**The Best of It**

A Film by Scott Pearson Eberly

**RUN TIME:** 116 minutes

**RATING:** Not Rated

**RELEASE DATE:**

HD Digital on iTunes, Amazon, Google Play and Vimeo on Demand

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**PUBLICITY CONTACTS**

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**SYNOPSIS**

**THE BEST OF IT** takes an unflinching look at the life of a professional gambler. The character driven documentary focuses on the lives of Boston, The Shrink, Dink, and Banker who all chose to make a living betting sports. A gambler selects this profession despite knowing the life they fancied tends to chew up and spit out even the most seasoned gambler—an all too common tale in Las Vegas. A feud between Boston and The Shrink develops after accusations are made about gambling debts, but a gambler’s actual bank account balance is often based on rumors and half-truths. The outcome of a gambler is as unpredictable as the the games they bet.

**DIRECTOR’S STATEMENT**

I’ve told many types of stories throughout my career, but it was during my time as a senior features producer for a horse racing network that I became fascinated by the gambler. The supposed stories were the horse, jockey, or trainer, the action was on the track not in the grandstand. Yet, I kept being drawn to the guys pulling out big, fat wads of cash and stepping up to the betting windows certain that they knew something that nobody else did. I was especially captivated with the professional gambler; somebody who proclaimed that this is my career, this is how I’m going to make a living. I thought heading to Hollywood to pursue a life in film was a career with no safety net—I now felt my choice was conservative by comparison. While I found the horseplayer interesting, I quickly learned the takeout was considered way too high for most pros to play ‘The Sport of Kings' seriously—so—I shifted my attention to the gambler who bet sports.

I started going to Las Vegas in 2008 for weekend getaways, but the visits quickly turned into research as I began to meet and study the professional gambler. There were all sorts of detours along the way for what would quickly become a passion project; a brief stint as a reality show, a tragic incident involving one of the subjects which led to me sticking the early tapes into a vault for two years, and finally a chance encounter with a childhood friend who had won a milliondollar race with the horse I produced a feature on.

In 2012, I got the initial funding and I bought the equipment instead of renting to maximize shooting days. I also determined that I had to shoot with no crew if I was going to achieve the intimacy I wanted to bring to the screen. I even bought a Prius knowing I’d be making a lot of trips from Los Angeles to Las Vegas; I had no idea the filming would span three years and that I’d make a total of roughly thirty-five trips. I conducted a lot of interviews, however, it was the 10-hour shooting days embedded with Boston and Dink that allowed me to gain access behind the curtain. I’d watch them keep an eye on the odds, the other on the game while making countless bets for over 12- hours in a single day. I started to understand the psychological mindset and to a certain point, the lunacy that is needed to be a professional gambler. I would eventually understand the gambler’s mantra: it’s all about the number, not the team, and the most important factor, whatever you do, make sure that you get “The Best of It.”

 *• Scott Pearson Eberly*

**ABOUT THOSE FEATURED IN THE BEST OF IT**

**BOSTON** has been betting sports in Las Vegas for over 30 years. He's an iconic college basketball betting guru in the gambling community who puts in countless hours handicapping. He's gambling's version of a gym rat. Boston is 'Old School' and proud of it; while other gamblers have switched to analytics, computers and numbers, Boston bets as much with gut and feel as he does using his personal power ratings that can be found in a three-ring binder. His obsession for the game fuels his legendary notebooks filled with his power rankings for all 347 Division 1 college basketball teams that he updates daily.

Boston is also known for being harsh, honest, a true colorful personality with a short fuse who is known as much for his temper and unpredictability. Behind the gruff exterior though is a sensitive side who loves his dog, has a strong passion for film, watches "American Idol," still bemoans the cancellation of "Freaks and Geeks" and talks candidly about how loss at an early age sent him down the seductive path to living the life of a gambler.

**DINK** loves to gamble. He also loves to enjoy life away from the long hours and the daily grind while being holed up in his office gambling seven days a week.  You can find Dink at independent wrestling shows in Los Angeles, producing his own wrestling shows, the racetrack betting the ponies, playing with Alex the hamster or Irving the dog, and eating dinners with his wife, Gayle. But even though Dink will tell you he likes time away to enjoy other things, when he's doing those other things he still checks scores every 5-minutes much to the chagrin of his wife.

Dink credits much of his gambling success to his days as a bookmaker in Queens. In his 20s he regularly got cleaned out by 'Wise Guys' (successful professional gamblers), which taught him valuable, albeit costly lessons. He learned the intricacies required to be successful in the sports betting world and the fine line between a winning 'Sharp' and a broke 'Square' can be razor thin. After serving time in a halfway house for bookmaking Dink moved to Las Vegas and vowed to do everything on the up-and-up; he was determined to become a winning sports bettor.

21 years later Dink gambles on sports year-round from his home in a gated community in Las Vegas, specializing in hockey. In 2013, Bruce Willis portrayed Dink and Catherine Zeta-Jones portrayed Dink’s wife in the movie **LAY THE FAVORITE**.

**LEM BANKER** came to Las Vegas when the town was still run by the mob. Lem quickly became connected to many of the unruly types that ran Vegas upon his arrival to the desert in 1953. Banker ran a couple of sportsbooks and became good friends with Lefty Rosenthal the man Robert De Niro's character is based on in the film "Casino."

But Lem didn't truly make his mark as a gambler until the 1980s behind a team of bet runners and a network that made him privy to inside information on injuries well before the bookmakers could adjust their lines. When Banker would receive injury information he would pounce and hit Vegas Sportsbooks and bookies across the nation--getting 'The Best of It.' Lem will point out what he did then couldn't be done today because of all the social media and Don Bets software which allows sports books to copy betting lines eliminating a lot of the bargain shopping that Banker parlayed into riches.

Although, Banker was a highly successful gambler, the film demonstrates the perils and pitfalls for a lifelong gambler.

**THE SHRINK** got his name from his time he spent going to school pursing a career in psychology. Although he never found himself examining the mind in a professional sense; he did build the biggest sports betting forum site in the 90s and became a therapist of sorts on the message boards. He also brokered relationships with offshore Sportsbooks back before the government cracked down on citizens betting sports offshore. His motto was to always get 'The Best of It' proclaiming that money management is vital to the longevity of a gambler.

The Las Vegas Review-Journal listed **Michael "Roxy" Roxborough** number two on its list of most influential people in sports of the 20th century, as well as one of GQ magazine's '50 Most Important People in Sports.' Roxy came to Las Vegas romanizing about living the life as a professional gambler in 'Sin City,' but in his 30s he wondered if gambling was sustainable as an actual career? So, in 1982 he founded the world's top oddsmaking firm, Las Vegas Sports Consultant. Roxy also became part of the team that set the opening line for the Stardust, the most import and influential betting line in the 80s.

Roxy serves as an instrumental voice in the film not only framing the life of a gambler, but communicating America's view towards gambling and how technology has changed the game for both the gambler and the sports book.

Today, Roxy splits his time between Las Vegas and Thailand. He runs his families investments, gambles on sports and horses mostly wagering via exchange betting, and remains a trusted voice in the sports betting world.

**ABOUT THE FILMMAKER**

**SCOTT PEARSON EBERLY** has worked for CNN, ESPN, Midwest Sports Channel, Bravo, DirecTV, NBC, and FOX. But it was his decade as TVG's (horse racing network) senior features producer when he told over 600 stories filming at racetracks around the country. But he quickly noticed the biggest personalties weren't in the game, they were betting on it.  Eberly got to know the gambler. He started to differentiate the distinction between the recreational bettor and the professional gambler. He became intrigued with the professional gambler and how exactly one could make a living totally reliant on his R.O.I. (return on investment), or in simpler terms--a winning bankroll.  In 2010, Eberly had an initial agreement to sell the sports betting themed reality show titled, "The Book." The project, however, would be cancelled before shooting the pilot, but by that time Eberly already had setup time to film a group of gamblers in Las Vegas during March Madness. Eberly went to Las Vegas by himself and shot the initial footage on a prosumer camera that he bought after hitting a superfecta bet while filming at Churchill Downs--he thought this must be kismet. A year later Eberly would start to embed himself with the gambler, filming over 1,400 hours of footage, spanning five years, which resulted in Eberly's directorial debut with his feature film **THE BEST OF IT.**

**Production Notes**

\*Eberly shot the film on a Canon 5D camera

\*The film’s director shot the movie himself with no crew for intimacy and budgetary reasons

\*Shooting for the film spanned five years amassing 1,400 hours of footage (2010, 2012-2015)

\*Eberly bought a Prius knowing all the driving he’d be making; 57-roundtrips from Los Angeles to Las Vegas and spending over 170-nights

\*Eberly would embed himself with Dink between 10-14 hours… they would often get takeout for all three meals

\*Eberly would shoot Boston 4-6 hours before he would asks for shooting to stop for the day

\*Eberly would often line up the camera behind the computer monitor and asks minimal questions while they were gambling

\*Eberly initially sold the premise as a sports betting themed reality show

\*Eberly felt fortunate that the deal blew up before shooting the pilot

\*Chris Harrison, the host of “The Bachelor” inspired Eberly to turn “The Best of It” into a feature length documentary

\*Eberly already had The Shrink and Boston lined up to shoot during March Madness before the reality project was dead (2010)

\*Eberly shot the 2010 footage on a camera he bought after hitting a superfecta while filming at Churchill Downs

\*While filming the 2012 Pacific Classic for TVG/FOX Sports Eberly interviewed the race’s winning part-owner who turned out to be a

childhood friend

\*The childhood friend ended up making the initial investment to start filming after seeing the 2010 footage that had been in a vault for nearly two years

\*The first interview was shot in Baton Rouge, LA; during an airport security search a screw to the tripod was lost, Eberly was forced to balance the

camera on two bags stacked on a picnic table for the entire 2-hour interview

\*Eberly’s Australian Shepherd, Lucy can be seen in several scenes during the film

\*Eberly considers himself a dog lover, but Dink’s dog Irving would constantly bark at him. A couple of scenes had to be cut due to Irving’s barking

\*Dink’s love for horse racing extends beyond gambling; he’s also a big supporter of Southern California Thoroughbred Rescue, rescuing retired racehorses

\*Dink loves PWG independent wrestling so much that he comes to the Los Angeles area every month for his front row seat

\*Ben Mankiewicz, Turner Classic Movie host was the only person to see the initial rough cut that ran over 2 hours, 40 minutes (2014)

\*As a 9-year-old Eberly bought Larry Merchant’s book, “The National Football Lottery”… he used the scores in the books to play a solitary football game

\*The interview with HBO's iconic boxing analyst Larry Merchant took place at his house in Santa Monica six months after he famously told Floyd Mayweather, “If I was 50-years younger I’d kick your ass.”

**Credits**

**Best of It Films**

**presents**

Directed/Produced by

Scott Pearson Eberly

Executive Producer

Robert Milton Eberly

Camera

Scott Pearson Eberly

Edited by

Ryan Dawson

Featuring

(in order of appearance)

Alan “Boston” Dvorkis

Gianni “Vegas Runner” Karalis

Michael “Roxy” Roxborough

Ken “The Shrink” Weitzner

Larry Merchant

Alan “Dink” Denkenson

Lem Banker

Jimmy Vaccaro

Michael Konik

Richard Louis

Gayle Downing Denkenson

Archival Interviews

Alan “Boston” Dvorkis

Michael “Roxy” Roxborough

Jimmy “The Hat” Taffel

Larry Merchant

The following were interviewed but did not appear in the film

Steve Fezzik

Brady Kannon

Arne K. Lange

Erin Rynning

Extreme Music Coordinator

Evelin Garcia

Post Production Services

Provided by

Anarchy Post

Re-recording Mixer

Marcus Pardo

Sound Editors

Isai Espinoza

Marcus X. Pardo

Sound Supervisor

Dan Snow

Online Supervisor

Eric Lalicata

Colorist

Joel Ides

Conform Editor

Persephanie Engel

Illustrator/Animation

Eva Branellec

Movie Poster/Artwork

Beau Shoulders

Special Thanks

Gary Kirke, Jr.

John Kelly

EOG.com

LVH/Westgate

extrememusic.com

Billy Momo

George Knapp

pregame.com

Jay Kornegay

John Avello

Brady Kannon

Jerry Lee Donahue, Jr.

Derek Lee Donahue

Joe Vandercook

Sau Feiner

Ben Mankiewicz

Colin Cowherd

Chad Millman

Michael C. Donaldson

Chris Perez

Danielle Rosales

Chris Harrison

Jason Carbone

Pete Royer

Distribber

Jason Brubakker

Denny Tedesco

Chris Speck

Paul Marshilan

Gibson Carothers

Matt Carothers

John Shepphird

Bill Spagnoli

Robert “Bubs” Eberly

Karla Eberly

Matt Eberly

Jennifer Eberly

Lauren Eberly

Gary Kirke, Sr.

Jack Kirke

Aspen Kirk

Kendall Kirke

Steve Ouimet

Tony Allevato

Brandy Dawson

Hunter Dawson

Sawyer Dawson

Michelle Carpenter

Les & Mae Pearson

Everybody from Anarch Post

The People and city of Las Vegas

“Mexico”

Performed Billy Momo

“Nowhere You Belong”

Cut One

“Come My Way”

Billy Momo

"They Fuck You at the Crossroads”

Performed by Billy Momo

“Keep Dreaming"

Performed by Billy Momo

“No Easy Way”

Composed by Joshua Herschel

“Carmen - Habanera”

Composed by Georges Bizet, Public Domain

“XOX”

Composed by Cameron Rafati

“Odd Complex”

Composed by Bobby Tabour

“Every Avenue”

Composed by Robert Neufeld

“Hootenanny Hayride”

Composed by Adam Peters

“Skid Row Joe"

Composed by Werner Tautz

“Cape Crusader”

Composed by Vincent Amberson, Bruce Fingers, & Billie Ray Fingers

“On The Make”

Composed by Werner Taut

“Awe and Peace”

Composed by Matt Kirsch & Jack Elliot

“Outta Juice”

Composed by Pete Nashe & jack Livesey

“Stark Light”

Composed by Mel Wesson

“De-Union”

Composed by Sam Hulick & Jack Wall

“Angel Quest”

Composed by James Michael & Hans Zimmer

“Miss Understood”

Composed by Atli Orvarsson

“My Condition”

Composed by Simon Steadman & Charlton Pettus

Kiss the Blues Goodbye”

Composed by Chucho Merchan & Jimmy Zavala

“Gobstopper Popper”

Composed by Matt Kirsch & Jack Elliot

“Glock ’N Roll”

Composed by Rupert Vyvyan Kendrick Pope

“Black Light

Composed by Joshua Herschel Klein

“Cello Sub Marine”

Composed by Mwl Gwaaon

“Little Miss Priggy”

Composed by Brian Langsbard

“Rebel Heart”

Composed by Sonny Tan

Won’t Destroy the Proise”

Composed by Steve Mark Mullen

“Eyewitness Account”

Composed by Joshua Herschel Klein

“Honeymoon Swoon”

Composed by Werner Taut

“Freak of the Week”

Composed by Bobby Tabour

“Nu Constitution”

Composed by Beat, Jay Rifkin, & Louis

“Eager Beaver”

Composed by Joshua Herschel Klein

“All Too Clear”

Composed by Joshua Herschel Klein

“Bottle Rocket Scientist”

Composed by Matt Kirsch & Jack Elliot

“Dirt Money”

Composed by Jasha Alain Klebe, Billie Ray Fingers, & Bruce Finbgers

“Slick ’N Sly”

Composed by Andreas Hartman

“Bittersuite”

Composed by Joss Albert

“Naughty Trained”

Composed by Pete Nashe & Jack Livesey

“Black Tide”

Composed by Dirty Dick, Carrie Harry, & Bart K. Hendrickson

“Mild Shine”

Composed by James S. Levine

“Safe Circle”

Composed by Mel Wesson

“Basic Needs”

Composed by Atli Orvarsson

“Ocean Drop”

Composed by Will Johnstone, Andrew Philip Carroll, & Nicholas Thomas Emmanuel Amour

“Insomnia”

Composed by Ben Trigg & Angela Penhaligon

“Suspicious Signs”

Composed by Dirty Dick & Carrie Harry

“Sleep Tight”

Composed by Mathew Oden

“Hammer and Bongs”

Composed by Richard Causon & Angela Penhaligon

“It”

Composed by Philip Kay & Rachel Wood

“Cerebral Inversion”

Composed by Don Hatt & Barney Door

“Toe Tag”

Composed by Quentin chiappetta

“Into Oblivion”

Composed by Paul Brill

“Russian Doll”

Composed by Amy May & Angela Penhaligon

“Waiting to Happen”

Composed by Michael Rafferty

“New Machine”

Composed by Thomas Bergerson & Nick Phoenix