. In *Spinning the Globe*, author Ben Green tells the story of this extraordinary franchise and iconic American institution. We follow the Globetrotters' rise from backwoods obscurity during the harsh years of the Great Depression to become the best basketball team in the country and, by the early 1950s, the most popular sports franchise in the world. Green brings to life their struggles with racism and segregation, and their influence upon a nation's views about race and sport. We witness the Globetrotters' fall from grace to the brink of bankruptcy in the early 1990s, and their ultimate rebirth under Mannie Jackson today, as they once again amaze kids and families around the world. Now in paperback, this is the true and complete story of their amazing eighty years as a team, told with lyrical prose and masterful storytelling by Ben Green.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

It is an honor to be the first person to review this book. One of my greatest childhood memories is of my father taking my brother and I to see the Globetrotters in the late 60's. I fell in love with the show then and have gone to see them about ten times since then. I love introducing people to the trotters who never saw them in person before. Now this great new book comes along about the Trotters. It was too good to be true. This is a very scholarly tome. It is richly detailed. I came away from it marveling at the stamina and endurance of this team. Being in existence for 80 years is truly remarkable. This book traces the teams' history from their humble beginnings in the 1920's to their

resurgence in 2005. I was startled by the poor conditions they played under early on. Abe Saperstein, the founder and owner of the team is an enigma. I found myself admiring him greatly at times and hating him for his veiled prejudice and sense of superiority. Mr Green devotes a lot of space to Goose Tatum and Marques Haynes. It is worth it to get to know these great players that came before my time. The story about Goose and his "son" was very funny. I was really looking forward to reading the section on Meadowlark Lemon. He was my globetrotter hero growing up and it was a bit sad to read about his career as a Trotter. The book really picks up steam when Mannie Jackson is introduced as the current owner of the team and all of his changes are instituted and the Globetrotters are returned to glory. The book has great closure. If I had one quibble with this book I would have liked to know more about the inner workings of the games and how the Trotters work with the Washington Generals or whichever team they are playing. I would have loved to have read what it is like playing against the Trotters night after night.

Full disclosure: I grew up loving the Harlem Globetrotters and am still a fan (I have a collection of every season program since 1948), although I'm more a fan of their legacy than their current watered-down incarnation. Anyway, there have been a number of books over the years about the Trotters (some better than others), but this is the first one that I'd call scholarly and even-handed in its treatment of them. As you read, you'll find Abe Saperstein to be a visionary with a plantation mentality. I think he truly loved his players, but in a paternalistic sense, and he never missed the chance to make a dollar or promote himself as well as his team. I really have mixed feelings about him, and so do a lot of his former players. The book gives a great background of Saperstein's life before he formed the Trotters so you get a perspective for WHY and HOW the team was formed. You then get a seat in the car as the fledgling team drives to small midwest towns to play straight basketball (and play it well) before discovering comedy almost by accident. It took the better part of 15 years before the Trotters really received widespread notice, but winning a World Championship in the early 40's boosted their fame and beating the NBA champion Lakers in the late 40's cemented it. At the time, the team had a near-perfect mix of skill and humor, and they just took off.

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