

Sweetness The Enigmatic Life Of Walter Payton Jeff Pearlman

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Explore the captivating and often mysterious life of Walter Payton, the legendary Chicago Bears running back affectionately known as 'Sweetness.' Penned by acclaimed author Jeff Pearlman, this biography uncovers the complexities behind the iconic NFL player's public persona, offering an intimate look at the triumphs, struggles, and enduring legacy of a true football icon.

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Sweetness

The first definitive biography of Chicago Bears superstar Walter Payton. At five feet ten inches tall, running back Walter Payton was not the largest player in the NFL, but he developed a larger-than-life reputation for his strength, speed, and grit. Nicknamed "Sweetness" during his college football days, he became the NFL's all-time leader in rushing and all-purpose yards, capturing the hearts of fans in his adopted Chicago. Crafted from interviews with more than 700 sources, acclaimed sportswriter Jeff Pearlman has produced the first definitive biography of Payton. Sweetness at last brings fans a detailed, scrupulously researched, all-encompassing account of the legend's rise to greatness. From Payton's childhood in segregated Mississippi, where he ended a racial war by becoming the star of his integrated high school's football team, to his college years and his twelve-year NFL career, Sweetness brims with stories of all-American heroism, and covers Payton's life off the field as well. Set against the backdrop of the tragic illness that cut his life short at just forty- six years of age, this is a stirring tribute to a singular icon and the lasting legacy he made.

Sweetness

The definitive biography of Chicago Bears and Hall of Fame superstar Walter Payton. Based on meticulous research and interviews with nearly 700 contacts, an unforgettable portrait that describes a man who lived his life just like he played the game: at full speed.

Gunslinger

From a New York Times best-selling author, the full, definitive biography of Brett Favre, football's ultimate gunslinger and fan favorite, whose rise from small-town Mississippi obscurity to the top of the American sports landscape was the stuff of legend--and whose fall from grace has been just as great

Boys Will Be Boys

New York Times bestseller From celebrated sports writer Jeff Pearlman, author of *The Bad Guys Won*, a rollicking, completely unabashed account of the glory days of the legendary Dallas Cowboys They were called America's Team. Led by Emmitt Smith, the charismatic Deion "Prime Time" Sanders, Hall of Famers Troy Aikman and Michael Irvin—and lorded over by swashbuckling, power-hungry owner Jerry Jones and his two hard-living coaches, Jimmy Johnson and Barry Switzer—the Cowboys seemed indomitable on the football field throughout the 1990s. Off the field the 'Boys were a dysfunctional circus, fueled by ego, sex, drugs, and jaw-dropping excess. What they achieved on game day was astonishing; what they did the rest of the week was unbelievable. *Boys Will Be Boys* is the story of the Dallas Cowboys in their prime—a team of wild-partying, out-of-control glory-hounds that won three Super Bowls in four years and earned their rightful place in sports lore as the most beloved and despised dynasty in NFL history.

Football for a Buck

From a multiple New York Times best-selling author, the rollicking, outrageous story of the United States Football League, a bona fide professional sports phenomenon full of larger-than-life characters and you-can't-make-this-up stories featuring some of the biggest celebrities and buffoons in the game.

I Remember Walter Payton

Includes personal anecdotes about Walter Payton, the football star who succumbed to cancer in 1999, by his closest friends and family members.

Walter Payton

One of the greatest all-around running backs in National Football League history, Walter Payton set several league records—including career rushing yards (16,726); most games rushing for 100 or more yards (77); and rushing touchdowns (110)—during his 13-year career with the Chicago Bears. Nicknamed "Sweetness" by his Jackson State University teammates because of his smooth running style and friendly disposition, Payton was a nine-time Pro Bowler and two-time NFL MVP. In 1985, he rushed for more than 1,500 yards to help Chicago capture the most wins in franchise history, with a 15-1 regular season record. In the playoffs, the Bears outscored their opponents 101-10, including a dominating 46-10 victory against the New England Patriots in Super Bowl XX. Tragically, in February 1999, Payton was diagnosed with bile duct cancer. Less than six months later, he was dead, at the age of 45. Payton's legacy endures today through the charitable foundation that he and his wife, Connie, established in 1989. The Walter and Connie Payton Foundation has provided toys and school supplies to thousands of abused, neglected, and underprivileged children in Illinois.

Three-Ring Circus

From 1996 through 2004, Kobe Bryant and Shaquille O'Neal combined-- and collided-- to help bring the Lakers three straight championships and restore the franchise as a powerhouse. From public sniping and sparring, to physical altercations and the repeated threats of trade, it was warfare. The eight years of infighting and hostility were by turns mediated and encouraged by coach Phil Jackson. Pearlman shows how the Shaq-Kobe duo resulted in one of the most enduring, and ever-evolving, teams in NBA history. -- adapted from jacket

The Rocket That Fell to Earth

"Pearlman's book develops a stark, unsparing picture of Clemens's life that surpasses anything that's come before." —Boston Globe New York Times bestselling author Jeff Pearlman reconstructs pitcher Roger Clemens's life—from his Ohio childhood to the mounds of Fenway Park and Yankee Stadium—to reveal a flawed and troubled man whose rage for baseball immortality took him to superhuman heights before he crashed down to earth. A fearless, hard-nosed Texan with a 98-mph fastball and a propensity to throw at the heads of opposing hitters, Roger "the Rocket" Clemens won 354 games, an unprecedented seven Cy Young Awards, and two World Series trophies over the course of twenty-four seasons. But the statistics and hoopla obscured a far darker story—one of playoff chokes, womanizing (including a long-term affair with a teenage country singer), violent explosions, steroid and human growth hormone use. . . and an especially dark secret that Clemens spent a lifetime trying to hide: a family tragedy involving drugs and, ultimately, death.

Captain for Life

A unique and powerful personal tale about the great joy and devastating price of playing professional football, by a legendary former NFL linebacker One of the greatest linebackers to ever play professional football, Harry Carson built a reputation during his 13 years in the NFL as a fearsome, physical and passionate player who would give everything he had to win. Whether violently tackling running backs, engaging blockers with reckless abandon or ferociously attacking the line of scrimmage, Carson will always be remembered as having played the game the way it's meant to be played--all out. For the first time ever, this legendary athlete takes readers on an unlikely journey to the NFL that began in the small town of Florence, South Carolina to his days at little known South Carolina State University--and then the bright lights of professional football in New York, playing for the Giants. Carson's story of his life as a football player and after his retirement is more powerful and eye-opening than any that's come before. Within these pages, Carson reveals the startling truth behind the sacrifices these great warriors make for our entertainment, the thrill of stepping onto a field with 80,000 fans screaming your name, and the debilitating physical and mental toll this violent and uncompromising game takes. With insight into some of the game's biggest stars, from Lawrence Taylor to Bill Parcells to Phil Simms this book is a must for any NFL fan.

The Bad Guys Won

"Jeff Pearlman has captured the swagger of the '86 Mets. You don't have to be a Mets fan to enjoy this book—it's a great read for all baseball enthusiasts." —Philadelphia Daily News Award-winning Sports Illustrated baseball writer Jeff Pearlman returns to an innocent time when a city worshipped a man named Mookie and the Yankees were the second-best team in New York. It was 1986, and the New York Mets won 108 regular-season games and the World Series, capturing the hearts (and other assorted body parts) of fans everywhere. But their greatness on the field was nearly eclipsed by how bad they were off it. Led by the indomitable Keith Hernandez and the young dynamic duo of Dwight Gooden and Darryl Strawberry, along with the gallant Scum Bunch, the Amazin's left a wide trail of wreckage in their wake—hotel rooms, charter planes, a bar in Houston, and most famously Bill Buckner and the hated Boston Red Sox. With an unforgettable cast of characters—including Doc, Straw, the Kid, Nails, Mex, and manager Davey Johnson—this "affectionate but critical look at this exciting season" (Publishers Weekly) celebrates the last of baseball's arrogant, insane, rock-and-roll-and-party-all-night teams, exploring what could have been, what should have been, and what never was.

The Good Son

The FOXSports columnist and author of Pistol presents the story of the 1980s champion fighter, describing how he fulfilled a promise to his war-injured father and rose to the status of a national hero before a fateful match against a doomed Korean challenger that ruined his image and ended his career.

If These Walls Could Talk: Chicago Bears

Led by stars like Walter Payton, Jim McMahon, Mike Singletary, William "Refrigerator" Perry, head coach Mike Ditka, and defensive coordinator Buddy Ryan, the Chicago Bears in the 1980s were an NFL powerhouse. As anyone who's seen "The Super Bowl Shuffle" surely knows, they were also an unforgettable group of characters. Otis Wilson, the Bears starting outside linebacker, was right in the center of the action, and in this book, Wilson provides a closer look at the great moments and

personalities that made this era legendary. Readers will meet the players, coaches, and management and share in their moments of triumph and defeat. Be a fly on the wall as Wilson recounts stories from those days in Chicago, including the 1985 Super Bowl-winning season. If These Walls Could Talk: Chicago Bears will make fans a part of the team's storied history.

Path Lit by Lightning

A biography of America's greatest all-around athlete that "goes beyond the myth and into the guts of Thorpe's life, using extensive research, historical nuance, and bittersweet honesty" (Los Angeles Times), by the bestselling author of the classic biography *When Pride Still Mattered*. Jim Thorpe rose to world fame as a mythic talent who excelled at every sport. Most famously, he won gold medals in the decathlon and pentathlon at the 1912 Stockholm Olympics. A member of the Sac and Fox Nation, he was an All-American football player at the Carlisle Indian School, the star of the first class of the Pro Football Hall of Fame, and played major league baseball for John McGraw's New York Giants. Even in a golden age of sports celebrities, he was one of a kind. But despite his awesome talent, Thorpe's life was a struggle against the odds. At Carlisle, he faced the racist assimilationist philosophy "Kill the Indian, Save the Man." His gold medals were unfairly rescinded because he had played minor league baseball, and his supposed allies turned away from him when their own reputations were at risk. His later life was troubled by alcohol, broken marriages, and financial distress. He roamed from state to state and took bit parts in Hollywood, but even the film of his own life failed to improve his fortunes. But for all his travails, Thorpe survived, determined to shape his own destiny, his perseverance becoming another mark of his mythic stature. Path Lit by Lightning "[reveals] Thorpe as a man in full, whose life was characterized by both soaring triumph and grievous loss" (The Wall Street Journal).

Never Die Easy

"Never die easy. Why run out of bounds and die easy? Make that linebacker pay. It carries into all facets of your life. It's okay to lose, to die, but don't die without trying, without giving it your best." His legacy is towering. Walter Payton—the man they called Sweetness, for the way he ran—remains the most prolific running back in the history of the National Football League, the star of the Chicago Bears' only Super Bowl Championship, eleven times voted the most popular sports figure in Chicago's history. Off the field, he was a devoted father whose charitable foundation benefited tens of thousands of children each year, and who—faced with terminal liver disease—refused to use his celebrity to gain a preferential position for organ donation. Walter Payton was not just a football hero; he was America's hero. *Never Die Easy* is Walter Payton's autobiography, told from the heart. Growing up poor in Mississippi, he took up football to get girls' attention, and went on to become a Black College All-American at tiny Jackson State (during which time he was also a finalist in a Soul Train dance contest). Drafted by the Bears in 1975, he predicted that he would last only five years but went on to play thirteen extraordinary seasons, a career earning him regular acknowledgment as one of the greatest players in the history of professional football. And when his playing days were over, he approached business and charity endeavors with the same determination and success he had brought to the football field, always putting first his devotion to friends and family. His ultimate battle with illness truly proved him the champion he always had been and prompted a staggering outpouring of love and support from hundreds of thousands of friends and admirers. Written with veteran journalist and author Don Yaeger in the last weeks of Walter Payton's life, *Never Die Easy* presents Walter's singular voice—warm, plainspoken, funny, self-aware—along with the voices of the friends, family, teammates, and business associates who knew him best at all stages of his life, including his wife, Connie, and their children, Brittney and Jarrett; his teammate and friend Matt Suhey; former Bears head coach Mike Ditka; and many, many others. Walter made Don Yaeger promise that his book would be "inspirational and leave people with some kind of lesson . . . and make sure you spell all the words right." *Never Die Easy* keeps all those promises.

Payton

Presents the life and accomplishments of Walter Payton, the record-setting running back for the Chicago Bears, who played on the Bears 1985 Super Bowl winning team and whose life was tragically cut short by liver cancer.

Rush to Glory

The greatest duel in FORMULA 1 history: the 1976 season between Austrian Niki Lauda and Britain's James Hunt. As the '75 season ended, Hunt was out of FORMULA 1 racing while Lauda was world

champion and the odds-on favorite for '76 with a year's contract ahead of him and Enzo Ferrari begging him to sign a multi-year deal. James Hunt, without a drive until Emerson Fittipaldi broke his McLaren contract, grabbed the McLaren drive with both hands and the help of friend John Hogan and Marlboro cigarettes. The result? Two drivers in an epic sixteen-race battle across the globe for the '76 title, ultimately decided by a single point. Fame, wealth, drugs, sex, and the rest of globetrotting 1970s FORMULA 1 racing are encompassed in the Lauda vs. Hunt duel. At the '76 German Grand Prix, Lauda nearly died in a fiery crash, only to emerge six weeks later, severe burns on his face and head, to pursue his rivalry with Hunt. It all came down to the last race, a rain-soaked affair in Japan, where Hunt won the championship by the slimmest possible margin. The book is a study in contrasts during an era of Brut aftershave and disco sex parties. James Hunt, legendary philanderer and FORMULA 1 rock star, versus supernatural racer Niki Lauda, who in '75 set the first sub-seven minute lap around the Ring.

Showtime

The New York Times bestselling author of *Sweetness* delivers the first all-encompassing account of the 1980s Los Angeles Lakers, one of professional sports' most-revered—and dominant—dynasties. The Los Angeles Lakers of the 1980s personified the flamboyance and excess of the decade over which they reigned. Beginning with the arrival of Earvin "Magic" Johnson as the number-one overall pick of the 1979 draft, the Lakers played basketball with gusto and pizzazz, unleashing their famed "Showtime" run-and-gun style on a league unprepared for their speed and ferocity—and became the most captivating show in sports and, arguably, in all-around American entertainment. The Lakers' roster overflowed with exciting all-star-caliber players, including center Kareem Abdul-Jabbar, and they were led by the incomparable Pat Riley, known for his slicked-back hair, his Armani suits, and his arrogant strut. Hollywood's biggest celebrities lined the court and gorgeous women flocked to the arena. Best of all, the team was a winner. Between 1980 and 1991, the Lakers played in an unmatched nine NBA championship series, capturing five of them. Bestselling sportswriter Jeff Pearlman draws from almost three hundred interviews to take the first full measure of the Lakers' epic Showtime era. A dazzling account of one of America's greatest sports sagas, *Showtime* is packed with indelible characters, vicious rivalries, and jaw-dropping, behind-the-scenes stories of the players' decadent Hollywood lifestyles. From the Showtime era's remarkable rise to its tragic end—marked by Magic Johnson's 1991 announcement that he had contracted HIV—*Showtime* is a gripping narrative of sports, celebrity, and 1980s-style excess.

The Last Folk Hero

By the New York Times bestselling author of *Showtime*--the source for HBO's *Winning Time*--the definitive biography of mythic multi-sport star Bo Jackson. From the mid-1980s into the early 1990s, the greatest athlete of all time streaked across American sports and popular culture. Stadiums struggled to contain him. Clocks failed to capture his speed. His strength was legendary. His power unmatched. Video game makers turned him into an invincible character--and they were dead-on. He climbed (and walked across) walls, splintered baseball bats over his knee, turned oncoming tacklers into ground meat. He became the first person to simultaneously star in two major professional sports, and overtook Michael Jordan as America's most recognizable pitchman. He was on our televisions, in our magazines, plastered across billboards. He was half man, half myth. Then, almost overnight, he was gone. He was Bo Jackson. Drawing on an astonishing 720 original interviews, New York Times bestselling sportswriter Jeff Pearlman captures as never before the elusive truth about Jackson, Auburn University's transcendent Heisman Trophy winner, superstar of both the NFL and Major League Baseball and ubiquitous "Bo Knows" Nike pitchman. Did Bo really jump over a parked Volkswagen? (Yes.) Did he actually run a 4.13 40? (Yes.) During the 1991 flight that nearly killed every member of the Chicago White Sox, was he in the cockpit trying to help? (Oddly, yes. Or no. Or ... maybe.) Bo Jackson isn't Jim Thorpe. He's not Deion Sanders, either. No, Bo Jackson is Paul Bunyan. *The Last Folk Hero* is the true tale of Bo Jackson that only "master storyteller" (NPR.org) Jeff Pearlman could tell.

House of Nails

"Tough, straight, upsetting, and strangely beautiful. One of the best sports autobiographies I've ever read. It comes from the heart." —Stephen King
Eclipsing the traditional sports memoir, *House of Nails*, by former world champion, multimillionaire entrepreneur, and imprisoned felon Lenny Dykstra, spins a tragicomic tale of Shakespearean proportions -- a relentlessly entertaining American epic

that careens between the heights and the abyss. Nicknamed "Nails" for his hustle and grit, Lenny approached the game of baseball -- and life -- with mythic intensity. During his decade in the majors as a center fielder for the legendary 1980s Mets and the 1990s Phillies, he was named to three All-Star teams and played in two of the most memorable World Series of the modern era. An overachiever known for his clutch hits, high on-base percentage, and aggressive defense, Lenny was later identified by his former minor-league roommate Billy Beane as the prototypical "Moneyball" player in Michael Lewis's bestseller. Tobacco-stained, steroid-powered, and booze-and-drug-fueled, Nails also defined a notorious era of excess in baseball. Then came a second act no novelist could plausibly conjure: After retiring, Dykstra became a celebrated business mogul and investment guru. Touted as "one of the great ones" by CNBC's Jim Cramer, he became "baseball's most improbable post-career success story" (The New Yorker), purchasing a \$17.5-million mansion and traveling the world by private jet. But when the economy imploded in 2008, Lenny lost everything. Then the feds moved in: convicted of bankruptcy fraud (unjustly, he contends), Lenny served two and a half harrowing years in prison, where he was the victim of a savage beating by prison guards that knocked out his front teeth. The Daily Show's Jon Stewart, channeling the bewildered fascination of many observers, declared that Lenny's outrageous rise and spectacular fall was "the greatest story that I have ever seen in my lifetime." Now, for the first time, Lenny tells all about his tumultuous career, from battling through crippling pain to steroid use and drug addiction, to a life of indulgence and excess, then, an epic plunge and the long road back to redemption. Was Lenny's hard-charging, risk-it-all nature responsible for his success in baseball and business and his precipitous fall from grace? What lessons, if any, has he learned now that he has had time to think and reflect? Hilarious, unflinchingly honest, and irresistibly readable, House of Nails makes no apologies and leaves nothing left unsaid.

Among The Thugs

THE BESTSELLING ACCOUNT OF FOOTBALL VIOLENCE Welcome to the world of football thuggery. They have names like Bonehead, Paraffin Pete and Steamin' Sammy. They like lager, football, the Queen, and themselves. They love England. They dislike the rest of the known universe. The beautiful game remains ugly. From following Manchester's Red Army to drinking with skinheads, acclaimed writer Bill Buford enters this alternate society and records both its savageries and its sinister allure with the social imagination of George Orwell and the raw personal engagement of Hunter S. Thompson. Among the Thugs is a terrifying, malevolently funny, supremely chilling book about the experience, and the eerie allure, of crowd violence and football culture.

The Pro Football Hall of Fame 50th Anniversary Book

There is no question that football is indeed America's most popular sport, and the Pro Football Hall of Fame's 50th Anniversary book totally captures our passion for the game. Having opened its doors in Canton, Ohio on September 7, 1963, the Hall will be celebrating its 50th anniversary year from 2012 to 2013, commencing with the Pro Football Hall of Fame Enshrinement Festival, a ten-day period in early August which culminates in the annual Hall of Fame Game. The Pro Football Hall of Fame Enshrinement Festival draws close to a million fans each year. The book has been crafted by Joe Horrigan, the Hall's VP of Communications/Exhibits, along with John Thorn, creator of Total Football, and the end result is a beautifully bound keepsake for any serious football fan. The 50th Anniversary Book features essays by football writers, broadcasters, and celebrated players. Every living Hall of Famer will contribute a commentary on some aspect of the game and its history; each deceased member will be represented in a sidebar or pullout quote. In addition, the book features rarely seen photos and artifacts of some of the Hall's greatest treasures.

Love Me, Hate Me

From acclaimed sports writer and bestselling author Jeff Pearlman, a searing and insightful look into the life and career of Barry Bonds, one of the most celebrated, contradictory and controversial sports figures of our time. No player in the history of baseball has left such an indelible mark on the game as Barry Bonds. In his twenty-year career, Bonds has amassed an unprecedented 7 Most Valuable Player awards, 8 Gold Gloves, and more than 700 home runs (and counting), an impressive assortment of feats that has earned him the consideration as one of the greatest players the game has ever seen. Equally deserved, however, is his reputation as an insufferable braggart, whose mythical home runs are rivaled only by his legendary ego. From his staggering ability and fabled pedigree (father Bobby played outfield for the Giants; cousin Reggie and godfather Willie are both Hall of Famers), to his

well-documented run-ins with teammates and his alleged steroid abuse, Bonds inspires a like amount of passion from both sides of the fence. For many, Bonds belongs beside Babe Ruth and Hank Aaron in baseball's holy trinity; for others, he embodies all that is wrong with the modern athlete: aloof; arrogant; alienated. Drawing on extensive interviews with Bonds himself, members of his family, former and current managers, teammates, opponents, trainers, outspoken critics, and unapologetic supporters alike, Pearlman reveals, for the first time, a wonderfully nuanced portrait of a prodigiously talented—and immensely flawed—American icon, whose controversial run at baseball immortality forever changed the way we look at our sports heroes.

Romo

Off the field, Bill Romanowski was a caring father and devoted husband. On the field, Romo was unstoppable, terrorizing the NFL for sixteen brutal years. Some players called him a throwback, some called him mean, some called him dirty. But they all respected him and would much rather have played with him than against him. Coaches loved Romo for the heart and soul he gave to the game. He was rewarded with two Pro Bowl appearances and four Super Bowl rings, but it all came at a heavy price: dozens of concussions that have led to dizzy spells, memory lapses . . . and questionable choices that undermined his integrity. Would he do it all over again? Romo the intimidating linebacker would in a heartbeat. Bill Romanowski, however, would do things differently today. Whether it was in high school, at Boston College, or with the NFL, Romo vowed to himself that he would outwork and out hustle everyone else. Practice? Loved it; he'd play like it was a game and attack his teammates as if they were opponents. Game day? He'd work himself into a state of invincibility. If you were a tight end, running back, or quarterback with the wrong uniform, you were marked for elimination. Nutrition? He would consult top nutritionists, looking for the best foods, an extraordinary range of supplements, and alternative remedies, anything that would help give him an edge. It would lead to a controversial relationship with BALCO. Treatment? He would try almost anything that would help with his performance, keep his body healthy, and help it recover from the beatings he took and gave on Sundays. Phentermine, THG, hyperbaric chambers, IVs. He would experiment with substances and methods that the NFL had never heard of, and he'd become an expert who teammates and friends would turn to. Endurance? He never missed a game to injury, and once played an entire season with a partially torn knee ligament. Intimidation? From trash talk to mind games to nasty hits and breaking fingers, Romo would roam the field seeking confrontation -- and usually find it. Through it all -- through his years with the San Francisco 49ers, the Philadelphia Eagles, the Denver Broncos, and the Oakland Raiders -- Romo was driven by something else: the fear of failure, the fear of losing it all. Who knew what a head coach or an owner would be thinking or what young player was in the wings ready to take his hard-won position. He didn't dare allow someone else to decide his fate, so he did whatever it took to live his dreams and ward off the dragons of self-doubt that pushed him . . . until his body betrayed him and his morality was compromised. Romo is a jolting, candid, and inspiring rocket ride into the heart of the NFL and a look at what it costs to be an elite athlete today in a world of impossible expectations. Read it -- and try not to wince.

State

With the passing of Title IX, a Chicago high school girls' basketball team becomes pioneers as they play for the championship in this sports memoir. Set against a backdrop of social change during the 1970s, *State* is a compelling first-person account of what it was like to live through both traditional gender discrimination in sports and the joy of the very first days of equality—or at least the closest that one high school girls' basketball team ever came to it. In 1975, freshman Melissa Isaacson—along with a group of other girls who'd spent summers with their noses pressed against the fences of Little League ball fields, unable to play—entered Niles West High School in suburban Chicago with one goal: make a team, any team. For “Missy,” that turned out to be the basketball team. Title IX had passed just three years earlier, prohibiting gender discrimination in education programs or activities, including athletics. As a result, states like Illinois began implementing varsity competition—and state tournaments—for girls' high school sports. At the time, Missy and her teammates didn't really understand the legislation. All they knew was they finally had opportunities—to play, to learn, to sweat, to lose, to win—and an identity: they were athletes. They were a team. And in 1979, they became state champions. With the intimate insights of the girl who lived it, the pacing of a born storyteller, and the painstaking reporting of a veteran sports journalist, Isaacson chronicles one high school team's journey to the state championship. In doing so, Isaacson shows us how a group of “tomboys” found themselves and each other, and how basketball rescued them from their collective frustrations and troubled homes, and forever altered the

course of their lives. Praise for *State* “A beautiful story of basketball and life.” —Steve Kerr, head coach, Golden State Warriors “Isaacson perfectly captures the birth of Title IX and a time when high school girls were starting to gain equality in sports and in the classroom, showing us how opportunities on the court can light a path for girls to become their authentic selves in all aspects of their lives.” —Billie Jean King, founder of the Billie Jean King Leadership Initiative “The book is special because Isaacson captures the special bond that formed among the female athletes. Not only were they teammates, they were pioneers of a sort . . . A wonderful book that is both eye-opening history and a moving and deeply personal memoir.” —Booklist, starred review “An intimate, at times inspiring account.” —Kirkus Reviews

Sayers

The record-breaking football player shares the story of his life, from his Omaha, Nebraska, upbringing and his All-American college career, to his accomplishments with the Chicago Bears before an injury cut short his spectacular professional career.

Pros and Cons

Examines the criminal records of NFL players.

Winning Fixes Everything

The reporter who broke the Houston Astros' cheating scandal reveals how a baseball team could so dramatically descend into corruption, with never-before-told details of a broken management culture, the once-revered leaders who enabled it and the scandal itself. Baseball, that old romantic game, has been defaced and consumed by corporate America. As Moneyball-thinking and Ivy League graduates grabbed hold of the sport, the Astros set out to build a cost-efficient winning machine on the principles of the outside business world, squeezing every dollar out of every transaction, player and employee. In less than a decade, ex-Astros general manager Jeff Luhnow helped revolutionize the game. He created an environment that led to one of the worst cheating scandals in baseball history, a Shakespearean tragedy of innovation and failed change management. Through years of extensive interviews, former Houston Chronicle beat writer Evan Drellich, now a national writer for *The Athletic*, delivers the definitive account of baseball's most controversial franchise and how a modern baseball team truly works—without the usual myth-spinning. Drellich reveals the rise and fall of the Astros to be a collision of subcultures. The team's top boss was a former McKinsey consultant who lived on the bleeding edge with no guardrails. He hired outsider after outsider to change the organization as quickly and cheaply as possible. The wins piled up, and so did the cash for the billionaire owner with a checkered business past. But not even a World Series title could cover up the rot. All of it came at a cost to fans, employees, and the sport on a whole. But as *Winning Fixes Everything* makes clear, “The Astros Way” isn't going anywhere. Drellich uses the saga of the Astros' scandal to detail the evolution of baseball itself.

Playing for Keeps

The Pulitzer Prize-winning journalist looks at the life and times of the Chicago Bulls superstar—“The best Jordan book so far” (*The Washington Post*). One of sport's biggest superstars, Michael Jordan is more than an internationally renowned athlete. As illuminated through David Halberstam's trademark balance of impeccable research and fascinating storytelling, Jordan symbolizes the apex of the National Basketball Association's coming of age. Long before multimillion-dollar signings and lucrative endorsements, NBA players worked in relative obscurity, with most games woefully unattended and rarely broadcast on television. Then came Larry Bird and Magic Johnson, Jordan's two great predecessors, and the game's status changed. The new era capitalized on Jordan's talent, will power, and unrivaled competitiveness. In *Playing for Keeps*, Halberstam is at his investigative best, delving into Jordan's expansive world of teammates and coaches. The result is a gripping story of the athlete and media powerhouse who changed a game forever. This ebook features an extended biography of David Halberstam.

Go Up for Glory

Back in print for the first time in decades, *Go Up for Glory* is the classic 1968 basketball memoir by NBA legend Bill Russell, with a new foreword from the author. From NBA legend Bill Russell, *Go Up for Glory* is a basketball memoir that transcends time. First published in 1965, this narrative traces

Russell's childhood in segregated America and details the challenges he faced as a Black man, even when he was a celebrated NBA star. And while some progress has been made, this book serves as an urgent reminder of how far we still have to go in the fight for human rights and equality.

Undefeated

"[Freeman is] an excellent storyteller." —Sports Illustrated The 1972 Miami Dolphins, under the expert leadership of legendary coach Don Shula, remain to this day the only team in the National Football League ever to enjoy a perfect season with no defeats and no ties. Now, 40 years after sports history was made, acclaimed sports writer Mike Freeman celebrates the Dolphins' singular achievement in *Undefeated*. A riveting story filled with heartbreaking injuries, miraculous finishes, and tested relationships—featuring a roster of gridiron greats, including Bob Griese, Earl Morrall, Larry Csonka, Paul Warfield, Mercury Morris, Nick Buoniconti and others—*Undefeated* follows a underdog team on its remarkable run: 14 regular season victories, 2 postseason wins, and a Super Bowl championship. It is a book no football fan will want to miss.

Bo Knows Bo

Biography of a ball player.

You Can't Make This Up

In this highly entertaining and insightful memoir, one of television's most respected broadcasters interweaves the story of his life and career with lively firsthand tales of some of the most thrilling events and fascinating figures in modern sports. No sportscaster has covered more major sporting events than Al Michaels. Over the course of his forty-plus year career, he has logged more hours on live network television than any other broadcaster in history, and is the only play-by-play commentator to have covered all four major sports championships: the Super Bowl, World Series, NBA Finals, and the Stanley Cup Final. He has also witnessed first-hand some of the most memorable events in modern sports, and in this highly personal and revealing account, brings them vividly to life. Michaels shares never-before-told stories from his early years and his rise to the top, covering some of the greatest moments of the past half century—from the "Miracle on Ice"—the historic 1980 Olympic hockey finals—to the earthquake that rocked the 1989 World Series. Some of the greatest names on and off the field are here—Michael Jordan, Bill Walton, Pete Rose, Bill Walsh, Peyton and Eli Manning, Brett Favre, John Madden, Howard Cosell, Cris Collinsworth, and many, many more. Forthright and down-to-earth, Michaels tells the truth as he sees it, giving readers unique insight into the high drama, the colorful players, and the heroes and occasional villains of an industry that has become a vital part of modern culture.

Walter & Me

Widely regarded as one of the best football players to ever tie on a pair of cleats, Walter Payton led a fascinating and ultimately tragic life. Told in the voices of those who knew him best, this biography of the Chicago Bears legendary running back tells the inspiring account of the reward of hard work and is an uplifting testament to the power of the human spirit. It is a story of inspiration, redemption, and the deep passion two brothers felt for the sport of football. More than a decade after the untimely death of Walter Payton, his older brother recalls the moments they shared and the continuing sting of the loss of a legend. This glimpse into Payton's life doesn't sugarcoat the issues or glorify the late superstar, but rather it addresses the subjects of suicide, drug abuse, and infidelity head-on with intimate knowledge of the facts. In this candid take, Walter's older brother discloses the true life of man simply known as "Sweetness."

League of Denial

NEW YORK TIMES BESTSELLER • A "meticulously documented and endlessly chilling" (The New York Times) exploration of the NFL's decades-long attempt to deny and cover up mounting evidence connecting football and brain damage. "A first-rate piece of reporting [that] adds crucial detail, texture, and news to the concussion story, which despite the NFL's best efforts, isn't going away."—Time ONE OF THE BEST BOOKS OF THE YEAR: The Boston Globe, NPR "Professional football players do not sustain frequent repetitive blows to the brain on a regular basis." So concluded the National Football League in a December 2005 scientific paper on concussions in America's most popular sport.

That judgment, implausible even to a casual fan, also contradicted the opinion of a growing cadre of neuroscientists who worked in vain to convince the NFL that it was facing a deadly new scourge: chronic traumatic encephalopathy (CTE), a chronic brain disease that was driving an alarming number of players—including some of the all-time greats—to madness. Everyone knows that football is violent and dangerous. But what the players who built the NFL into a \$10 billion industry didn't know—and what the league sought to shield from them—is that no amount of padding could protect the human brain from the force generated by modern football. In *League of Denial*, award-winning ESPN investigative reporters Mark Fainaru-Wada and Steve Fainaru expose the public health crisis that emerged from the playing fields and examine how the league used its power and resources to attack independent scientists and elevate its own flawed research—a campaign with echoes of Big Tobacco's fight to deny the connection between smoking and lung cancer. They chronicle the tragic fates of players like Hall of Fame Pittsburgh Steelers center Mike Webster, who was so disturbed at the time of his death he fantasized about shooting NFL executives, and former San Diego Chargers great Junior Seau, whose diseased brain became the target of a scientific battle between researchers and the NFL. Based on exclusive interviews, previously undisclosed documents, and private e-mails, *League of Denial* is the story of what the NFL knew and when it knew it—questions at the heart of a crisis that threatens American football—and of the battle for the sport's future.

Wish It Lasted Forever

"Drawing on unprecedented access and personal experiences that would not be possible for any reporter today, Shaughnessy takes us inside the legendary Larry Bird-led Celtics teams, capturing the camaraderie as they rose to dominate the NBA. Fans can witness the cockiness of Larry Bird (who once walked into an All Star Weekend locker room, announced that he was going to win the three-point contest, and did); the ageless athleticism of Robert Parish; the shooting skills of Kevin McHale; the fierce, self-sacrificing play of Bill Walton; and the playful humor of players like Danny Ainge, Cedric Cebalera, and M.L. Carr."--

Snake

The first in-depth biography of one of the most talented and infamous legends to play in the National Football League—the life and times of pro football's first bad boy, famed Oakland Raiders quarterback Ken Stabler. Ken "The Snake" Stabler was the embodiment of the original Men in Black—the free-wheeling, hard-hitting Oakland Raiders. The league's first swashbuckling pass thrower, the mythical southpaw Southerner famous for come-from-behind drives late in the game, Stabler led the Raiders to their first Super Bowl championship in 1977. In an era dominated by gentleman quarterbacks like Roger Staubach and Bob Griese, this 1974 NFL MVP, four-time Pro-bowler, and Super Bowl champion was an iconoclast who partied as hard as he played and lived life unapologetically on his own—not the NFL's—terms. Though Stabler's legacy is larger-than-life, there has never before been an exclusive account of him, until now. *Snake* goes deep under the surface of Stabler's persona to reveal a man who, despite his penchant for partying and debauchery, was committed to winning and being the best player he could be. From his college days playing for Bear Bryant at Alabama to his years with the Raiders under coach John Madden, his broadcasting career to his death in 2015 and the revelation that he suffered from chronic traumatic encephalopathy, known as C.T.E., *Snake* probes the myriad facets of Stabler's life on and off the field to tell his complete story, and explores how his legacy and the culture and times that pivotally shaped it, continues to impact football today.

Monsters: The 1985 Chicago Bears and the Wild Heart of Football

The gripping account of a once-in-a-lifetime football team and their lone championship season For Rich Cohen and millions of other fans, the 1985 Chicago Bears were more than a football team: they were the greatest football team ever—a gang of colorful nuts, dancing and pounding their way to victory. They won a Super Bowl and saved a city. It was not just that the Monsters of the Midway won, but how they did it. On offense, there was high-stepping running back Walter Payton and Punky QB Jim McMahon, who had a knack for pissing off Coach Mike Ditka as he made his way to the end zone. On defense, there was the 46: a revolutionary, quarterback-concussing scheme cooked up by Buddy Ryan and ruthlessly implemented by Hall of Famers such as Dan "Danimal" Hampton and "Samurai" Mike Singletary. On the sidelines, in the locker rooms, and in bars, there was the never-ending soap opera: the coach and the quarterback bickering on TV, Ditka and Ryan nearly coming to blows in the Orange Bowl, the players recording the "Super Bowl Shuffle" video the morning after the season's only

loss. Cohen tracked down the coaches and players from this iconic team and asked them everything he has always wanted to know: What's it like to win? What's it like to lose? Do you really hate the guys on the other side? Were you ever scared? What do you think as you lie broken on the field? How do you go on after you have lived your dream but life has not ended? The result is *Monsters: The 1985 Chicago Bears and the Wild Heart of Football*, a portrait not merely of a team but of a city and a game: its history, its future, its fallen men, its immortal heroes. But mostly it's about being a fan—about loving too much. This is a book about America at its most nonsensical, delirious, and joyful.

Relentless

Bill Belichick: "Julian is the epitome of competitiveness, toughness, and the great things that are possible when someone is determined to achieve their goals." Tom Brady: "It's a privilege for me to play with someone as special as Julian." The Super Bowl champion wide receiver for the New England Patriots shares his inspiring story of an underdog kid who was always doubted to becoming one of the most reliable and inspiring players in the NFL. When the Patriots were down 28-3 in Super Bowl LI, there was at least one player who refused to believe they would lose: Julian Edelman. And he said so. It wasn't only because of his belief in his teammates, led by the master of the comeback, his friend and quarterback Tom Brady—or the coaching staff run by the legendary Bill Belichick. It was also because he had been counted out in most of his life and career, and he had proved them all wrong. Whether it was in Pop Warner football, where his Redwood City, California, team won a national championship; in high school where he went from a 4'10"

The Perfect Pass

"New York Times bestselling, award-winning historian S.C. Gwynne tells the incredible story of how Hal Mumme and Mike Leach—two unknown coaches who revolutionized American football in the 1980s, 1990s and 2000s—changed the way the game is played at every level, from high school to the NFL"—

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Sports

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Where did Walter Payton grow up?

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What did Walter Payton do after he retired?

Did Walter Payton get a liver transplant?

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