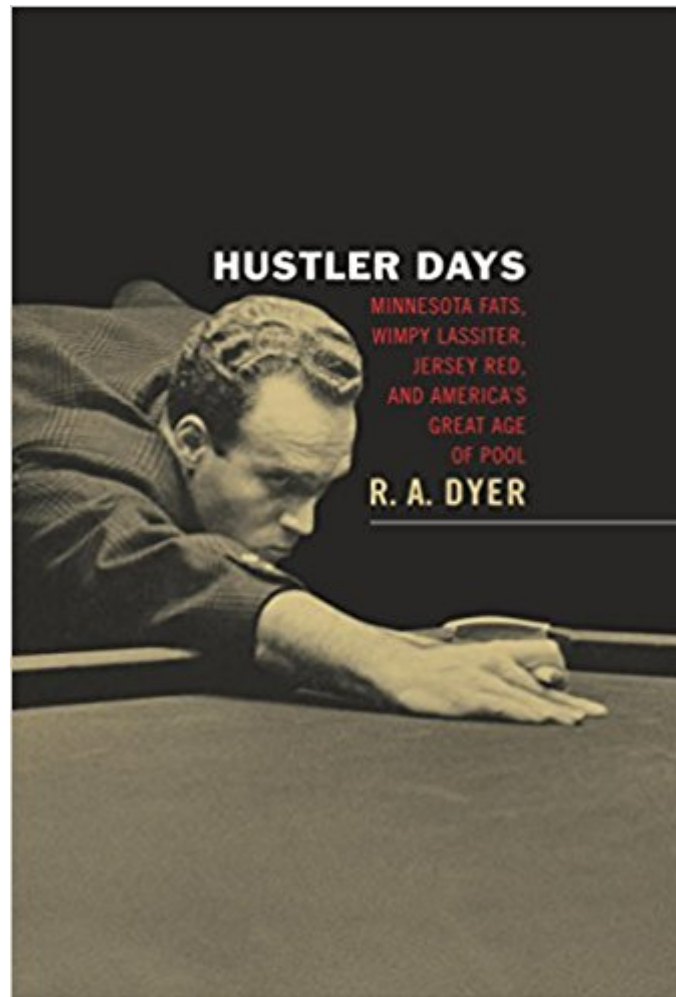


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Hustler Days: Minnesota Fats, Wimpy Lassiter, Jersey Red, And America's Great Age Of Pool



Synopsis

Minnesota Fats was a brilliant pool player, but he was even better at lying about his past. Wimpy Lassiter, the gentleman hustler, started playing at age seven, and for the rest of his life lived for the rush of victory and high stakes. Violent and determined, Jersey Red made and lost a fortune at the table. With a passion for the game evident on every page, R.A. DYER takes us through the smoky bars and late nights where a win was just as dangerous as a loss. He captures the game's popularity in the thirties, its dark days in the fifties, and its renaissance and apex in the sixties, fueled by the smashing success of Paul Newman and Jackie Gleason going toe-to-toe in *The Hustler*. It was an era that culminated in the legendary nationally televised tournaments in Little Egypt, Illinois, where Jersey Red and Wimpy Lassiter went at it for hours. And it was an era that ended in perhaps the most dramatic scene in all of pool. Just as Jersey Red beat Wimpy Lassiter in 1969, after a decade of bitter rivalry, the police shut down the tournament. Cameras in tow, they arrested eighty hustlers--including the new champion! From Fats's first showdown--in Brooklyn, with a Texas-style gunslinger in cowboy boots and revolvers--to world championship clashes, *HUSTLER DAYS* is a rollicking portrait of one of our national treasures.

Book Information

Hardcover: 296 pages

Publisher: Lyons Press; 1st edition (November 1, 2003)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 156731807X

ISBN-13: 978-1567318074

ASIN: 1592281044

Product Dimensions: 9.3 x 6.2 x 1.1 inches

Shipping Weight: 1.4 pounds

Average Customer Review: 4.5 out of 5 stars [See all reviews](#) (31 customer reviews)

Best Sellers Rank: #324,079 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #36 in [Books > Sports & Outdoors > Individual Sports > Billiards & Pool](#) #116 in [Books > Biographies & Memoirs > Regional U.S. > Midwest](#) #580 in [Books > Sports & Outdoors > Miscellaneous > History of Sports](#)

Customer Reviews

I got this book as a gift and had no idea what to expect. Having no background or real knowledge about pool, I was completely delighted and mesmerized by an era of American culture I didn't even know existed. R.A. Dyer's storytelling of this time in history allowed me to be a voyeur of an age

gone by; feeling the pool halls come alive with each page I read. I couldn't put the book down, needing to know what was coming next. Thank you R.A. Dyer for taking us on a rockin adventure with the likes of Fats, Red, Wimpy, and the rest of the boys!

In HUSTLER DAYS, R. A. ?Jake? Dyer captures the turbulent lives of three lions who prowled the green felt jungle during the 1960s: Fats, Wimpy, and Red. Readers, such as myself, who play the game will feel as comfortable as if they were in their neighborhood poolroom. Readers less familiar with the game will discover it in all its varying nuances, through the colorful, yet accurate, depiction of these three anti-heroes.

My husband can't put this book down long enough for me to get my hands on it. He even drifts off to sleep holding it. It's amazing to me because he hasn't read a book in quite some time. I think his words were "never". He says it is extremely interesting and well written. A brand new pool table was just delivered, hum. Must be of great inspiration, a perfect Christmas gift for anyone.

I was absolutely fascinated by this book , I expect to see a movie with these characters to come in the future. John Goodman as "Fats"? As a child of 12 I used to hang out at the local pool hall and watch guys who were inferior players to the likes of R.A. Dyer's heroes grind it out for a few measly bucks a game. This book accurately depicts how serious these guys were about winning and being the best. This book took me back to my coming of age and answered a lot of questions I had about pool hustling that I had been curious about for the last 30 years. You don't have to play the game to enjoy this dramatic telling of the golden age of pool hustling and that is the highest compliment any piece of literature can receive. Time to get the Meucci out of the case again!

An OK secondary source history of the classic, seedy pre-1965 days of pool hustlers and pool hustling, but its over-reliance on secondary sources and rumor makes it questionable as a reliable reference. Covers all the famous guys from the 1960s and earlier.

Interesting read. Anyone who started hanging around a pool hall in the late 50's and early 60's will see a little of themselves as young men in this book. Now looking back on it all these decades later.....and reading this book.....I realize my real education was there and not in the school classrooms I so frequently skipped to become a self taught person, and certainly learned what not to do to have a happy life. I highly recommend this book to anyone who ever held a cue stick, and to

all those who never held a cue stick. This book is a real lesson in life, as well as a colorful description of an era gone by.

Pool is probably one of the few sports that the general public knows virtually next to nothing on. Ask anybody to name one pool player and the majority will say "Minnesota Fats". Most of the public would be amazed to find out that he wasn't a champion, never won a tournament, probably couldn't even beat half the country. This book explains how he could con a nation into thinking he was "the greatest" and in the process become single handedly the biggest promoter to the sport the game has ever known. Yes, this book is really about the true story of Rudolph Wanderone (Fats) and it is a very good read.

R. A. Dyer's book is an interesting read that gives you an insight into the lives of three of the greatest legends to ever play the game of pool. He takes takes you back to the days of dark, smoky pool halls and the hustlers that made a living off of the innocent wanna-be's. However, this is not just a book about Fats, Wimpy, and Red, it's a book about life in a most difficult of times. If you love the game of pool and the history of the game, this is a must-read.

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