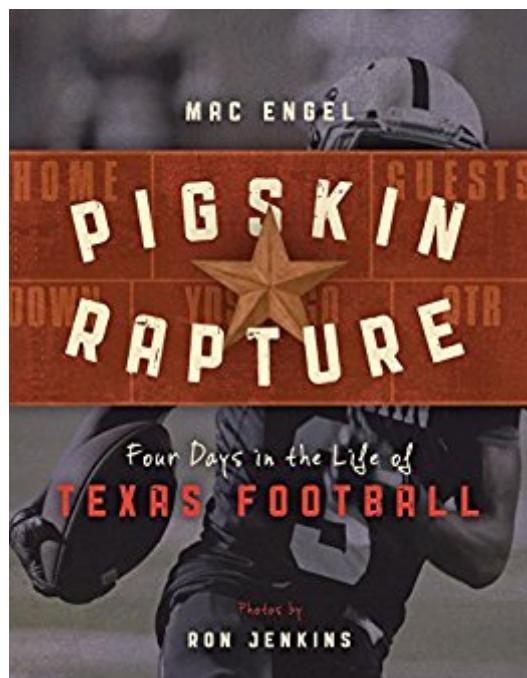


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Pigskin Rapture: Four Days In The Life Of Texas Football



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Customer Reviews

It's August in Texas and I'm counting the days until kickoff! Mac Engel, who covers sports for the Fort Worth Star-Telegram, has been in Texas long enough to get it--football rules in Texas! One weekend last fall, he decided to take in as much Texas football as he could in one weekend. He didn't get a lot of rest, but he saw some great (and not-so-great) football in a four-day stretch. The result: *Pigskin Rapture: Four Days in the Life of Texas Football*. Engel covers four big games: Houston Texans v. Indianapolis Colts, Midland Lee v. Odessa Permian, Texas v. Oklahoma, and Dallas Cowboys v. New England Patriots. The game coverage is adequate, giving the flow and outcome of each game. Of the four, the only real football drama was Texas-OU, where Texas pulled off a big upset. But *Pigskin Rapture* is not about the play-by-play. It's about the people and culture of football. At each stop, Engel takes in local dining spots, the tailgate and bar scene, and checks out other local football programs and hot spots. This is what I enjoyed most about the book. Engel likes the side roads, the little programs, the mainstream fans, the back stories. He drops by Rice Stadium and Andrew Luck's high school alma mater in the Houston area. He checks in at The Bar in Odessa, where Permian fans and former players mingle and relive the glory days. He samples the

deep-fried glory of the State Fair of Texas. He gawks at the fine art around the palace that Jerry built--and wonders at the armed brawl in the parking lot that left a fan dead. Texas football fans, especially fans of the teams he covers, will love *Pigskin Rapture* the way they might enjoy a college yearbook. Texans and non-Texans alike will get a great glimpse into Texas football life and history.

I enjoy watching and reading about football, and I am from Texas. This book brought back childhood memories and spoke to my heart. Everyone knows that Texans religiously watch and/or attend football anytime it is played, most notably high school football under the "Friday Night Lights". As the author states, "The game of football is a language every Texan speaks, and it connects El Paso to Brownsville to Tyler to Sherman. The game becomes the dominating point of conversation in church, at lunch, at work, or a thousand other places all over the state." I am from a small east Texas town just outside of Texarkana. I followed high school and college football all over the state, including east Texas, the DFW Metroplex, and all the way across the state in west Texas. Some sports channels like Fox Sports SW occasionally broadcast high school games of the week. The University of Texas even has their own sports network that plays Longhorn sports 24/7. The author of this book set out to attend four games in four days, and as such the book is divided into four quarters. The four highlighted games are: the Houston Texans on Thursday night, Odessa Permian on Friday night, the University of Texas on Saturday, and the Dallas Cowboys on Sunday. At the end of each day he includes a travel log and a dining log. The interesting part of the book is that he includes stops at neighboring towns, schools, and points of interest. I will admit that I am not a huge fan of professional football, but I did enjoy reading the sections about the Texans and the Cowboys. The author takes you inside the games, giving relevant play by play analysis, and behind the scenes to Jerry Jones's owner's suite and the locker room for post-game interviews.

PIGSKIN RAPTURE by Mac Engel reminds the reader of the vast, varied, and layered devotion to football that spans the state of Texas. Using 4 games (2 pro, 1 high school, and 1 college) over 4 days, Mac Engel, along with amazing photos by Ron Jenkins, shows the full array of football fandom and how it affects education, business, social events and even home life. Engel divides the book in 4 quarters, with a quarter devoted to each game. The first quarter is devoted to a Houston Texans game, and Engel explores devotion to a new team and how Houston, one of the largest cities in the country, embraced the new team and while it is still struggling as a franchise, has already developed die hard fans. Second quarter is a high school game including Permian High School, from the *Friday Night Lights* book, movie and TV show. Engel gives a recap on where Permian is now and how the

book/movie/TV show changed the high school and town forever. A devotion to high school football is covered as well, with Engel really studying the lifestyle changing way of life a community has around their local team, from changing event and social calendars to businesses capitalizing and suffering based on how their local team is doing. Third quarter jumps into college football, where Texas is king. Engel reminds the reader the deep history and current success of some of the college football powerhouses in Texas. The game he attends is an event too, from the cannon-firing touchdown celebration, to how everyone hangs on the edge of their seat for their respective team. Fourth quarter is football royalty, the Dallas Cowboys.

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