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Playing With Fire



Synopsis

In *Playing with Fire*, now in trade paperback, Theo Fleury takes us behind the bench during his glorious days as an NHL player, and talks about growing up devastatingly poor and in chaos at home. Dark personal issues began to surface and drinking, drugs, gambling, and girls ultimately derailed his Hall of Fame-caliber career. Fleury shares all in this raw, captivating and honest look at the previously untold story of one of the game's greatest heroes.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

It's hard to believe Fleury survived his own life. (The Globe and Mail) "An account the hockey world has long waited to hear, as Fleury's career had been one of the most spectacularly troubled in NHL history. . . . Fleury lifts the lid on the entire harrowing tale. (Maclean's) "Nobody came through in a big game like he did. I played against him when he led the Flames in the mid-90s. At five foot six and 150 pounds he played at twice that size. (Wayne Gretzky) "I've known Theo Fleury since back in junior, and I always hated playing against him. Theo was the ultimate competitor. He would do anything to win. That kind of attitude is tough to beat. I am really glad Theo has come out on top. (Joe Sakic) "As a young player in the League, I was lucky to have a captain like Theoren Fleury. I've never played with a more tenacious and determined player. (Jarome Iginla) "Theoren Fleury was a brilliant hockey player. He excelled in a team game. (Ron MacLean) "Fleury has won over fans all around the world. . . . we are all cheering for the little underdog in the biggest fight in his

life. (Hockeybookreviews.com) "The emotional story of a young man who despite his size, troubled upbringing, and addictive demons made an undeniable impact on the game of hockey. (NHL Digest) --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

Theoren Fleury won a World Junior title, a Turner Cup, a Stanley Cup as a rookie with the Calgary Flames and later a Canada Cup and an Olympic gold medal. A former player with the Colorado Avalanche, New York Rangers and Chicago Blackhawks, he now lives in Calgary, where he is a motivational speaker and an investment representative with a land development company. Visit him online here: www.theofleury14.com. KIRSTIE MCLELLAN DAY ranks among the top hockey book writers in the world thanks to the three national bestsellers: Theo Fleury's #1 bestselling memoir *Playing with Fire*, Bob Probert's *Tough Guy* and Ron MacLean's *Cornered*. She's currently working with Marty McSorley on his upcoming *Hellbent*. Her other books include *Above and Beyond*, a comprehensive family and business history of cable magnate J.R. Shaw; *Under the Mat*, a memoir with Diana Hart of the Hart wrestling family; and *No Remorse*, a true-crime novel. Kirstie is a mother of five and lives with her husband, television producer Larry Day, in Calgary. Together they own one of Canada's most successful television companies, Pyramid Productions. Visit her online at www.kirstiemclellanday.com and follow her on Twitter @kmclellanday. --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

I was really looking forward to reading this book, but for me it was a disappointment. Throughout the entire book he would brag about how great he was and he was the sole reason for a team's success and the only reason fans watched. If you didn't follow hockey much, you'd think you were reading about one of the top 5 players to ever play the game. He was a good player, but he isn't even in the same conversation as the all time greats. He also seems to use this book as a platform to call out people he didn't like. There were several times where he goes out of his way to take a shot at a guy, and these don't usually contribute anything to the story. He seems to think that the only way a person is worth anything, is if they played on a championship winning team in their pro career. He has an entire chapter that is nothing more than a long rant about how coaches have no right to coach or tell players what to do unless they also had a long pro career. He even goes as far as saying star players shouldn't ever have to listen to coaches. With his troubled childhood and off ice problems, I was looking forward to an interesting read. This book did give some good insight, but his overall arrogant attitude and constantly playing the victim grow tiring. I was glad to see him take

some responsibility in the last chapter, and I hope he continues down a good path.

This is one of the best memoirs I've ever read. Actually, it's one of the best books I've ever read. I've read a lot of memoirs and biographies, and this one is brutally honest -- heartbreakingly so. Theo Fleury's book contains many stories. It's the story of a Canadian who grew up poor on the prairies and clung to his dream like a lifeline. It's a story of a broken, lonely childhood plagued by demons and abuse. It's a story about the drive to be the best at a particular sport. It's a story of addiction to booze, drugs, and sex. It's a story of both dizzying success and financial failure. But most of all, it's a story about what it means to be human and what it's like to live in constant pain...and to find relief in things that only make matters worse. Anyone who loves hockey (especially the Calgary Flames) will love this book. Ditto anyone who's been abused or anyone who struggles (or struggled) with substance abuse and suicidal impulses. Theo has written a book for both sports fans and those who don't care about sports. His story is painful, but it deserves to be heard. And hopefully it will help anyone who struggles with the same issues that affected him. Thank you, Theo, for writing this book.

I was never a big Fleury fan during his playing days (I'm a Kings fan, so he was the guy you loved to hate), but after becoming familiar with his story, I couldn't help but feel for the guy. Unfortunately, while his story and career are compelling and interesting, the telling of it could have been far better. Theo collaborated with, I assume, a professional author so I blame her for this more than Fleury. At times the story seems out of order and entire chapters read like "here's what I think of this guy . . . here's what I think of THAT guy . . ." Not real interesting. Plus, there are some obvious factual errors that Theo should know, for example, he talks about getting a hat trick to reach 50 goals in one season, but then when he's detailing the FOLLOWING season, he talks about "his first career hat trick" that year. A minor detail maybe, but still . . . That being said, it's an interesting story and if you're a hard core hockey fan (or a Fleury fan), it's worth a look.

With his raw talent, passion and determination to make the NHL, Theo Fleury certainly left his mark on the game with a career spanning 15 years (including a Stanley Cup victory in his rookie season and an Olympic Gold medal towards the end). Yet behind the thrilling wins and career successes lay a man consumed by demons of the past. A less than stable upbringing with parents that struggled with issues of substance abuse and an adult mentor who took advantage of him in the most personal way possible, Fleury fell into a cycle that involved drugs, alcohol, gambling and sex.

Finally it all caught up with him resulting in a man who almost pushed himself right over the edge. Fleury (along with Kirstie McLellan Day) tell a no holds barred tale of a young man with big dreams of being a sports star and what lengths he would go to achieve his goals, which included the covering up of the abuse he suffered and how chasing your dreams can sometimes mean you pay a high price which Fleury did. The book is refreshingly honest and at times is both unsettling and disturbing which no doubt was what the authors had intended. Yet through his struggles, Fleury maintains a sense of humour. The best part of course is knowing he survived his trail by fire and made it through the other side. Fleury acknowledges his faults and flaws and knows he isn't perfect. But he also gives credit to his family and friends for helping him make it showing a humble side to the man. You don't have to be a sports fans or even know that much about Ice Hockey to appreciate a story of man who achieved such success in his professional career but found his greatest sense of accomplishment after the lights in the arena switched off and the crowds were gone. Well worth reading.

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