



SPORTS

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HIGH

21

Introduction	1
Novels	2
Adventure & Travel	4
Biography	6
Sports Journalism	8
Notes	12

Introduction

With most of the globe practising social distancing, the usual events that mark the passing of the seasons have been rescheduled, cancelled, postponed indefinitely. For sports fans living through these months without the colour of the FA cup final, the sound of willow on leather or the build up to the Olympics, the welcome distraction that these comforting dramas bring to our lives is keenly felt. TV channels and podcasts have been quick to revisit iconic moments, reminding a new audience that what makes sport so enthralling is not so much the result as the personalities of

the protagonists and the often hidden stories behind their legendary achievements.

While the books on this list all depict men and women pushing themselves to the extremities of physical achievement, there is also a fascination with the psychological struggles that individuals experience as they circumnavigate the globe, make the first ascent of an 8000 metre mountain or drain the last drop of energy out of themselves in titanic sporting confrontations. In some of the books writers capture the poetry in motion of individuals and teams operating

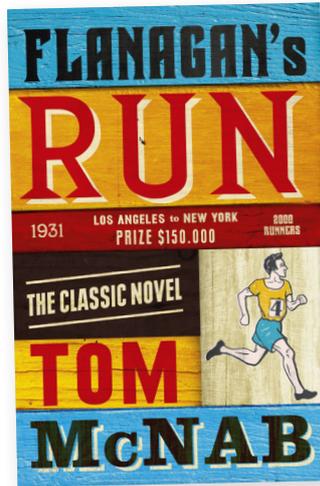
at their absolute peak, while others describe the blood, sweat and tears that have allowed these athletes to reach this seemingly effortless perfection. In many of the novels, biographies and essays in this selection the egos, rivalries and cultures that combine to create often deeply flawed sportspeople are revealed to the reader, humanising these heroic figures in a way that makes them seem vulnerable and familiar. In this summer without the usual sporting highlights, why not immerse yourself in the triumphs and tragedies of these men and women as they strive for greatness.

Mr Gault

WARNING!

Some of these novels explore potentially disturbing issues and some contain more adult themes and language.
Readers must ensure that their parents and carers are comfortable with these choices of books.

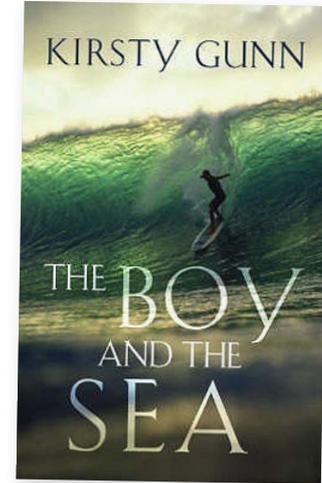
Novels



Flanagan's Run

Tom McNab 

In depression-era America 2,000 audacious athletes from every walk of life and all ends of the globe run themselves ragged in a coast-to-coast race across America.

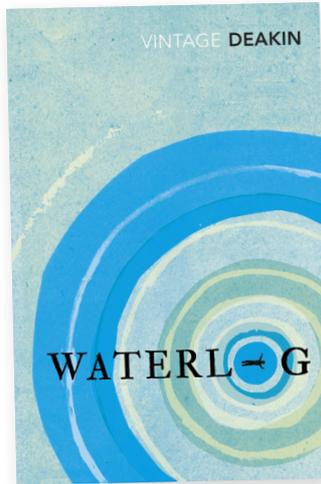


The Boy and the Sea

Kirsty Gunn 

A sumptuous coming-of-age story of a sun-drenched, sea-soaked day which changes a boy's life forever.

Adventure & Travel



Waterlog: A Swimmer's Journey through Britain

Roger Deakin 

Roger Deakin celebrates the wonder of wild swimming in the sea, rock pools, rivers and ponds of Great Britain.

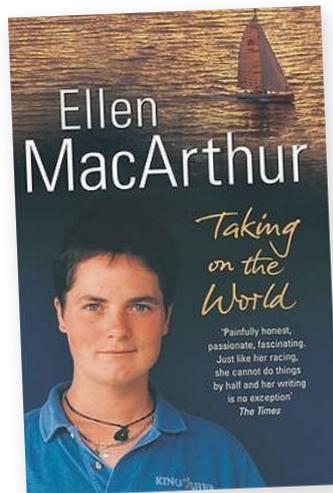


Annapurna

Maurice Herzog 

A classic mountaineering book that captures the breath-taking determination and courage of the first climbers to conquer an 8000 metre peak.

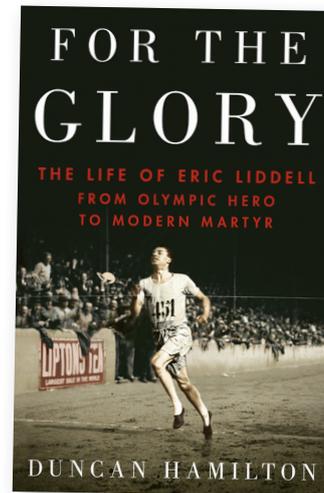
Biography



Taking on the World

Ellen MacArthur 

Ellen MacArthur tells her story, from saving pennies to buying her first boat to being the youngest person to circumnavigate the globe solo. Enthralling and inspiring in equal measure, it shows how courage, passion and determination can overcome all obstacles.

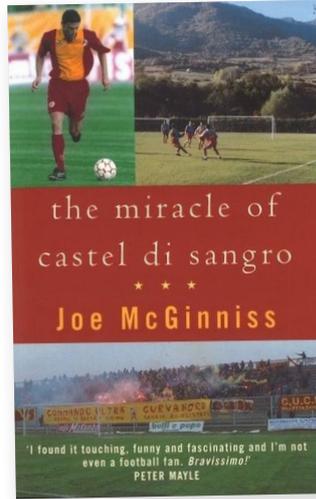


For the Glory: Eric Liddell's Journey from Olympic Champion to Modern Martyr

Duncan Hamilton 

Liddell's athletic prowess is immortalised in the film Chariots of Fire, but this biography also depicts the leadership that he showed as a missionary in China, and his immense bravery during the Japanese occupation.

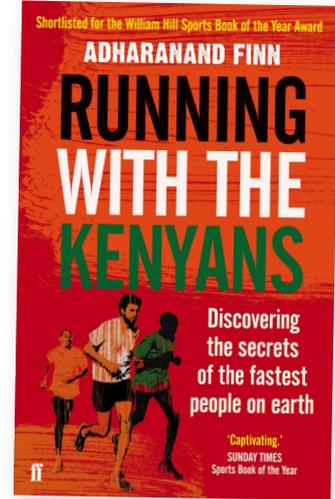
Sports Journalism



The Miracle of Castel di Sangro

Joe McGinniss 

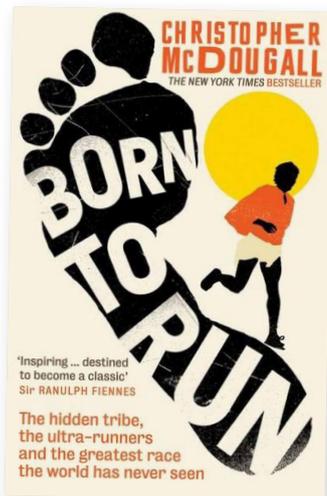
The miraculous story of how a small team from Castel di Sangro rise to the top of the professional Italian football league.



Running with the Kenyans

Adharanand Finn 

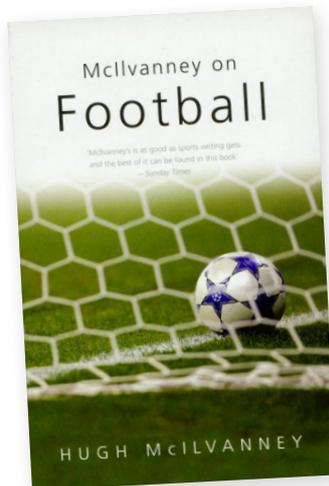
Finn travels to Kenya with his young family in an attempt to understand the reasons behind the phenomenal success of distance runners from the country.



Born to Run

Christopher McDougall 

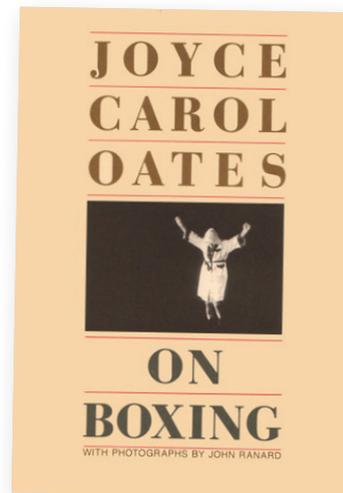
McDougall makes the treacherous journey into the canyons of Mexico to try to learn the secrets of a mysterious tribe who are reputed to be the best ultra-runners in the world.



McIlvanney On Football

Hugh McIlvanney 

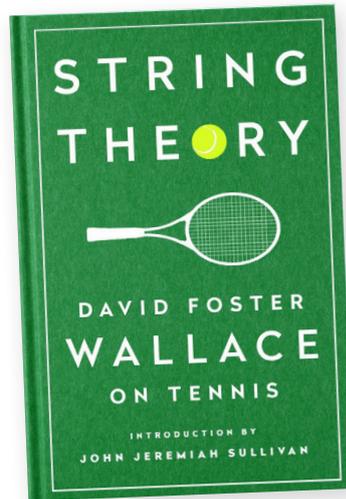
From Busby to Ferguson, this collection of forty years' worth of football articles from the only sports journalist to win Journalist of the Year explores the personalities and stories behind the beautiful game.



On Boxing

Joyce Carol Oates 

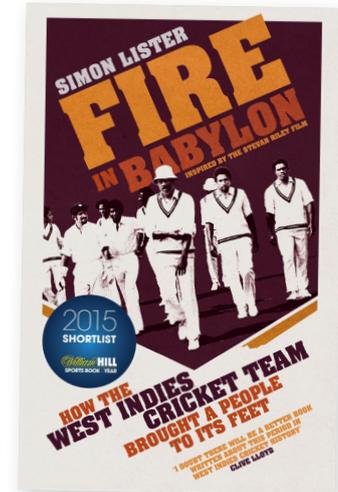
A vivid and realistic picture of the most controversial sport on Earth, On Boxing is a riveting journey through a world of glitter and gore, where heart-soaring triumph and heart-rending tragedy go hand in hand.



String Theory

David Foster Wallace 

One of the greatest novelists of his generation, David Foster Wallace writes about tennis with the authority of an insider, the showmanship of a literary pyrotechnician, and the disarming admiration of an irrepresible fan.



Fire in Babylon

Simon Lister 

Told by the men who made it happen and the people who watched it unfold, *Fire in Babylon* is the definitive story of the West Indies cricket team of the 1970s, one of the greatest teams that sport has known.



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