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Going to the 'Brink'

By **Bill Simmons**
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Rarely -- not often, but rarely -- this isn't the greatest gig in the world. Yes, I actually get paid to write just three columns a week. Yes, I work mostly out of my own house. Yes, I covered a championship fight in Vegas and spent nine days in New Orleans for the Super Bowl. Yes, I've successfully completed a three-step handshake with Stuart Scott, called John Buccigross "Booch" and shadowboxed in the ESPN newsroom with an overmatched Brian Kenny.

But it's not all peaches and cream, folks. Last December, my bosses sent me to visit the set of "Season on the Brink," (8 p.m. ET Sunday, ESPN and ESPN2) the upcoming movie about Bobby Knight ... which was being filmed in Winnipeg, Manitoba.

That's right, Winnipeg.

After completing the requisite number of weeks in therapy, I'm here to answer all your questions:



"Season on the Brink" goes behind the scenes of Indiana's 1985-86 season.

Q: Winnipeg? Winnipeg???? Why film the movie in Winnipeg?

Good question. Apparently, it's cheaper than you're avoiding more... resembles ESPN shoot.

(Let's just say it's a zippo. There's Streets of Win degrees colder.

Q: Is this movie...

I haven't seen a film... but I read the script and watched a full day of filming. The script is OK. It's a straight-forward treatment of the '86 season -- as described in detail by John Feinstein's superb book -- which has the same problems that most TV movies have: Too much ground to cover, not enough time to explore the fringe characters, clichéd dialogue, plots moving along too abruptly and so on. Given that it was the first ESPN-produced movie, they probably weren't expecting anything beyond a cost-effective, watchable, semi-absorbing sports movie that could be carried by one visible star (in this case, the bankable Brian Dennehy as Knight).

As for the scenes I watched in person, if you're looking for inexperienced actors reciting lines of dialogue like this ...



BILL SIMMONS

THE SPORTS GUY



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