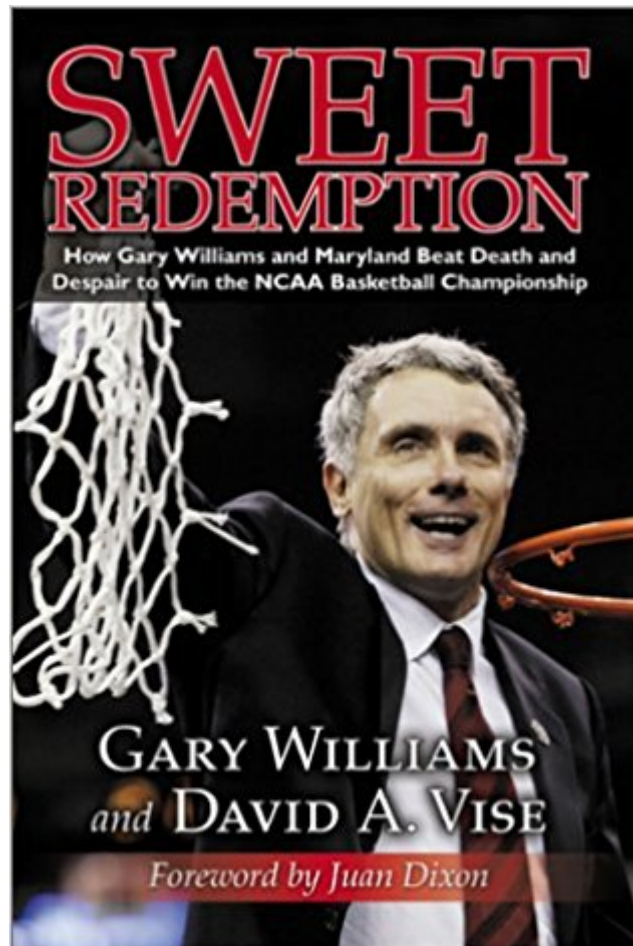




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# Sweet Redemption



## Synopsis

Sweet Redemption is the amazing inside story of how Coach Gary Williams survived devastating defeats and overwhelming odds to build a championship basketball program at Maryland and win the 2002 NCAA title. In a series of exclusive interviews that take you into the huddle, into the locker room and into his head, Gary Williams, for the first time, pulls back the curtain and tells his incredible story through best-selling author David A. Vise, a Pulitzer Prize-winning reporter for The Washington Post. Sweet Redemption also takes you into the heart and soul of Gary Williams and the team's star guard, Juan Dixon, providing a vast array of never-before-told stories about the mysterious forces and people that fueled their rise. It is a fast-moving inspirational tale of trial and triumph. And it is the story of a man, a family and a team whose lives were made, and saved, through a simple game involving a ball, a hoop and a dream. When he arrived in College Park in 1989, Williams absorbed one knockout punch after another as the new head basketball coach of his alma mater. His promising career seemed over and Maryland basketball appeared destined, like its greatest player ever, to plunge to an untimely death. But by the spring of 2002, when Coach Williams and the Terrapins stood on the podium in the Georgia Dome to receive the NCAA championship trophy, he had brought about some of the most far-reaching changes in the history of college athletics. Sweet Redemption is the story of how he did it.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

Gary A. WilliamsDavid A. Vise is a Pulitzer Prize-winning reporter for the "Washington Post" and the author of three books, including the "New York Times" bestseller "The Bureau and the Mole," Mark

Malseed, who has contributed to the "Washington Post" and the "Boston Herald," has won high praise for his research efforts on Bob Woodward's recent books, "Plan of Attack" and "Bush at War." "From the Hardcover edition."

During my junior year at UMD, Coach Williams came in and all of us students realized that we were witnessing something special. We knew after the devastation of the draconian NCAA sanctions that it would be a while until the program got back up. This book emphasized how Walt (the Wizard) Williams was such an important save for the program. (I remember when Walt broke his leg and we thought all was lost, until coach W tried to sneak him in during the Wake Forest game. Cole Field House EXPLODED before he even got in. When Walt tipped in a sloppy alley oop, I thought the roof would come down!). One by one, the pieces came in, Keith booth, Joe Smith.....Steve Francis.....Juan Dixon...etc etc etc.... The efforts of the staff to keep the program together, the incompetence of the administration, and the impatience of many so-called fans..... Coach W kept the program going..... culminating in the ultimate prize.\*Fast forward to a football game a few years ago. I was at a tailgate ready for the Clemson/Terps game and Coach W saw me wearing a National Championship cap.... He shook my hand and said, "Nice hat".... I shook his hand again and said, "Thanks Coach...for all you do!".....

Husband is a diehard Univ of Md fan so yes he loved it!

for those who knew and went through the pain of Len Bias this book takes the reader from the cellar to the top of the mountain and the struggle that one man endured along the way to restore the image of not only a program but the sport as a whole. Gary Williams for all of the things that people said about him and recruiting, did it his way and as a result it was a way in which produced a championship for the University it's dedicated fan base. Just an overall great read

Sweet Redemption is the well-told story of how a very good and very dedicated coach and some very good and very dedicated players -- whom most other schools overlooked -- finally brought the NCAA Division I men's basketball championship to the University of Maryland. Like the movie Hoosiers, it should be of interest to all basketball fans -- indeed all sports fans. But it will be a special treasure to supporters of Maryland basketball who for years watched their generally quite good teams suffer one frustration after another. Maryland's 2002 basketball championship was indeed sweet redemption which all true sports fans should be able to savor.

For all Maryland Terps, past and present, the 2001-2002 basketball season was a magical one to follow. It marked the culmination of years of hard work and overcoming almost insurmountable odds by both coach Gary Williams and star guard Juan Dixon. "Sweet Redemption" tells the tale of the separate, yet similar, journeys these two men took, along with the Maryland basketball program, to overcome tremendous hardships and reach the summit of excellence with the 2002 NCAA National Title. Gary Williams came from a broken home to become hard driven coach and successful coach at the expense of his own marriage and estrangement from his daughter. Williams returned to his alma mater, University of Maryland, to coach the men's basketball team in 1989, just in time for all the bad blood of Len Bias' death from cocaine and subsequent recruiting violations to cripple the Terrapin program in a way that made it impossible to win (or even get fan and university support) in those first few years. Juan Dixon came from a harsher background. His parents, while bright and intelligent people, were caught in the vice grip of heroin addiction. They were in and out of prison through most of Juan's young life and he was shuttled from family member to family member to be cared for (a role that mostly fell to his older brother Phil). Though his parents finally cleaned up, the damage was done and they died from HIV-related complications brought about by using dirty heroin needles. Prior to his death, Juan's father made sure to his that his brother looked after Juan and made sure he got his education. Basketball was an escape for both Juan Dixon and Gary Williams. So, it would make sense that the two would come together and help each other achieve the highest level of success possible. "Sweet Redemption" does give some details into backgrounds of Williams and Dixon, but, at 252 pages, it is understandably superficial in its overall treatment of the subject. Additionally, the progress of the Maryland basketball program from a being nearly dismantled to winning the National Title over 13 seasons is given a perfunctory treatment. All things considered, though, this deficiency does not detract from the overall impact of the book. There is a list of sources in the back of the book that give reference to more in-depth material on which this book is based. "Sweet Redemption" is designed to be a quick study and companion piece of the championship season for fans to read and enjoy while they get re-energized for the upcoming season.

Anyone who loves the underdog has to love Gary Williams. He has bounced back time and again over the course of his career and faced tremendous odds. Winning the National Championship was truly Sweet Redemption for him. However, this is quite possibly one of THE WORST BOOKS I HAVE EVER READ. As a voracious sports biography reader, this book falls short of the mark made

by even the lesser sports books out there. Vise did a TERRIBLE job of accounting the situation. This book is DEVOID of any passion on his part. It reads as if a high school journalism student slapped it together using a simple writing formula : "Here is what happened", , "Review what I just told you again."You could get the ENTIRE contents of this book by reading newspaper clippings from Gary's career. That's basically all this book is, one big newspaper clipping.Gary Williams deserves a much better book than this one.

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