

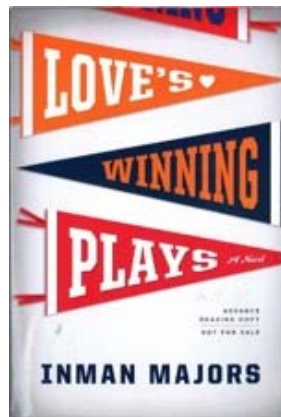
Novel offers tongue-in-cheek look at Southern football culture

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BOOK REVIEW

By NILES REDDICK



Love's Winning Plays
Inman Majors
W.W. Norton & Co.,
2012

With football season upon us, *Love's Winning Plays* by Inman Majors will whet readers' appetites for a good football game, especially the back story of the game in all of its managed chaos. *Love's Winning Plays* is a tongue-in-cheek look at Southern football culture sprinkled with romantic comedy. Majors' novel is not just for the fan of college football, but also for those who don't think the game's worth a bag of buttered popcorn.

In a comical play-by-play account, the satirical novel unfolds through the point-of-view of young Coach Love, a hard-working, fair-playing, and aspiring head coach who is competing for a position with another graduate student coach. Coach Love is interested in dating the athletic director's daughter and even joins a book club to woo her. Head Coach Driver assigns Love to keep older Coach Woody in line and on time for each of the university's on-the-road annual pep rallies/fundraisers—the Pigskin Cavalcade!

Coach Woody, however, will not be babysat. He's a crafty, opera-loving character, but he has years of wisdom and insight, which he shares with Coach Love. Despite turmoil and conflict, even a memorable knockout, Love wins, both literally and metaphorically, and we are reassured that a new and even better season is just around the corner.

Readers will not actually experience a game in prose, but will be drawn to the stadium and locker room, laughing at the behind-the-scenes reality of the game, the lives of the coaches, staff, players, chat room experts and cigar smoking boosters. Like an exciting game, *Love's Winning Plays* will pull readers to the edge of the bench and have them cheering from the sidelines for the story's characters.