

Recommended Sports Biographies for High School Physical Education's Character Education Project

Compiled by Mr. Dutcher

Armstrong, Lance. It's not about the bike: my journey back to life. New York: Putnam, 2000.

In this memoir, the author tells of his life-threatening bout with cancer in 1996, his victory in the Tour de France bicycle race in 1999, and the things that matter to him most.

Description: 275 pages, illustrated.

Subjects: Armstrong, Lance; Cyclists- United States- Biography, Cancer patients- United States- Biography

Baker, Ken. They Don't Play Hockey in Heaven: A Dream, a Team, and My Comeback Season. Guilford: Lyons Press, 2003.

Ken Baker chronicles his struggle to become a professional ice hockey player, discussing how he overcame a brain tumor to achieve his dream.

Description: 282 pages, illustrated.

Subjects: Baker, Ken, 1970-; Hockey- United States; Hockey goalkeepers- United States.

Barber, Tiki. Tiki: My Life in the Game and Beyond. New York: Simon Spotlight Entertainment, 2007.

Traces the story of the New York Giants star, from his childhood at the side of his fellow football-playing identical twin and his efforts to overcome personal obstacles and injuries to the controversies that marred the 2006 season and his surprise early retirement.

Description: 229 pages, illustrated.

Subjects: Barber, Tiki, 1975- ; Football players- United States- Biography- Juvenile literature; Football players- United States- Biography.

Bettis, Jerome. The Bus: My Life in and Out of a Helmet. New York: Doubleday, 2007.

Despite his performance on the field, he always worried that he would blow his chance to make good and later he wondered if he had what it takes to succeed. After he was traded to the Pittsburgh Steelers, he became the most beloved player in that town. Before retiring in 2006, he helped the Steelers win their record-breaking fifth Super Bowl.

Description: 216 pages, illustrated.

Subjects: Bettis, Jerome; Football players- United States- Biography.

Blake, James. Breaking Back: How I Lost Everything and Won Back My Life. New York:

HarperCollins, 2007.

Tennis player James Blake chronicles his year of recovery from three challenges: a neck fracture suffered in a freak accident on the court; zoster, a rare virus that paralyzed half his face; and his father's death of stomach cancer, and describes his father's lasting influence on his tennis career and his daily life.

Description: 275 pages, illustrated.

Subjects: Blake, James, 1979- ; Tennis players.

Brodeur, Martin and Damien Cox. Brodeur: Beyond the Crease. Mississauga: J. Wiley and Sons Canada, 2006.

Martin Brodeur takes a look at his career, his sport, the business of hockey, the evolution of the sport, and his journey to the top of the modern game.

Description: 280 pages, illustrated, index.

Subjects: Brodeur, Martin, 1972- ; Hockey players- Canada- Biography.

Bruschi, Tedy. Never Give Up: My Stroke, My Recovery, and My Return to the NFL. Hoboken: John Wiley & Sons, 2007.

New England Patriots linebacker Tedy Bruschi describes the stroke he suffered in 2005 and his recovery and discusses the importance of early medical attention to reduce a stroke's damage, providing information for prevention and advice for stroke survivors.

Description: 268 pages; illustrated.

Subjects: Bruschi, Tedy; New England Patriots (Football team); Football players- United States- Biography; Cerebrovascular disease- Patients- United States- Biography.

Brunt, Stephen. Searching for Bobby Orr. New York: Triumph, 2006.

This book chronicles Orr's life from his humble beginnings, skating along a frozen river in Parry Sound, Ontario, to the height of his career as the league's top-scoring defenseman, who shot the goal that won the Boston Bruins the Stanley Cup. Orr also had his lows-he will forever be known as a key figure in the Alan Eagleson scandal and for the injuries that forced him into early retirement.

Description: 304 pages, illustrated, bibliographic references.

Subjects: Orr, Bobby, 1948- ; Boston Bruins (Hockey team); Hockey players- Canada- Biography

Cox, Lynne. Swimming to Antarctica: Tales of a Long-Distance Swimmer. Orlando: Harcourt, 2005.

Distance swimmer Lynne Cox describes her emotional and spiritual need to swim and about the mythical act of swimming itself, and chronicles some of her more memorable swims.

Description: 359 pages, illustrated, maps.

Subjects: Cox, Lynne, 1957- ; Swimmers- United States- Biography; Long distance swimming;

Athletes- United States- Biography; Marathon swimming.

Dungy, Tony. Quiet Strength: a memoir. Carol Stream: Tyndale House Publishers, 2007.

NFL football coach Tony Dungy reflects on his personal and professional life; discussing his childhood, family, religious beliefs, coaching practices, Super Bowl victory, and more.

Description: 301 pages, illustrated.

Subjects: Dungy, Tony; Spiritual biography; African American football coaches- Religion; African American football coaches- Biography; Christian life.

Eig, Jonathan. Luckiest Man: The Life and Death of Lou Gehrig. New York: Simon & Schuster, 2005.

Chronicles the life of baseball legend Lou Gehrig, discussing his childhood in New York City, shyness, interactions with other members of the Yankee team, professional triumphs, personal relationships, and struggles to overcome a debilitating disease.

Description: 420 pages, illustrated, bibliographical references, index.

Subjects: Gehrig, Lou, 1903-1941; Baseball players- United States- Biography; Amyotrophic lateral sclerosis- Patients- Biography.

Freeman, Michael. Jim Brown: The Fierce Life of an American Hero. New York: William Morrow, 2006.

Chronicles the life and career of football star Jim Brown, discussing his childhood, schooling, career achievements, personal and professional battles, ambitions, and other related topics.

Description: 289 pages, illustrated, index.

Subjects: Brown, Jim, 1936- ; Football players- United States- Biography.

Gummer, Scott. The Seventh at St. Andrews: How Scotsman David McLay Kidd and His Ragtag Band Built the First New Course on Golf's Holy Soil in Nearly a Century. New York: Gotham Books, 2007.

When the town of St. Andrews announced in 2001 that a new championship course was in the works- the town's first since 1914- David McLay Kidd fought off all comers and earned the right to make golf history. The author chronicles the days in the dirt and the nights in the pubs, the politics and histrionics, to bring this tale to the reader.

Description: 288 pages, illustrated, maps.

Subjects: Kidd, David McLay, 1967- ; Royal and Ancient Golf Club of St. Andrews- History; Golf course architects- Scotland- Biography; Golf courses- Design and construction- History- 20th century.

Hamill, Dorothy. A Skating Life. Hyperion, 2007.

Ice skater Dorothy Hamill offers an intimate look at her life, discussing her childhood, relationship with her parents, career as an Olympic and professional skater, failed marriages, insecurities, personal triumphs, and other related topics.

Description: 238 pages, illustrated.

Subjects: Hamill, Dorothy; Figure skaters- Biography; Women figure skaters- Biography.

Hamilton, Bethany. Soul Surfer: A True Story of Faith, Family, and Fighting to Get Back on the Board. New York: MTV Books/Pocket Books, 2004.

Bethany Hamilton shares the story of her lifelong love of surfing, and tells how she was able to recover and return to competition with the help of her family, friends, and faith, after losing her arm in a shark attack at the age of thirteen.

Description: 213 pages, illustrated.

Subjects: Hamilton, Bethany; Surfers; People with disabilities- Biography.

Hamm, Mia. Go for the Goal: A Champion's Guide to Winning in Soccer and Life. New York: Quill, 2000.

Olympic and World Cup soccer champion Mia Hamm discusses her life, tracing her path to success on the field, and offers advice and tips to other girls who would like to follow in her footsteps.

Description: 254 pages, illustrated.

Subjects: Hamm, Mia, 1972- ; Soccer training; Soccer- Psychological aspects; Success.

Howard, Johnette. The Rivals: Chris Evert vs. Martina Navratilova: Their Epic Duels and Extraordinary Friendship. London: Yellow Jersey, 2005.

Examines the personal friendship and professional rivalry between the two tennis greats, and examines each of their careers, their tournaments, and how they influenced women's sports.

Description: 296 pages, illustrated, bibliographic references, index.

Subjects: Evert, Chris; Navratilova, Martina, 1956- ; Tennis players- United States- Biography; Women tennis players- United States- Biography; Sports rivalries.

Halberstam, David. Playing for Keeps: Michael Jordan and the World He Made. New York: Random House, 1999.

Examines the epic career of basketball superstar Michael Jordan, discussing the forces in his life that have led him to pursue excellence in all his endeavors, whether on the court or off.

Description: 222 pages, bibliographic references.

Subjects: Jordan, Michael, 1963- ; Basketball players- United States- Biography.

Kindred, Dave. Sound and Fury: Two Powerful Lives, One Fateful Friendship. New York: Free Press, 2006.

Recounts the friendship between Muhammad Ali and Howard Cosell, discussing how the two men from drastically different backgrounds were first brought together, why they developed such a strong bond, and how their friendship influenced each of their lives.

Description: 368 pages, illustrated, bibliographical references, index.

Subjects: Ali, Muhammad, 1942- ; Cosell, Howard, 1918-1995; Boxers (Sports)- Biography; Sportscasters- Biography.

Maraniss, David. When Pride Still Mattered: A Life of Vince Lombardi. New York: Simon & Schuster, 1999.

A biography of legendary coach Vince Lombardi, discussing his early life in Brooklyn; his devotion to the principles of family, religion, and sports; and the philosophies that made him so successful in his profession.

Description: 541 pages, illustrated, bibliographical references, index.

Subjects: Lombardi, Vince; Green Bay Packers (Football team)- History; Football coaches- United States- Biography.

Moore, Kenny. Bowerman and the Men of Oregon: The Story of Oregon's Legendary Coach and Nike's Cofounder. New York: Rodale, 2006.

A biography of Bill Bowerman, discussing his family and youth, World War II service, and marriage and children, with a focus on his tenure as the running coach at the University of Oregon from the 1950s to the early 1970s, a position that led him to invent the waffle-soled running shoe later produced by Nike, and to develop other innovations in running.

Description: 432 pages, illustrated, index.

Subjects: Bowerman, William J.; University of Oregon- Track and field; Nike (Firm)- History; Track and field coaches- United States- Biography.

Plaschke, Bill. I Live for This!: Baseball's Last True Believer. Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 2007.

Tommy Lasorda is perhaps baseball's most famous and popular figure. At 79, after 20 years of managing and 57 years with one franchise, this Hall of Famer still suits up in Dodger Blue every day. He also keeps a travel schedule that would dizzy the most frequent fliers. Lasorda went from a scrawny, overlooked Italian kid of average ability to become one of the world's most recognizable baseball faces- and he fought for it every step of the way. Plaschke takes us inside the day-to-day world of this baseball great to reveal a side of Lasorda that few people know. Along the way, we're treated to some of the most outrageous stories in sports, and we discover Lasorda's unshakable opinions about what plagues baseball today.

Description: 236 pages, illustrated, index.

Subjects: Lasorda, Tommy; Los Angeles Dodgers (Baseball team); Baseball managers- United States- Biography.

Robinson, Jackie. I Never Had it Made: An Autobiography of Jackie Robinson. Hopewell: Ecco Press, 1995.

Jackie Robinson tells his life story, covering such aspects as his childhood in California; his experiences at UCLA, in World War II, and in the Negro Leagues; and the impact that breaking the color barrier had on his later years, on sports, and on American society.

Description: 279 pages, illustrated.

Subjects: Robinson, Jackie, 1919-1972; Baseball players- United States- Biography.

Schaap, Jeremy. Cinderella Man: James J. Braddock, Max Baer, and the Greatest Upset in Boxing History. Boston : Houghton Mifflin, 2005.

Once a promising light heavyweight for whom a string of losses and a broken right hand happened to coincide with the Great Crash of 1929. With one good hand, he was forced to labor on the docks of Hoboken. Only his manager still believed in him as together they staged the greatest comeback in fighting history. Braddock went from the relief rolls to face heavyweight champion Max Baer, the Livermore Butcher Boy, renowned for having allegedly killed two men in the ring. A ten-to-one underdog, Braddock's unlikely upset made him the most popular champion boxing had ever seen.

Description: 324 pages, illustrated, bibliographic references, index.

Subjects: Braddock, James J., 1906-1974; Baer, Max, 1909-1959; Boxers (Sports)- United States- Biography; Sports rivalries- United States.

Schaap, Jeremy. Triumph: The Untold Story of Jesse Owens and Hitler's Olympics. Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 2007.

Presents a comprehensive analysis of the 1936 Olympic games hosted by Germany, America's threat to boycott the games, and the four Olympic gold medals won by African-American athlete Jesse Owens, whose performance crushed Hitler's myth of Aryan supremacy.

Description: 272 pages, illustrated, bibliographic references, index.

Subjects: Owens, Jesse, 1913- 1980; Glickman, Marty, 1917-2001; Stoller, Sam, 1915-1983; Olympic Games (11th : 1936 : Berlin, Germany); Track and field athletes- United States- Biography; African American athletes- Biography; Jewish athletes- United States- Biography; Olympics- Participation, American; National socialism- Philosophy; Racism- Germany- History- 20th century.

Silver, Michael. Golden Girl: How Natalie Coughlin Fought Back, Challenged Conventional Wisdom, and Became America's Olympic Champion. New York: Rodale, 2006.

Chronicles Olympic swimmer Natalie Coughlin's struggle for the gold, recounting the disappointments, oppressive training schedule, and personal challenges that almost prevented her from making it to the 2004 Olympics.

Description: 285 pages, illustrated.

Subjects: Coughlin, Natalie, 1982- ; Swimmers- United States- Biography; Women swimmers- United States- Biography.

Towle, Mike. I Remember Arthur Ashe: Memories of a True Tennis Pioneer and Champion of Social Causes by the People Who Knew Him. Nashville: Cumberland House, 2001.

Friends, family, peers, and others share their favorite memories of African-American tennis player Arthur Ashe, who grew up in a Southern, middle-class family and won at Wimbledon

and the U.S. and Australian Open tournaments, and used his fame to spread awareness of apartheid and AIDS.

Description: 175 pages, illustrated, bibliographical references, index.

Subjects: Ashe, Arthur; Tennis players- United States- Biography; African American tennis players- Biography.

Williams, Geoffrey. C. C. Pyle's Amazing Foot Race: The True Story of the 1928 Coast-to-Coast Run Across America. New York: Rodale, 2007.

Recounts C. C. Pyle's 1928 foot race across America, describing the experiences of the 199 men who participated in the race, hoping to find fame and fortune at the finish line.

Description: 322 pages, illustrated, bibliographic notes, index.

Subjects: Pyle, Charles C., 1882-1939; Running races- United States- History; Sports promoters- United States- History.

Yao, Ming and Ric Bucher. Yao: A Life in Two Worlds. New York: Miramax Books, 2004.

Presents a memoir in which basketball star Yao Ming recalls his childhood and family in Shanghai, his early love for the game, his success in China, his move to Houston to play in the National Basketball League, and the adjustments he had to make to life and fame in the U.S.

Description: 290 pages, illustrated.

Subjects: Yao, Ming, 1980- ; National Basketball Association; Basketball players- China- Biography.