Cultural Daily

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Three of the Best Sports Books Ever

Ethan Powell · Monday, September 5th, 2022

The best non-fiction books have the ability to motivate and inspire the reader. The stories of Steve Jobs learning mechanics in his garage alongside his adopted father before going on to revolutionize the world of computers, Muhammad Ali's rise from Louisville, Kentucky, to be the greatest boxer in the world still shift thousands of copies as we learn of how a young child dealt with the privations of war and occupation. Likewise with sport and its focus on winning, teamwork and that inner grit to prove you are the best. Reading about how a sports star battled the odds and challenges life throws up at us to become a leader in their chosen field can give us that steely determination to face down our own obstacles.

There are many aspects to sports, from fandom to college sports to being a global superstar, so we have tried to select books which can give us an intimate portrait of an individual or a team and the lengths they go to to achieve their goals.

FEVER PITCH – NICK HORNBY

Not all of us can be sporting superstars beyond our dreams, but we do know what it is like to follow a team. A rollercoaster of emotions as we witness the occasional moment of glory that more than makes up for the years of despair and anguish. Published in 1992, Nick Hornby's ode to fandom literally changed the face of sports literature in the United Kingdom, transforming it from a collection of cliché-filled biographies and dry histories into a vibrant mosaic of emotion-filled narratives. Fever Pitch was about the author's obsession with the popular soccer club Arsenal, and a generation of sports fans, not just Arsenal supporters, immediately saw themselves writ large in the flowing text. It soon spawned a film. But a fan of any sport would have identified with the lead character's turmoil growing up and balancing life around his favorite sports team, work, family and relationships, and there was little surprise when an American remake was released focusing on the Boston Red Sox.

MY LIFE: QUEEN OF THE COURT – SERENA WILLIAMS

Imagine growing up in an area notorious for crime, learning to play a sport on a public tennis court to a symphony of gunshots from nearby drive-by shootings and within a few years becoming the most successful female athlete of all time. Now, there is a story worth reading! The single-minded determination from that young lady to avoid the used syringes and spaced-out junkies in her neighborhood to focus purely on improving her tennis paid off as she went on to win seven Australian Opens, three French Opens, six US Opens and seven Wimbledons, amassing an estimated $95 million along the way. Blessed with a powerful serve, her aggressive forehands and

backhands have battered many an opponent into submission over the years, and after more than 20 years, she went into the US Open ranked as a possible winner in the Ladbrokes tennis odds. In what was her final appearance at a major tournament, she defeated Danka Kovinic in her opening game, and told Tennis.com she felt comfortable. However, she would go on to lose to Australian Ajka Tomljanovic in the third round. With retirement looming, her story remains fresh and is a testament to the career of one of perhaps the best female tennis players of all time.

TIGER WOODS – JEFF BENEDICT & ARMEN KETEYIAN

There was a time at the turn of the century when Tiger Woods was a colossus, bestriding the game of golf like it was his own personal plaything, seemingly winning trophies for fun. In a 10-year period, he picked up four Masters, four PGAs, three US Opens and three Open Championships. But in 2009, things started to unravel as he was hit by infidelity accusations and sponsors ended their deals with him. How he handled that dark time and fought back to become the PGA Player of the Year in 2013 and win the Masters in 2021 makes for a fascinating read. Woods is a sports star who had the world at his feet, nearly lost it all and clawed his way back towards the top; he continues to thrill crowds and fans around the world.

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This content is written in collaboration with Ethan Powell to provide information to our readers.

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