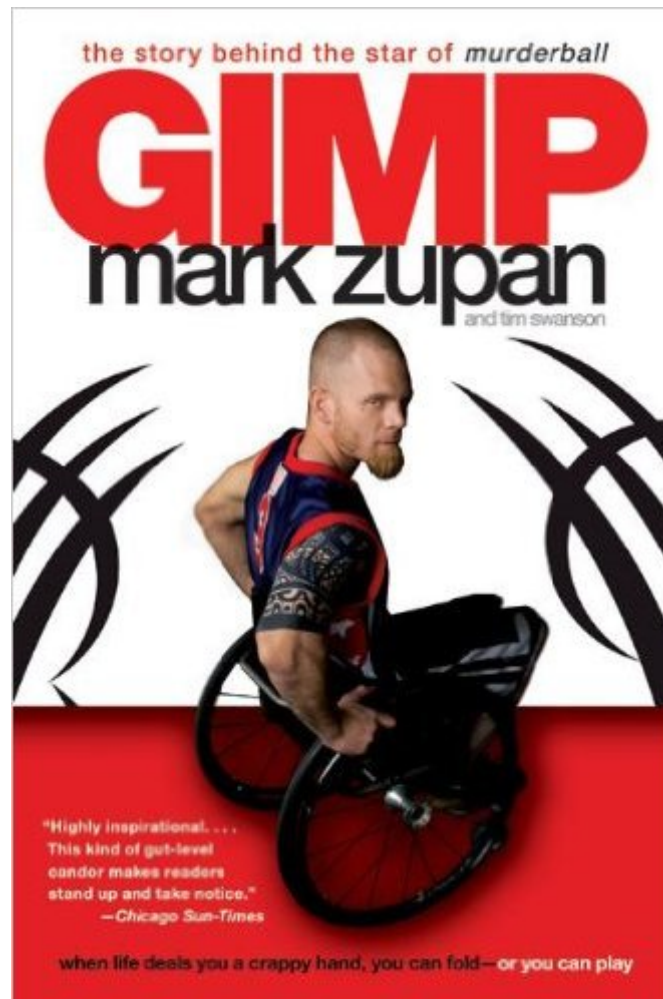


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# GIMP: The Story Behind The Star Of Murderball



## Synopsis

College soccer star Mark Zupan had been out drinking one night and had passed out in the back of his best friend's pickup truck when his friend got in the driver's seat, decided to take the truck for a spin, and accidentally crashed it. Thrown into a canal and stuck in frigid water for fourteen hours, Mark was finally rescued and learned soon after that he'd broken his neck. He'd most likely be a quadriplegic and spend the rest of his life in a wheelchair, doctors told him. At first Mark's only goal was to walk again. When that proved impossible, he fell into the depths of anger and despair, retreating from the world and the people closest to him. But love, friendship, and a new sport, quad rugby (a.k.a. "murderball"), helped Mark create a new existence that's truly exceptional. *Gimp*, the no-holds-barred memoir of a Paralympic athlete and the star of the Academy Award-nominated documentary *Murderball*, is an inspiring, defiant, and revealing celebration of spirit and will that confounds readers' prejudices by offering proof that a guy in a chair can still do amazing things: have sex with his girlfriend, party with his friends . . . even crowd-surf at Pearl Jam shows.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

Sometimes, people who have been "handicapped" in some manner end up withdrawing into themselves. A few of them are downright miserable. Mad at the world for being stuck in the situation they're in... the best they can hope for (because they're depressing to be around) is to have people feel sorry for them. Mark Zupan (who, hopefully, you know from the astoundingly-good, and deserved-to-win-the-Oscar documentary, *MURDERBALL*), is NOT one of those people. He doesn't WANT anyone to feel sorry for him. (In fact, he doesn't even want to be seen as a "role model," or

an "inspiration," though [sorry Mark!], to a lot of people, he is.) Mark was an athletic, fun-loving 18-year-old, having a blast in South Florida when everything he knew changed in an instant. Sleeping off a night of heavy partying in the back of his buddy Chris Igoe's parked pickup, he had no clue when his friend got in and (also drunk) drove off. Not too long thereafter, Igoe swerved off the road and Mark ended up flying out of the truck-bed, over a fence, and into some dense foliage overhanging a small lake. (Igoe had no idea Mark was in the truck bed, so when the police came, they never looked for him.) Mark regained consciousness, only to find himself unable to move (he didn't know it yet, but he was paralyzed from the neck down), hanging upside-down from a branch with his nose just inches from the water... and getting closer by the moment. He hung there for 14 hours, before a workman heard him yelling for help. And that's just the START of the story! In the years that followed, he has not only become one of the star players of the sport known as Quad Rugby (a.k.a. Murderball), his attitude about his "situation" (whether he likes it or not!

I don't read many autobiographies of famous people because in my opinion, they too often seem self-censored, either because the person writing it wants to preserve a certain image of themselves or because they can't trust the reader enough to make the "right" interpretation about their life. Speaking as a person who worked for the authors of "Gimp" to transcribe hours of interviews with family and friends of Mark Zupan, in addition to the subject himself, I felt compelled to write about the book because I feel it does something that is all too rare among autobiographies - it tells the truth. Mark Zupan isn't a household name, but thanks to the documentary "Murderball," he has become an inspiration to many. As a college freshman who miraculously survived a car accident that left him a quadriplegic, Zupan has gone on to become a star quad rugby player and has found incredible success on and off the court. Yet Zupan's story isn't your traditional feel good story with a few too many coats of gloss. It's told in a style that's both lyrical at times and intimate enough that you feel like a friend's telling you the story over a beer. A fan of both good music and good times, Zupan wouldn't have it any other way. But "Gimp" also takes you through the hard times as Zupan recovers from the accident and is forced to deal with relationships that have changed in his life and adjust into adulthood. As the title indicates, Zupan has a sense of humor about his life so far and also isn't afraid of confrontation, whether it's his fearlessness in playing quad rugby or correcting misapprehensions about his condition.

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