



## Zion 2.0 and the Celtics' "Big 3" Double Up In Sports Illustrated's Dual Cover Basketball Preview Issue

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Inside the Basketball Preview Issue, available at [SI.com](https://www.si.com) and on newsstands today: Can New Orleans Pelicans' superstar Zion Williamson and the Boston Celtics trio of Jayson Tatum, Marcus Smart and Jaylen Brown set the NBA ablaze this season?; Plus, secret techniques from the top wide receivers in the NFL, an excerpt from Joe Maddon's new book; and more

NEW YORK--(BUSINESS WIRE)--Oct. 13, 2022-- The last time we saw New Orleans Pelicans' superstar Zion Williamson playing in the NBA, he was dominating the competition and earning himself his first All-Star selection. But that was two seasons ago, and after he missed all of last season with a fractured right foot there were questions about whether he'd ever have the NBA impact expected when he was the No. 1 draft pick in 2019. In [All Eyes on Zion](#), senior writer [Howard Beck](#) profiles the hard work Williamson put in this offseason, recovering from his injury and rebuilding physically and mentally. The second cover for Sports Illustrated's basketball preview features the [Boston Celtics'](#) Jayson Tatum, Marcus Smart and Jaylen Brown, who spoke with [Chris Mannix](#) about putting their NBA Finals loss and controversial offseason behind them. The NBA and College Basketball Preview issue is on sale today at newsstands and at [SI.com/issues](https://www.si.com/issues), with more features below.

This press release features multimedia. View the full release here: <https://www.businesswire.com/news/home/20221013005348/en/>



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### NBA Preview Features

- **All Eyes On Zion:** It's been more than a year since Zion Williamson played an NBA game. Now recovered from injury, the Pelicans' 22-year-old phenom is ready to show the world the new and improved Zion, according to Howard Beck.
- **Green Light:** Trade rumors linger and a sudden preseason coaching change hangs over the Celtics franchise. But their core of Jayson Tatum, Jaylen Brown and Marcus Smart are hyper-motivated to finish the job after last season's NBA Finals loss and bring another title to Boston, by [Chris Mannix](#).
- **Challenge Guys:** Who's the most influential person on an NBA bench? [Chris Mannix](#) makes the case for why the challenge guys—the assistants who decide when and why to officially challenge a referee's call—could be the difference between a win and a loss.
- **Scouting Reports:** Breaking down every team's chances, division by division. Including awards picks, SI Sportsbook odds, and our NBA Finals pick: Warriors over Bucks.

### College Basketball Preview Features

- **Full Drew Experience:** Gonzaga's top player could have left, but the NCAA gets another year of the Drew Timme Experience. His famous 'stache will shine, but [Greg Bishop](#) tells us his real focus is on bringing Gonzaga that elusive national championship. Plus, [Jeremy Woo](#) on why big men are back on campus, and how an offseason of coaching changes will shape the season.
- **Nothing But Love:** The Stanford women's loss in the Final Four last season sent the program back to the drawing board. Their drive for a title this season will be powered by lots of talent on the court and unique off-court

assets (a *happiness professor*, anyone?), by [Ben Pickman](#).

- **SI's Men's Top 25.** Our top 4: North Carolina, Gonzaga, Houston and Kentucky.

- **SI's Women's Top 25.** Our top 4: South Carolina, Stanford, Texas and Iowa.

#### Other Features

- **The Great Wide Open:** Wide receiver has become the NFL's marquee position, and four pass catchers rise above the rest for their skill and dominance. Here's how Davante Adams, Ja'Marr Chase, Cooper Kupp and Justin Jefferson do it from [Conor Orr](#) and [Albert Breer](#).
- **Fallen Angel:** Joe Maddon was one of MLB's most accomplished and experienced managers, but that didn't stop the Angels from firing him last June after the team underperformed for two weeks. In an excerpt from his new book, we learn from Tom Verducci and Joe Maddon what that firing says about the culture war between baseball's data-driven front offices and the men in uniform.
- **Astro in Exile:** As the Astros head into the MLB postseason as a favorite to reach the World Series, the man who built much of their roster – former GM Jeff Luhnow – is running low-level soccer teams in Spain and Mexico. According to [Stephanie Apstein](#), while nearly everyone else involved in Houston's cheating scandal three years ago has been welcomed back into the game, Luhnow is still in baseball exile – and feels like he doesn't have anything to prove to anyone.

#### Also in this issue:

- A photo tour of what might be boxing's last great boxing trilogy: the Canelo Alvarez-Gennady Golovkin rivalry that culminated with an epic bout last month.
- Michael Rosenberg on why the power of star players makes one wonder: who would ever want to run an NBA team?
- The upstart outfit that's redefining what it means to be a NASCAR racing team from Madeline Coleman.
- SI Gameplan: Mark Bechtel reviews a new book on the history of the World Series.
- SI Full Frame: Photographer Eric Rasco remembers the World Series' longest game.

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