

News Writing – How To Write a Sports Report In 4 Steps

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[Nazvi Careem](#)

News writing style is just as important for sports reporting as it is for general news, business stories or any other journalistic work.

The advantage of sports writing is that you are allowed a little more leeway in your choice of words. In crime or business writing, you are restricted in your use of adjectives and adverbs and are encouraged to focus more on nouns and verbs.

Sports writing, however, allows you to go to town in describing plays, the atmosphere, fans and other colorful aspects of a sporting event.

For this article, we will go through, step by step, how to write a straightforward sports report using quotes.

Ideally, any sports story would have quotes from the winners and losers. Indeed, many sports articles are written around what athletes say rather than what they have achieved on the field of play.

However, you also have sports articles written without quotes. When rookies learn how to write like a journalist, especially in sport, they are likely to come across the structure that we will show you here.

We will adapt the NBA game between Boston Celtics and Cleveland Cavaliers on April 1 as our example article.

1. Intro – the most important news aspect of a sports game is the score. Who won? How did they win and what effect did the victory have? Also important is whether we are writing from a Boston perspective or Cleveland. In this case, we will go with Cleveland.

“Cleveland Cavaliers lost 98-96 to the Boston Celtics after Delonte West’s sank two free throws in the final seconds, dropping three and a half games behind the Pistons for the best record in the Eastern Conference.”

2. More info – The above is enough for those who have a passing interest in the sport. However, NBA fans would want more information and you could give it to them in one or two paragraphs.

“The Cavaliers were without star player LeBron James, suffering from a knee injury, while the Celtics were minus Paul Pierce. Gerald Green led the way for Celtics with 25 points while Kendrick Perkins had 12 points and nine rebounds.

The Cavaliers, for whom Larry Hughes scored 24 with Sasha Pavlovic scoring 17, have already qualified for the play-offs while Boston are out of the running.”

3. Quote – This is where you can provide a quote from the coach or a key player from both teams. You can precede each saying with a lead-in paragraph or go straight into the quote.

“Celtic forward Al Jefferson, said: ‘They were missing their best player and we were missing our best play. We just stuck in there.’

Cavs coach Mike Brown said James’ absence was a key factor in their loss.

‘We miss LeBron. We miss LeBron every time he doesn’t play. He’s our guy,’ said Brown.”

4. The rest – Once you got the main information and key quotes out of the way, you can go on to describe the game. Even better would be to describe just one or two plays and include more quotes.

The thinking behind sports articles is that people would have watched the game on TV anyway and would not want boring game description. Therefore, quotes from the people who matter, such as athletes and coaches, would offer better reading value.