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Wonder Girl: The Magnificent Sporting Life Of Babe Didrikson Zaharias



Synopsis

This is the extraordinary story of a nearly forgotten American superstar athlete. Texas girl Babe Didrikson never tried a sport too tough and never met a hurdle too high. Despite attempts to keep women from competing, Babe achieved All-American status in basketball and won gold medals in track and field at the 1932 Olympics. Then Babe attempted to conquer golf. One of the founders of the LPGA, Babe won more consecutive tournaments than any golfer in history. At the height of her fame, she was diagnosed with cancer. Babe would then take her most daring step of all: go public and try to win again with the hope of inspiring the world. A rollicking saga, stretching across the first half of the 20th century, *Wonder Girl* is as fresh, heartfelt, and graceful as Babe herself.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

When *Sports Illustrated* selected its top athletes of the 20th century, Babe Didrikson Zaharias was the only woman listed among the top 10. She was in the elite company of Michael Jordan, Babe Ruth, Muhammad Ali, Jim Brown, Wayne Gretzky, Jesse Owens, Jim Thorpe, Willie Mays and Jack Nicklaus. After reading *Wonder Girl*, you'll understand why Babe was an easy choice to be listed about the 10 greatest athletes of the 20th century. Author Don Van Natta Jr. does a commendable job of bringing Babe to life for the generations of sports fans who are too young to remember her. Babe died in 1956 from cancer at the age of 45. Growing up in Texas, Babe's goal was to be "the greatest athlete who ever lived." In 1932, Babe single-handedly won the AAU National Women's Track and Field Championships in Chicago. She was the only team member to represent Employers' Casualty. Competing in an unheard of eight events against 20 teams, some with 22

members, Babe tallied 30 points to win the team title. She won gold in five events--broad jump, baseball toss, shot put, javelin and 80 meters hurdles, and she tied for first in the high jump. She qualified for the Olympics in three events, hurdles, high jump and javelin. In the 1932 Olympics in Los Angeles, Babe won two gold medals and a silver medal. She was disqualified in the high jump, finishing second. She set two world's records and an Olympic record. Grantland Rice wrote that Babe was "the most flawless section of muscle harmony, of complete mental and physical coordination the world of sport has ever known." Despite her athletic prowess, Babe wasn't easy for her teammates and fellow competitors to like. She could be cocky, arrogant, selfish, obnoxious, boastful and a media hog.

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