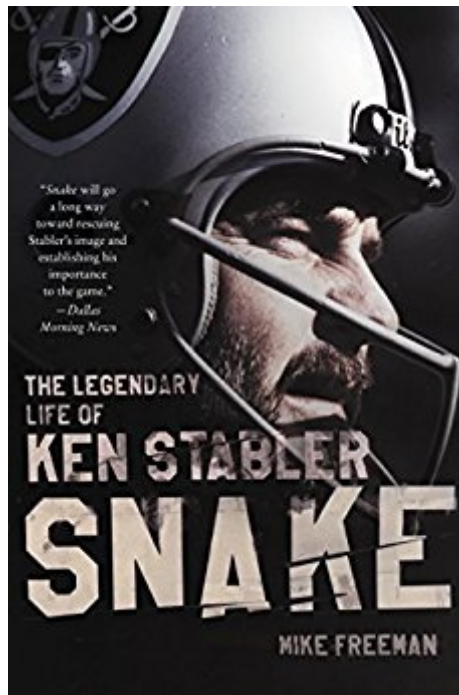




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Snake: The Legendary Life Of Ken Stabler



Synopsis

The first in-depth biography of one of the most talented and infamous legends to play in the National Football League—the life and times of pro football’s first bad boy, famed Oakland Raiders quarterback Ken Stabler. Ken “The Snake” Stabler was the embodiment of the original Men in Black—the freewheeling, hard-hitting Oakland Raiders. The league’s first swashbuckling pass thrower, the mythical southpaw Southerner famous for come-from-behind drives late in the game, Stabler led the Raiders to their first Super Bowl championship in 1977. In an era dominated by gentleman quarterbacks like Roger Staubach and Bob Griese, this 1974 NFL MVP, four-time Pro-bowler, and Super Bowl champion was an iconoclast who partied as hard as he played and lived life unapologetically on his own—not the NFL’s terms. Though Stabler’s legacy is larger-than-life, there has never before been an exclusive account of him, until now. Snake goes deep under the surface of Stabler’s persona to reveal a man who, despite his penchant for partying and debauchery, was committed to winning and being the best player he could be. From his college days playing for Bear Bryant at Alabama to his years with the Raiders under coach John Madden, his broadcasting career to his death in 2015 and the revelation that he suffered from chronic traumatic encephalopathy, known as C.T.E., Snake probes the myriad facets of Stabler’s life on and off the field to tell his complete story, and explores how his legacy and the culture and times that pivotally shaped it, continues to impact football today.

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Customer Reviews

husband read this. said it was "ok"

Solid depiction of Ken Stabler's life... From humble beginnings, through the shadow of "Bear" Bryant to a Super Bowl Championship, Stabler's personality is revealed. A story worth reading.

Great book focused on Ken Stabler the man....As an avid Raider Nation fan I learned a lot about the Snake.Thank you

Would love to give this 5 stars -- Snake is the reason I'm a pro football fan. Fact-checking in this book missed a few key points. There are contradiction when the same story is referenced in multiple places, and this happens for several stories. I'm not criticizing Snake's life -- that's part of what drew me to being a fan of his (and developing a taste for whiskey myself!). Loved Snake. What I am criticizing is the lack of thoroughness of the research. The worst one in my opinion is this:P. 22 The Italian Campaign:Sometime between 1926 and 1930 he (William Edgar Stabler) moved his family of two sons and three daughters to Foley, in Baldwin County. There the youngest son, Jimmy, was born. Jimmy was Kenny's grandfather. Not possible. Snake was born Dec. 25, 1945. Yet, Leroy Slim Stabler (Snake's dad) was in Europe, including fighting in Anzio, from late November 1943 to mid-July 1944. If Jimmy was really Kenny's grandfather, and was thus born in 1930 or later, there's no way Jimmy would have a son old enough to enlist to fight in WWII in 1943. Hell, Jimmy himself wasn't old enough to enlist to fight in WWII. Jimmy has to be Snake's uncle.Rather, using Ancestry.com's records, this appears to be the case:2 May 1923, Leroy Stabler was born in Alabama; his father was (William) Edgar Stabler (Snake's grandfather, born in 1894), his mother Marie Williams. Leroy's wife was Myrtle Margaret Osborne Stabler. A 1923 birth for

Snake's dad makes a lot more sense.

Really enjoyed this book. Mike brings inside knowledge and insight to one of the most colorful, influential and truly great players in NFL history. His change of life is extremely well chronicled.

As a true Silver & Black Raider fan from their inception and an original PSL season ticket holder upon their journey back to Oakland I've seen and cheered them all on. But the one player above and beyond them all who I idolized on AND off the field was the one and only the inimitable "Snake" Stabler! The coolest man on the field even with seconds remaining in game after game and the outcome on the line every Raider looked to him believed in him and followed the now *LONG-OVER-DUE-HALL-OF-FAMER* KEN "THE SNAKE" STABLER!... The Snake was also the coolest man in every bar in town and I idolized him for that too! Potential readers who are reading this review please believe me that my feelings for "The Snake" will not influence my review of the quality of the book. First let me point out that this is a short book that if you take away the bibliography/sources pages is only 227 pages and if you take away the three pages (two blank and one wasted with simply a small title) between each of the four "sub-book" dividers and it's even twelve pages less than that. There are about five pages (an estimate) telling about Stabler's ancestry dating back to the 1600's and 1700's that I thought would never end and seemed like a hundred pages. Now that I got those two things out of the way everything else is UNBELIEVABLE!! Being Kenny's life and career is history much of what is written has been written before (and duly noted) but interspersed are many personal interviews and discussions directly with the author. The personal admiration for Stabler by the author is not only informative but to me highly admirable. In my opinion it's that very combination of history and true heartbeat that make *this-book-on-this-subject-at-this-time* even more

impactful and enjoyable. Poor Kenny and his lifelong fans which include me AND the author. The author could be me or many other fans that have stood at bars at ballgames in airports at the Thanksgiving dinner table and argued and/or simply proclaimed THAT KEN STABLER SHOULD HAVE BEEN IN THE HALL OF FAME DECADES AGO! The author covers all the bases including the saga of Stabler's Father Slim who did not come home from World War II unscathed. In those days there was no PTSD you either had scars that you can see missing appendages or you didn't get special care. Slim's inner ticking time bomb when mixed with alcohol.. affected the entire Stabler family for life. The author does a wonderful job extrapolating why "The Snake" became who he was on and off the field. Kenny was a great high school baseball pitcher as well as a great football player. In fact Stabler was the only high school pitcher to ever beat future baseball Hall of Famer Don Sutton. "The Snake" struck out 16 batters in that game compared to Sutton's 14. From there to the University of Alabama and the special relationship again on and off the field with the legendary Bear Bryant. There are some great heartfelt stories from that time period and of course later on there's the special relationship with Hall of Fame Raider coach John Madden. Of course no story of Stabler or the all-time classic Silver and Black teams that Stabler spearheaded could leave out the literal all-time-all-time classic plays and games such as THE HOLY ROLLER THE GHOST TO THE POST THE IMMACULATE RECEPTION **OR AS MANY RAIDERS AND FANS CALL IT "THE IMMACULATE DECEPTION" but what true Raider or simply true old-school football fans will be impressed with is among other things that Stabler called his own plays every player looked up to him and would follow him to hell and back that he was cooler and calmer than the coach with the game on the line. The utter respect that opposing players had for him is legendary which has made it even more disdainful that "The Snake" didn't get into the Hall of Fame until after he died. After one game against the

Bears in which he was picked up and tossed on his head. When he awoke, he was helped off the field, only to return in time to help the Raiders win. After the game, the Bears' Walter Payton approached Snake as he was walking off the field, and then came one of those small but powerful moments that often go unnoticed.

"YOU'RE SUCH A GREAT FIGHTER," PAYTON TOLD SNAKE, "IT WAS AN HONOR TO BE ON THE SAME FIELD AS YOU."

Perhaps the greatest accomplishment by the author Mike Freeman in this book is showing without a shadow of doubt how much Snake loved football. Whether he just got done studying his playbook by the light of a jukebox or whether he only had an hour of sleep or he was always ready to win on that football field. Two quotes from this book that I will highlight here show the range of Stabler's wit and true emotions.

One year the Raiders were in the Super Bowl that was played in Pasadena, California during Super Bowl week he (Stabler) paid a visit to the Playboy Mansion in Los Angeles and he said,

"Just went to share a few thoughts about football with some of the librarians there."

And,

"A friend of Stabler's once read him a quote from writer and social activist Jack London: 'I would rather be a meteor, every atom of me in magnificent glow, than a sleepy and permanent planet. The proper function of man is to live, not to exist. I shall not waste my days trying to prolong them, I shall use my time.'"

"What does that mean to you?" Stabler was asked.

"He thought and contemplated. Seconds passed."

"That says it all! Rest in peace My Brother thanks for all the Silver and Black memories."

"SHAQ" Goldstein

It's an OK read but lots of repetition of events. Some new material.

Got it as a gift for my wife who grew up with Kenny...she loves it.

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