

# NBA betting scandal co-conspirator admits he and referee Tim Donaghy have been lying for the past decade

Anyone who has remotely followed my work on the 2003-07 NBA betting scandal knows I have exposed the many *demonstrably false* claims made by co-conspirators Tommy Martino and his lifelong best friend referee Tim Donaghy, especially. Beyond those which can be disproven with hard evidence, there remained claims which remained unsupported yet which, to someone like me who has spent thousands of hours on the subject, were false but would require a confession from Martino or Donaghy after all these years for any sense of resolution. One topic has consumed much media attention the last decade, namely Donaghy's self-serving claims he was threatened by the Gambino Crime Family in December 2006 into continuing betting on games he officiated.

Please recall (1) the FBI never described the case as an extortion scheme, and (2) never *mentioned* (even in confidential files) a role for organized crime. Also recall that during the sentencing phase, (3) the U.S. Attorney's Office didn't charge anyone with extortion and (4) wrote Donaghy "has never taken the position that he was anything other than a willing participant in the scheme with Battista and Martino, and, before them, with Jack Concannon" (Concannon was a Donaghy golfing buddy with whom he placed bets). Lastly, recall (5) Judge Amon described the scheme as a business "arrangement" before noting that (6) Donaghy was "more culpable" than his two co-conspirators.

Despite the six FACTS outlined above (among others), since Donaghy's release from prison a decade ago many in the media

and some in the academy (see e.g., here and here) have permitted (and have often *assisted*) Donaghy in promulgating his claims (1) “the mob” – in the form of Martino and his buddy, pro gambler Jimmy Battista (2) threatened him in December 2006 (through April 2007). I have debunked Donaghy’s absurd self-serving organized crime assertions on multiple occasions, just as I have illustrated (with overwhelming evidence) he lied/is lying about (1) wanting to stop betting on his games in 2006 and (2) only continued betting because of threats (generally, let alone from organized crime, specifically).

Donaghy’s primary tale is that when he and Martino met with Battista at the Philadelphia International Airport Marriott on December 12, 2006, he momentarily found himself alone with Battista at which point Battista threatened Donaghy and his family. Martino, when asked about this in public appearances (just as he did when cooperating with the FBI), has stuck to something like the following: “I never heard Battista threaten Donaghy. Donaghy says he was threatened, but that never happened when I was around.” Martino’s version of events allowed Donaghy’s damning claims to persist, of course, thrilling the former referee and outraging the former pro gambler.

In a recent Whistleblower podcast episode, Martino tells producer Tim Livingston that Battista has been railing against Martino and Donaghy ever since Donaghy took to the media following his prison sentence: “The guy argued with me and Tim for years after we got out of jail that we were lying and Battista was telling the truth.” Also in the “formal” interview Livingston conducted with Martino, Martino offered his scripted storyline about the issue at hand. Importantly, however, there are more casual moments with Martino where he offers different insights on the same topics. Indeed, a tired and hazy Martino confesses (during a relaxed conversation in a 4am car ride to the airport) what many informed persons knew

the last decade: Battista was just to be outraged at Donaghy and especially at his former pal all these years. Martino on his lifelong best friend Tim Donaghy:

*He fabricates (stuff? inaudible). Like the amount of money he got and shit...He's gotta stick by it. It's what he told the feds. He doesn't want to look like a liar...The big lying point was that Donaghy was threatened by Battista. The fact of the matter is, he wasn't. But, Tim asked me to back him up, ya know? So I always have to say 'I never threatened him but I don't know what happened with Timmy and Battista when I wasn't around' – but I was never not around. Tim will be pissed if he heard that.*

I put together a tidy audio clip of Martino's startling admissions (taken respectively from Episodes 2 and 3).

As I have said for the past decade-plus, it was always clear what transpired in December 2006 but, short of a confession from Martino or Donaghy, there was no means of resolution. Well, thanks to Tim Livingston and Tenderfoot TV, we can hopefully put this bs Donaghy claim to rest (just as we have done with dozens of others). Oh, and here's hoping a good portion of the media finally starts accepting they've been duped all this time, and that they've been depriving their respective audiences a full, *evidence-based* history of the scandal by instead choosing a sensational, fact-starved narrative.

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P.S. With respect to the lazy media who uncritically accept Donaghy's absurd stories, I am always reminded of the scene late in the film *Shattered Glass*. An exasperated editor Chuck Lane, who led a lonely and frustrating crusade within the publication to expose *The New Republic's* Stephen Glass' many fake stories, has to school a colleague on how and why they repeatedly deprived the public of the truth. He excoriates

her before explaining (@ 1:50 of this vid clip) that Glass “handed us fiction after fiction and we printed them all as fact...just because we found him entertaining. It’s indefensible.” The same is true for many in the media when it comes to Tim Donaghy.