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Totally Tara: An Olympic Journal



Synopsis

At the age of 14, Tara Lipinski became the youngest figure skater to win the World Championship title. Tara's own words, accompanied by thoughts from her parents, coach, choreographer, and others close to her, turn this stunning pictorial into a colorful, remarkably candid visual journey of a skating phenomenon and her Olympic experience

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

I can't say much more it is a condensed review of Taras run for Olympic Gold and leaves out the Nastiness that pervaded this story. Its Great because it is Typically Tara unassuming and joyful with no malice or rivalry toward anyone she was just out to do her best and hope it was good enough to win Gold. It all makes her critics look so small. Picking on such a young and delightful lady. I hope there will soon be a Book II on her continuing career. But this book is a Excellent version and tells a brief written story emphasized by pictures to give you a feeling of it all. Great Book.

This is a Tara Lipinski picture book, and that's about it. Picture books are for small children. Seems to me the writer was too lazy to actually write about her or perhaps he thought Tara's fan don't know how to read or don't care to read? Tara's fans deserve better. This book would have been excellent if there had been more written, informative details about her quest for Olympic gold along with the beautiful photos rather than the simplistic dribble that was written.

Why is figure skating my favorite sport? Actually, there are several reasons. First, it is a truly international sport. Also, it has both athletic and artistic sides to it, and it is performed to a great variety of beautiful music. And most of the female competitors look like fashion models, with glamorous costumes that only heighten the illusion. And then there are the rivalries, which range from friendly (The Battle of the Brians, for instance) to highly acrimonious (Tonya vs. Nancy, "Pasha" vs. Maia), giving the sport its gossipy appeal. The greatest rivalry of the late 90's, of course, was Tara vs. Michelle, as they battled on almost equal terms for the U.S., World, and ultimately the Olympic championships. This seemed to be a classic case of the "athlete" (Tara) versus the "artist" (Michelle) as each had the reputation (and higher scores, overall) in these respective areas (although both were great all-around skaters). The advantage, of course, would go to the "athlete" most of the time, since a fall on a jump is marked down much more severely than, say, an inferior leg position on a layback spin. Also, Tara benefitted from being the "underdog" in most of the big competitions, since there is always more pressure and distractions for the "favorite" to contend with. It also didn't hurt that Tara has the perfect body for figure skating (very short and pencil-thin), which no doubt contributed to her ability to rotate incredibly fast on jumps where she barely seemed to leave the ice. And switching coaches to Richard Callaghan was also a wise move, given his outstanding track record, not to mention having a hard-working and dedicated training partner and "role model" such as Todd Eldredge. The words that seem to best describe Tara would, I think, be precocious (youngest U.S., World, and Olympic champion), focused (having the ability to "bounce back" after lackluster performances), and gregarious. In other words, when it comes to Tara's skating style and accomplishments, she gets 5 "stars" (as does Michelle Kwan, for that matter), but as far as this book goes, I would only give three. Although the photography is certainly very nice, there is very little text (116 pages to 26) and it is mostly superficial and, as is typical in a semiautobiographical book, tends to look only at the good side of Tara (for a more "in depth" and not nearly as flattering look at Tara, see Christine Brennan's excellent figure skating "storybooks", *Inside Edge* and *Edge of Glory...*

In this pictorial legacy, the reader is treated to the history and triumphant win of Gold Medal winner, Tara Lipinski, the fourteen year old who claimed the highest honor in women's figure skating in the 1998 Winter Olympics. Simon Bruty's exquisite photographs showcase the hard work, beauty, grace and poise of this young skater, who claimed the hearts of sports enthusiasts worldwide in that chilly winter in Japan. This book is a real treat to those who love the sport in all of its marvelous facets.

This book is 145 pages long, and nearly every single one of those pages is a picture. Some of the pictures have words written on them, but this is a picture book. Don't get me wrong though, these pictures do a good job of showing Tara's preparation for the 1998 games, and her experiences while she was there. You get a good look inside her training, and her mind set entering the games. So, if you want to see a LOT of pictures of tara, and get a somewhat limited idea of her life, buy this book, but if you're looking for an autobiography...this isn't one.

....UNTIL I saw that picture of Michelle Kwan that has been mentioned in several other reviews. I'm sorry but why on earth was that necessary to include in a book about TARA? It seemed to me to be a rather immature thing to do, if you've won the gold medal why on earth would you be interested in anything but enjoying that medal, instead of "rubbing it in" to the silver medalist as it seems to be doing here? Totally unneccesary to a book that should have been all about Tara and her enjoyment of the Olympics. The rather tacky inclusion of that photo made me put this book back on the shelf as quickly as I had picked it up.

I can't say much more it is a condensed review of Taras run for Olympic Gold and leaves out the Nastiness that pervaded this story. Its Great because it is Typically Tara unassuming and joyful with no malice or rivalry toward anyone she was just out to do her best and hope it was good enough to win Gold. It all makes her critics look so small. Picking on such a young and delightful lady. I hope there will soon be a Book II on her continuing career. But this book is a Excellent version and tells a brief written story emphasized by pictures to give you a feeling of it all. Great Book.

If you are a fan of our current olympic gold medalist, "Tara Lapinski", I am certain you will truly enjoy this book. The Photographs in this olympic story book are magnificent, most in full color, and go cover to cover. The behind the scenes story text of Tara's life and times at the XVIII Winter Olympic Games in Nagano, is inspiring, and enlightening. It tells of the hard work, hopes and dreams of this very talented Ice skating princess. The story in the book also speaks of her loyal family and friends. I give "Totally Tara" my highest review. Her uplifting story made me feel good.

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