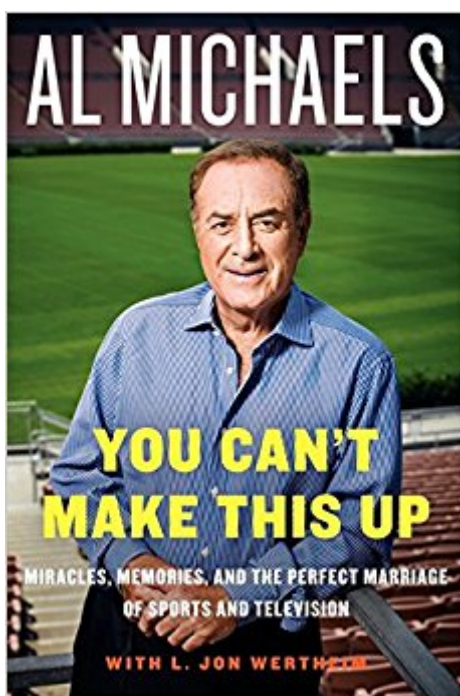


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# You Can't Make This Up: Miracles, Memories, And The Perfect Marriage Of Sports And Television



## Synopsis

In this highly entertaining and insightful memoir, one of television's most respected broadcasters interweaves the story of his life and career with lively firsthand tales of some of the most thrilling events and fascinating figures in modern sports. No sportscaster has covered more major sporting events than Al Michaels. Over the course of his forty-plus year career, he has logged more hours on live network television than any other broadcaster in history, and is the only play-by-play commentator to have covered all four major sports championships: the Super Bowl, World Series, NBA Finals, and the Stanley Cup Final. He has also witnessed first-hand some of the most memorable events in modern sports, and in this highly personal and revealing account, brings them vividly to life. Michaels shares never-before-told stories from his early years and his rise to the top, covering some of the greatest moments of the past half century—from the “Miracle on Ice” the historic 1980 Olympic hockey finals to the earthquake that rocked the 1989 World Series. Some of the greatest names on and off the field are here—Michael Jordan, Bill Walton, Pete Rose, Bill Walsh, Peyton and Eli Manning, Brett Favre, John Madden, Howard Cosell, Cris Collinsworth, and many, many more. Forthright and down-to-earth, Michaels tells the truth as he sees it, giving readers unique insight into the high drama, the colorful players, and the heroes and occasional villains of an industry that has become a vital part of modern culture.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

“An enjoyable look at an important period in sports and television history by a man who helped shape it.” (Washington Times)  
“A playful puppy of a memoir about a big dog career.” (Kirkus Reviews)  
Praise for Al Michaels: “Al Michaels is my favorite. . . . He is the last of the true icons.” (Eminem, in GQ Magazine)  
“Al Michaels might be the best storyteller in all of sports.” (Bill Simmons, editor-in-chief of Grantland and author of the #1 New York Times bestseller *The Book of Basketball*)  
“One of my favorite guests. I’ve lost track of how many times I’ve had Al Michaels on my shows.” (Howard Stern)  
“Al Michaels may be the best all-around play-by-play announcer ever.” (Sports Illustrated)

One of America’s most respected sportscasters and the play-by-play voice of NBC’s Sunday Night Football gives us a behind-the-curtain look at some of the most thrilling games and fascinating figures in modern sports. No sportscaster has covered more major sporting events than Al Michaels. During the course of his forty-plus-year career, he has logged more hours on live primetime network television than anyone in history, having covered all four major sports championships—the Super Bowl, the World Series, the NBA finals, and the Stanley Cup final—as well as the Olympic Games, the Triple Crown, and many more. He has witnessed firsthand some of the most memorable events in sports, and in this highly personal and entertaining account, he brings them all vividly to life. Michaels’s stories cover unforgettable chapters over the past half century—from the 1980 Lake Placid Olympics to the “Miracle on Ice” to the earthquake that rocked the 1989 World Series to the drama of what many consider the most exciting Super Bowl ever—Super Bowl XLIII between the Steelers and the Cardinals. Some of the biggest personalities on and off the field are here—Pete Rose, John Wooden, Brett Favre, Tommy Lasorda, O. J. Simpson, John Madden, Cris Collinsworth, Boone Arledge, Bill Parcells, Tiger Woods, Doc Rivers, Dennis Miller, and many, many more. Complementing access with insight, Michaels adds to the stories you thought you knew: Michael Jordan’s eyesight; Howard Cosell’s prickly, bombastic personality; even Peyton and Eli Manning’s sibling rivalry. From start to finish, Al Michaels gives us an up-close portrait of an industry that is today more than ever a vital part of our national culture.

Al Michaels shares a wealth of his experiences in the world of sports and those who have influenced him over his storied career. We all have those in our lives who have given us a helping

hand and Al Michaels first had his father and later on individuals such as Curt Gowdy and John Wooden who proved to be helpful. On the negative side were Jack Kent Cooke and Chick Hearn. Michaels experienced the polar differences in how teams were run with Sparky Anderson's Big Red Machine and the San Francisco Giants led by manager Charley Fox. In covering such a variety of sports with different networks Al Michaels worked with a number of different personalities ranging from Howard Cosell, O. J. Simpson, Ken Dryden, John Madden, Tim McCarver, Dan Dierdorf, Jim Palmer, and Frank Gifford to name a few. The book contains anecdotes on all of them. My favorite is one involving Howard Cosell on page 139 and 140 that is an absolute classic. I read it in another book on Cosell and Ali but it certainly warrants a retelling in this book. Anyone who has visions of becoming a sportscaster would do well to read this book. It's not always the glamorous job that one may envision. It includes countless meetings and hours of preparation and working well with personalities that may conflict with your own. I feel if you remember the years during the career of Al Michaels this will be a chance for you to relive the many dramatic moments that he covered in his storied career. This book is a very worthwhile addition to your sports library.

Al Michaels has done it all as a broadcaster. The Super Bowl, World Series, Stanley Cup, the Olympics and the NBA Finals. Al has been there and attained the pinnacles of success. This autobiography is arrayed in mostly chronological sequence. Reader milestones are subjective but this reviewer favors the tale of the U.S. hockey team's capture of the Gold Medal in the 1980 Winter Olympics in Lake Placid, NY. That is because he managed to miss the telecasts of the great victories over the Russians in the semis and Finland in the Final. Another high point is the author's relationship with the bombastic Howard Cosell. One might not like HC, but he was never boring. If this reviewer could sit down with Michaels, there are two issues he would raise: The first concerns Oakland Raider boss, Al Davis. Michaels casts Davis as an architect of the AFL-NFL merger. This observer (an avowed AFL guy) always thought AD was a dead-ender totally against the link up and ready to fight the NFL come what may. It says here that the major peace makers were Art Rooney of the Steelers and Art Modell of the then Cleveland Browns. Those guys even moved their franchises to the AFL to have an even number of clubs per league. Since Michaels was closer to the action, I must concede the point. The other concerns Angel pitcher Kirk McCaskill in the 1986 American League playoff. McCaskill lost a grounder in the sun. Surely a Brooklyn boy like Michaels must know about Brooklyn Dodger hurler Billy Loes. That colorful guy also lost a grounder in the sun during the 1952 World Series. There were gaps in the Ebbets Field facade and the sun shone through the openings. I thought everyone in Brooklyn knew that one! There are several

negatives with the tale: As briefly as possible, there is way too much OJ. Yes, that OJ! Also, Michaels' relating his horse ownership exploits comes across as bragging. And who cares about his salary disputes with BASEketball? Moreover, the photo section is skimpy, there is no glossary-the better to look up names with- and there is way (!) too much Network politics, backstabbing and wheeling/ dealing. In fact, the more this reviewer considers things, the less he likes "You Can't Make This Up". What was sorely needed here was a stern old-fashioned editor with a sharp blue pencil to thin out the text. Since most of those guys were been laid off long ago, the job never got done. That's unfortunate, since Michaels lost control of the narrative and it shows.

This is a great autobiography by Al Michaels on his career in sports broadcasting. Michaels has always been a favorite of mine. When I was first getting into sports he was broadcast for my favorite team, The Cincinnati Reds. I always followed where he was and could see he was fast riser in the business. In this book he goes over how got his start and how he progressed up the chain to become one of best in the business. He tells lots of funny stories and doesn't pull many punches for those that crossed him a long the way. If you liked him, then this is a must read and time well worth spent.

I agree with another poster. This is borderline false advertising. An audio book by a guy who makes his living speaking about things doesn't even read his own audio book? He reads the first chapter, and comes back for one more later. Ray Porter reads the rest, and Ray tries to dramatize the parts he thinks should be dramatized, but I'm not so sure. The Ray Porter readings were the quality of watching a bad reenactment scene on a true crime show... just bad. I'm a little flabbergasted that a great announcer couldn't take the time to read his own book for the audio version.

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