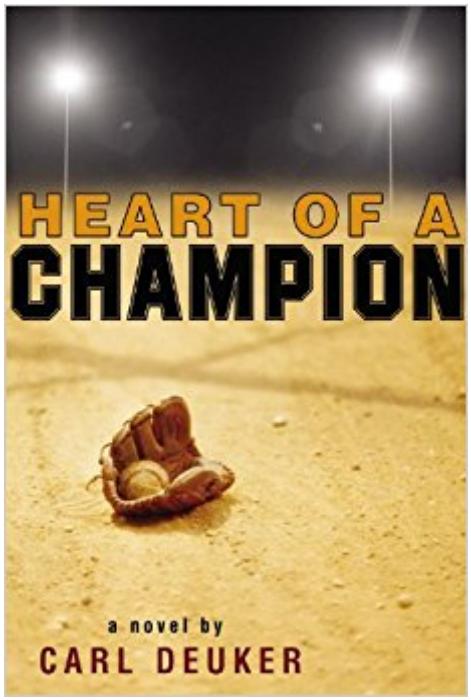
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Heart Of A Champion



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Synopsis

Jimmy Winter is a born star on the baseball field, and Seth Barnam can only dream of being as talented. Still, the two baseball fanatics have the kind of friendship that should last forever. But when Seth experiences an unthinkable loss, he’s forced to find his own personal strength--on and off the field. An ALA Best Book for Young Adults An ALA Best Book for Reluctant ReadersA New York Public Library Book for the Teen AgePennsylvania Young Reader’s Choice Book of the Year

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

This compelling tale of baseball and friendship, PW said, "hits a home run" with its "action worthy of the sports page." Ages 12-up. Copyright 1994 Reed Business Information, Inc. --This text refers to the Library Binding edition.

Grade 6-10-- On the day Seth Barham met Jimmy Winter, his life changed. Seth had been an unfocused, confused pre-teen who had never come to terms with his father’s death when he was seven. He meets Jimmy in a park as Jimmy’s overbearing father is putting his son through intense baseball drills. As their friendship develops, Jimmy’s intensity and self-assurance on the playing field spills over into Seth’s life, helping him to blossom as a student and a baseball player. However, Jimmy’s home life begins to unravel when his parents divorce. Also, he is suspended from the team when he develops a drinking problem. Seth withstands peer pressure to drink, and, with his mother’s support, begins to accept his father’s death. However, his biggest battle comes when he

must cope with Jimmy’s death in an auto accident. Baseball action permeates the story, increasing the novel’s interest to those readers familiar with the sport but setting up possible barriers for the uninitiated. Seth’s simply told, often moving first-person narrative is meant to be his way of accepting the two losses in his life. However, although the semi-therapeutic story covers three years in the boys’ baseball lives, it largely ignores their school lives and some readers may wonder what else they did. Mixing themes common to many YA coming-of-age titles with strong character development, this easy-to-read and well-paced novel will involve many readers. --Jack Forman, Mesa College Library, San DiegoCopyright 1993 Reed Business Information, Inc. --This text refers to the Library Binding edition.

Seth’s dad died when he was just seven years old, and he’s struggled ever since. Several years later he becomes friends with Jimmy Winters, a very talented and baseball-obsessed kid with a perfectionist father who drills him constantly on the game. But baseball gives Seth a direction he didn’t have before, and while he’s never as good as Jimmy he makes the high school team and his school performance improves and he becomes an honor student.One prominent theme in the book is the lack of a father in Seth’s life. Unfortunately for Jimmy, his alcoholic father isn’t a role model, either, and it isn’t long before his parents get divorced. But another prominent theme is the lure of alcohol for teenagers, and the devastating effects it can have.This is a great book that lots of kids who don’t ordinarily like reading will love (as is shown by many of the reviews here). My son read this book as an 8th grade summer-reading assignment and really enjoyed it. The play-by-play is full of action and the fundamentals of "how" a player should think are illustrated repeatedly, in marked contrast to another book my son and I read,Ã Â The Big FieldÃ Â by Mike Lupica (this book is much better). The narration by Seth comes across a bit flat for most of the book, but it makes better sense when you get to the end. I also thought the ending felt rather abrupt, but realized that it gives the message a forcefulness that might otherwise have been lacking. While the story revolves around baseball it has much larger implications, and will resonate with lots of kids.

My teen son loved it and he doesn’t like to read!

Good Read

I read this book b/c my son picked it for his 8th grade summer reading. I devoured it, even thought It’s slow. My son says "boring," but it’s far from boring. The author is masterfully setting the stage

and bringing you in w/ everyday happenings of the lives of young boys who play baseball. I mean, you can just picture these boys and their connection through the simple (not simple-minded) dialogue they have. I was in tears at the end of the book. This author is a freakin' genious the way he sets the stage and the local color and has a few exceptionally profound statements, said in a kids voice. This book is soulful and needs to be a must read in schools. Especially since kids today must read things like Shirley Jackson's "The Lottery."

I've read this book the first time in 6th grade and I named it my favorite book of all time. I'm reading it 6 years later and WOW!!! Still my favorite book ever. It's so sad to see such a great kid, with the true heart of a Champion go out like that. On top of the world and you think life is perfectly set up for you and BAM the harsh reality of life hits you right in the face. I want to say this book should serve as a lesson to all teenagers but that's what life is. One big lesson. You live and you learn.

My son chose this book off of the school's summer reading list. He doesn't like reading and reluctant to start. He made a deal to read 19 pages per day; well, he got into it so much he finished in 5 days.

Carl Deuker consistently provides a great plot with a winning message, presented in a sports culture.

This is a youth book about two boys' love for baseball. One is extremely talented on the baseball field while the other is better than average. They support each other in many ways. The author outlines their home lives along with the problems that many families may have.One boy's father is an alcoholic while the other's had died many years earlier. They are challenged with typical problems facing teenagers, such as drugs and alcohol, academics in school, and dedication to the sport of which they love. Will they or won't they win the state championship?This would be an interesting book for 10-15 year old boys. It's also a fun book for adults!

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