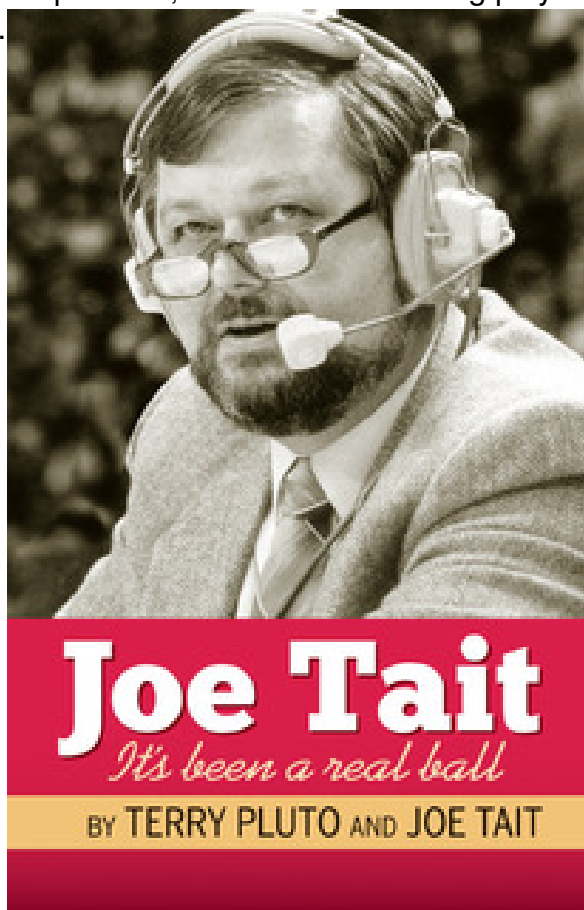


Few people have as much knowledge and as many memories about the NBA as Joe Tait. Having been around the league since 1970 and with the Cavaliers for all but two years of their existence, he has a vast knowledge base. In addition to his long-tenured relationship with the NBA, Tait has a photographic memory and can even recite final scores and the names of players from his days in high school.

Joe Tait was always interested in sports. The issue was that sports weren't always interested in Tait. As a child, Tait would do play-by-play for imaginary games that he was acting out in his head. Sports were an obsession for Joe Tait. Despite the fact that he was never athletically gifted, Tait managed to leave his mark on Cleveland sports forever.

Joe Tait's history with the Cavaliers is as old as the team. Think about that for a minute. With the exception of two years during the Ted Stepien era, Joe Tait was working play-by-play for as long as the NBA has existed in Cleveland.



The reason that I am repeatedly reiterating how long Joe Tait's history is with the Cavaliers and Cleveland is to emphasize how much he has meant to the city. In Terry Pluto's biography "**Joe**

Tait: It's Been a Real Ball

," fans were given an opportunity to offer their thoughts on what Tait has meant to the city, their careers and their lives.

The result is what is one of the biggest strengths of the biography. The personal anecdotes which result borrow upon Tait's long and storied career and how he has touched the lives of millions. When preparing for this book, Terry Pluto reached out to Cleveland fans through social media to have them share their personal experiences involving Tait. As a result, Interjected in-between the regular chapters of the book are stories where fans reminisce about Tait's career.

The reach of WTAM is advertised as being "38 states and half of Canada." The personal anecdotes from fans were touching and made the WTAM range seem miniscule. A major strength of the book was reading personal details of how Joe Tait inspired people from Cleveland. Over eighty different fan submissions made it into the book and most of them are interesting. Although every young Cavs fan at one point in their life fell asleep to the sound of Joe Tait calling a west coast game, Terry Pluto did a great job of including the archetypal anecdotes and more unique stories.

The most interesting chapter outlined the years that Ted Stepien owned the team.. Best known for being the cause of the Stepien Rule, he should also go down in history as being the man who forced a once-in-a-lifetime talent like Tait to leave for two years. Tait is candid with his opinions regarding the former Cavaliers owner. A major point of contention between The two was that Stepien viewed the play-by-play as an extension of the PR department. Forever being a man who took pride in literally calling it like he saw it, this was somewhat of an impasse between Stepien and Tait. Ted Stepien even went as far as telling the Plain Dealer that "white people have to have white heroes" and that "the Cavs have too many blacks." Ted Stepien has a very strong reputation and Terry Pluto and Joe Tait effectively outlined exactly what the issues were. Folklore paints Ted Stepien as an eccentric man that made brash personnel decisions and "**It's Been a Real Ball**" explain in great detail where his negative reputation comes from.

"**Joe Tait: It's Been a Real Ball**" is well done. Much of the book is going to be great for the sake of posterity. The line between hind-sight and reality of how things really were get blurred over time. Terry Pluto and Joe Tait do not leave any stones unturned. Much attention is paid to the early days of the franchise and there are candid quotes regarding LeBron James and Dan Gilbert. Another example is how the Richfield Colosseum was unpopular in its infancy, but fans love to reminisce about the Cavs' days in Summit county. Additionally, the rumor that LeBron James never once addressed Joe Tait in his seven years in Cleveland is put to rest by Tait himself. "

It's Been a Real Ball" feels like a lot of time and effort was put into making it great. Terry Pluto and Joe Tait have witnessed a combined for over seventy years of Cleveland sports and it is evident when reading the book. Everybody

remembers Mark Price and LeBron James. Thanks to “It’s Been a Real Ball,” more people will remember former Cavaliers such as Bob Rule, Greg “Stretch” Howard, Nate Thurmond, World B. Free and everybody in-between.

The Book “Joe Tait: It’s Been a Real Ball” can be purchased from Grayco.com , Amazon.com , BN.com and independent booksellers.

For book signing dates, free excerpts and more information visit www.joetaitbook.com .