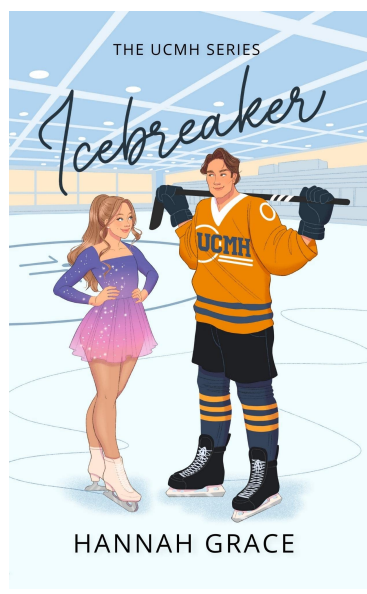


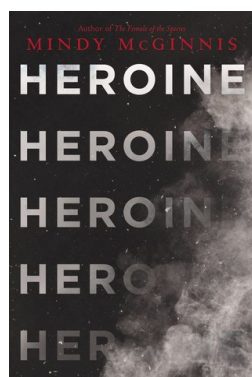
Book Recommendations: Sports Themes

Book Covers and Descriptions from Goodreads.com

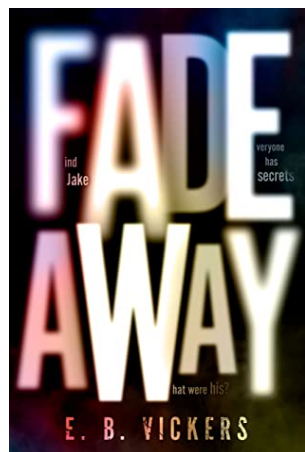
Genre: Sports Themes



Anastasia Allen has worked her entire life for a shot at Team USA. A competitive figure skater since she was five years old, a full college scholarship thanks to her place on the Maple Hills skating team, and a schedule that would make even the most driven person weep, Stassie comes to win. No exceptions. Nathan Hawkins has never had a problem he couldn't solve. As captain of the Maple Hills Titans, he knows the responsibility of keeping the hockey team on the ice rests on his shoulders. When a misunderstanding results in the two teams sharing a rink, and Anastasia's partner gets hurt in the aftermath, Nate finds himself swapping his stick for tights, and one scary coach for an even scarier one. The pair find themselves stuck together in more ways than one, but it's fine, because Anastasia doesn't even like hockey players...right?

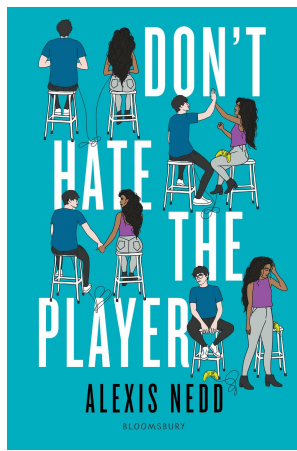


When a car crash sidelines Mickey just before softball season, she has to find a way to hold on to her spot as the catcher for a team expected to make a historic tournament run. Behind the plate is the only place she's ever felt comfortable, and the painkillers she's been prescribed can help her get there. The pills do more than take away pain; they make her feel good. With a new circle of friends—fellow injured athletes, others with just time to kill—Mickey finds peaceful acceptance, and people with whom words come easily, even if it is just the pills loosening her tongue. But as the pressure to be Mickey Catalan heightens, her need increases, and it becomes less about pain and more about want, something that could send her spiraling out of control.



At 8:53 pm, thousands of people watched as Jake Foster secured the state title for his basketball team with his signature fadeaway. But by the next morning, he's disappeared without a trace. Nobody has any idea where he is: not his best friend who knows him better than anyone else, not his ex-girlfriend who may still have feelings for him, not even his little brother who never expected Jake to abandon him. Rumors abound regarding Jake's whereabouts. Was he abducted? Did he run away to try to take his game to the next level? Or is it something else, something darker—something they should have seen coming?

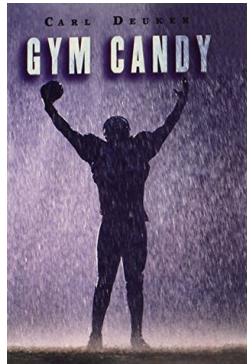
Told from the points of view of those closest to Jake, this gripping, suspenseful novel reminds us that the people we think we know best are sometimes hiding the most painful secrets.



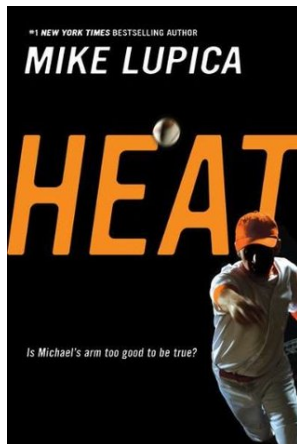
By day, Emilia is a field hockey star with a popular boyfriend and a mother obsessed with her academic future. But by night, she's kicking virtual ass as the only female member of a highly competitive eSports team. Emilia has mastered the art of keeping her two worlds thriving, which hinges on them staying completely separate.

When a major eSports tournament comes to her city, Emilia is determined to prove herself to the male-dominated gaming community. But her perfectly balanced life is thrown for a loop when a member of a rival team—Jake—recognizes her . . .

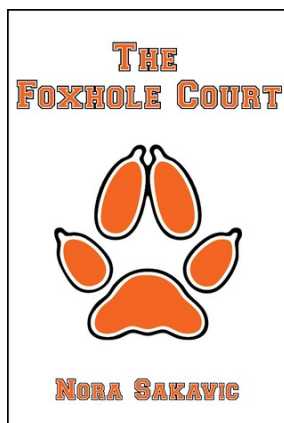
From an exciting new talent, this sweet and charming YA romance will win the hearts of gamers and non-gamers alike.



Running-back Mick Johnson has dreams: dreams of cutting back, finding the hole, breaking into the open, and running free with nothing but green grass ahead. He has dreams of winning and of being the best. But football is a cruel sport. It requires power, grace, speed, quickness, and knowledge of the game. It takes luck, too. One crazy bounce can turn a likely victory into sudden defeat. What elite athlete wouldn't look for an edge? A way to make him bigger, stronger, faster?



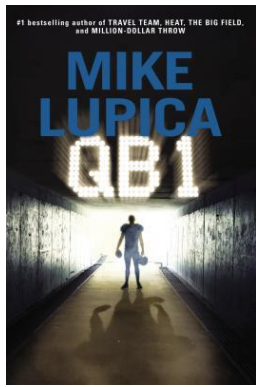
Michael Arroyo has a pitching arm that throws serious heat along with aspirations of leading his team all the way to the Little League World Series. But his firepower is nothing compared to the heat Michael faces in his day-to-day life. Newly orphaned after his father led the family's escape from Cuba, Michael's only family is his seventeen-year old brother Carlos. If Social Services hears of their situation, they will be separated in the foster-care system—or worse, sent back to Cuba. Together, the boys carry on alone, dodging bills and anyone who asks too many questions. But then someone wonders how a twelve-year-old boy could possibly throw with as much power as Michael Arroyo throws. With no way to prove his age, no birth certificate, and no parent to fight for his cause, Michael's secret world is blown wide open, and he discovers that family can come from the most unexpected sources.



Neil Josten is the newest addition to the Palmetto State University Exy team. He's short, he's fast, he's got a ton of potential—and he's the runaway son of the murderous crime lord known as The Butcher.

Signing a contract with the PSU Foxes is the last thing a guy like Neil should do. The team is high profile and he doesn't need sports crews broadcasting pictures of his face around the nation. His lies will hold up only so long under this kind of scrutiny and the truth will get him killed.

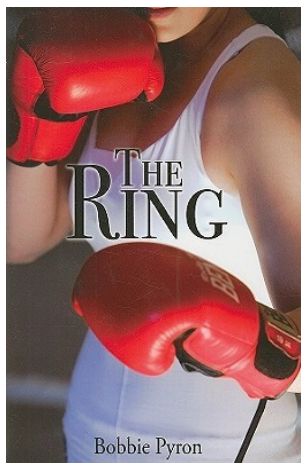
But Neil's not the only one with secrets on the team. One of Neil's new teammates is a friend from his old life, and Neil can't walk away from him a second time. Neil has survived the last eight years by running. Maybe he's finally found someone and something worth fighting for.



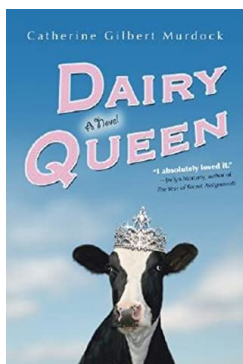
Jake Cullen is a freshman quarterback playing high school football in the high-pressure land of Friday Night Lights (Texas). He is also the brother of Wyatt Cullen, who quarterbacked his team to the Texas State Championship last season--not to mention the son of former NFL quarterback and local legend, Troy Cullen. To be a Cullen in Texas is to be royalty . . . and a quarterback. All of which leaves 14-year-old Jake in a Texas-sized shadow, a tall order for any boy, especially one who's merely a freshman. While his teammates assume the starting job will be handed to Jake on a silver platter, the truth is that he has to fight for every snap and every ounce of respect. Jake may be a Cullen and he may play quarterback, but he is not his brother or his father.



I, Felton Reinstein, am Stupid Fast. Seriously. The upperclassmen used to call me Squirrel Nut, because I was little and jumpy. Then, during sophomore year, I got tall and huge and so fast the gym teachers in their tight shorts fell all over themselves. During summer, three things happened all at once. First, the pee-smelling jocks in my grade got me to work out for football, even though I had no intention of playing. Second, on my paper route the most beautiful girl I have ever seen moved in and played piano at 6 a.m. Third, my mom, who never drinks, had some wine, slept in her car, stopped weeding the garden, then took my TV and put it in her room and decided she wouldn't get out of bed.



Plagued by slipping grades and a budding criminal record, at 15, Mardies heading down a path of self-destruction she can't seem to avoid. Unlike her perfect older brother Michael, who does everything right according to their father, Mardie can't measure up. But when she discovers a girls boxing club at the gym, Mardie's drawn in by the fighters' fearlessness and strength. Having already lost her parents' trust, and shunned by her boyfriend and friends, the ring is the only place left where no one judges Mardie. Angry and hurt, Mardie can't wait to start throwing punches. But Kitty, her wise and patient trainer, a former boxer who's coached her share of troubled girls, shows Mardie that boxing isn't just about fighting it's also about strategy and mental discipline, the things that make a fighter into a winner. Mardie begins to apply the lessons she's learned in the ring to her own battles, especially at home, where she finds she's not the only one struggling for acceptance.



When you don't talk, there's a lot of stuff that ends up not getting said. Harsh words indeed, from Brian Nelson of all people. But, D. J. can't help admitting, maybe he's right.

When you don't talk, there's a lot of stuff that ends up not getting said. Stuff like why her best friend, Amber, isn't so friendly anymore. Or why her little brother, Curtis, never opens his mouth. Why her mom has two jobs and a big secret. Why her college-football-star brothers won't even call home. Why her dad would go ballistic if she tried out for the high school football team herself.



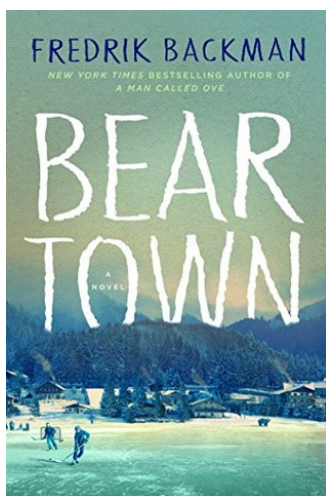
Fifteen-year-old Sadia Ahmadi is passionate about one thing: basketball. Her best friend Mariam, on the other hand, wants to get noticed by the popular crowd and has started de-jabbing, removing her hijab, at school every morning. Sadia's mom had warned her that navigating high school could be tricky. As much as she hates to admit it, her mom was right.

When tryouts for an elite basketball team are announced, Sadia jumps at the opportunity. Her talent speaks for itself. Her head scarf, on the other hand, is a problem; especially when a discriminatory rule means she has to choose between removing her hijab and not playing. Mariam, Sadia's parents, and her teammates all have different opinions about what she should do. But it is Sadia who has to find the courage to stand up for herself and fight for what is right — on and off the court



"With a bolt of lightning on my kicks . . .The court is SIZZLING. My sweat is DRIZZLING. Stop all that quivering. Cuz tonight I'm delivering," announces dread-locked, 12-year old Josh Bell. He and his twin brother Jordan are awesome on the court. But Josh has more than basketball in his blood, he's got mad beats, too, that tell his family's story in verse, in this fast and furious middle grade novel of family and brotherhood.

Josh and Jordan must come to grips with growing up on and off the court to realize breaking the rules comes at a terrible price, as their story's heart-stopping climax proves a game-changer for the entire family.

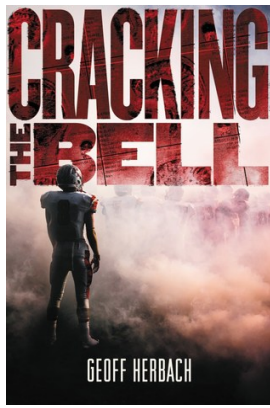


People say Beartown is finished. A tiny community nestled deep in the forest, it is slowly losing ground to the ever encroaching trees. But down by the lake stands an old ice rink, built generations ago by the working men who founded this town. And in that ice rink is the reason people in Beartown believe tomorrow will be better than today. Their junior ice hockey team is about to compete in the national semi-finals, and they actually have a shot at winning. All the hopes and dreams of this place now rest on the shoulders of a handful of teenage boys.

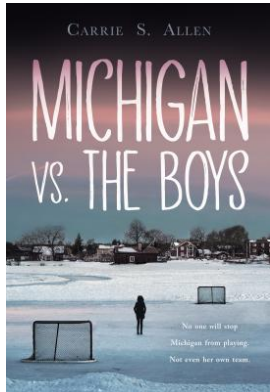
Being responsible for the hopes of an entire town is a heavy burden, and the semi-final match is the catalyst for a violent act that will leave a young girl traumatized and a town in turmoil. Accusations are made and, like ripples on a pond, they travel through all of Beartown, leaving no resident unaffected.



Sixteen-year-old Bart Lively desperately wants to feel comfortable in his own skin. Sure, he's a competitive swimmer, but being a jock doesn't mean he isn't the target of gay jokes, and the macho culture of his swim club is wearing him down. At the same time, he becomes drawn to the art and athleticism of synchronized swimming, the idea of the human form moving to music underwater. So he jumps at the opportunity to become the first boy on the synchro swimming team, even if it means others start questioning his masculinity even more. Ultimately, Bart will have to give in to his intuition that leads him to realize there are many ways to be a boy. If he doesn't, he'll not only lose his friendship with Erika, but his new Olympic dream--and the joy he feels as he dances in the deep.



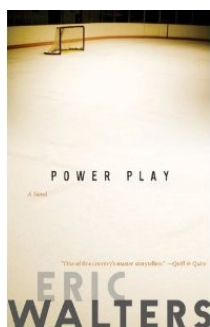
Isaiah loves football. In fact, football saved Isaiah's life, giving him structure and discipline after his sister's death tore his family apart. Now, nothing makes Isaiah happier than setting up the perfect defense and delivering a big hit. But when Isaiah gets knocked out cold on the field, he learns there's a lot more to lose than football. While recovering from another concussion, Isaiah wonders what his life would look without football. All his friends are on the team, and Isaiah knows they can't win without him. There's also the scholarship offer from Cornell, which is only on the table if he keeps playing. And without football, what would keep his family together? What would prevent him from sliding back into the habits that nearly destroyed him?



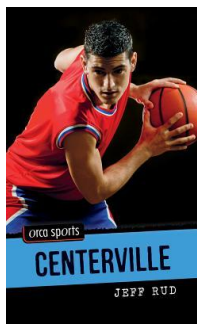
When a determined girl is confronted with the culture of toxic masculinity, it's time to even the score. Michigan Manning lives for hockey, and this is her year to shine. That is, until she gets some crushing news: budget cuts will keep the girls' hockey team off the ice this year. If she wants colleges to notice her, Michigan has to find a way to play. Luckily, there's still one team left in town ...The boys' team isn't exactly welcoming, but Michigan's prepared to prove herself. She plays some of the best hockey of her life, in fact, all while putting up with changing in the broom closet, constant trash talk and "harmless" pranks that always seem to target her. But once hazing crosses the line into assault, Michigan must weigh the consequences of speaking up - even if it means putting her future on the line



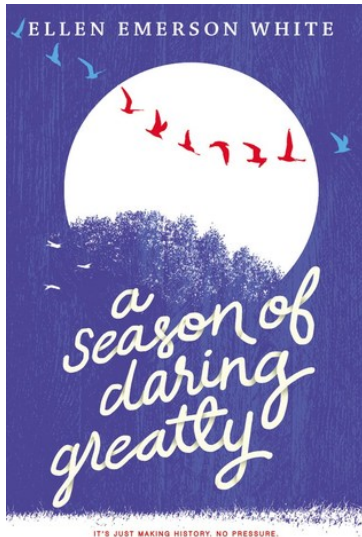
Audrey Lee is going to the Olympics. A year ago, she could barely do a push up as she recovered from a spine surgery, one that could have paralyzed her. And now? She's made the United States' gymnastics team with her best friend, Emma, just like they both dreamed about since they were kids. She's on top of the world. The pressure for perfection is higher than ever when horrifying news rips the team apart. Audrey is desperate to advocate for her teammate who has been hurt by the one person they trusted most--but not all the gymnasts are as supportive. Balancing the tenuous relationship between her teammates with unparalleled expectations, Audrey doesn't need any more distractions. No matter what it takes, she's not going to let anyone bring them down. But with painful revelations, incredible odds, and the very real possibility of falling at every turn, will Audrey's determination be enough?



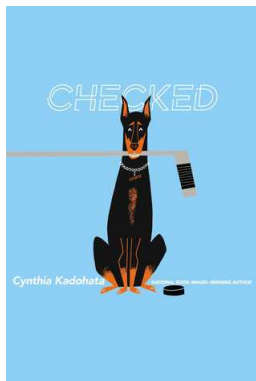
"You're going to spend some time on the power play, on penalty kill, and start right off as the second line centre," he told me. I didn't question why he was putting me on the second line. I'd show him the first line was the place I belonged. "The important thing is that you've been drafted," he said. "You're going to play Junior A, and you're going to be on my team. You're my player." This novel explores the complex and disturbing relationship between a talented young hockey star and his predatory coach as it descends into sexual abuse.



Basketball-crazy Jake Burnett is thrilled to be leaving home to attend prestigious Centerville Prep. It's an opportunity to pursue his hoop dreams at the highest level. But things aren't quite as advertised at his new school, and Jake soon finds himself struggling both on and off the court. At first, Jake is determined to play harder and ignore the warning signs. Until he discovers that his new head coach is a scam artist, putting kids at risk for his own gain. Now Jake has a difficult choice to make--advance his basketball career or do the right thing.



Eighteen-year-old Jill Cafferty just made history. Her high school's star pitcher, she is now the first woman drafted by a major league baseball team. Only days after her high school graduation, she'll join the Pittsburgh Pirates' Class A Short Season team . . . but not everyone is happy to have her there. On top of the pressure heaped on every pitcher, Jill must deal with defying conventions and living up to impossible expectations, all while living away from home for the first time. She'll go head-to-head against those who are determined to keep baseball an all-male sport. Despite the reassurance of coaches and managers alike, a few of her teammates are giving her trouble. The media presence following her at each game is inescapable. And to top it all off, Jill is struggling with the responsibilities of being a national hero and a role model for young women everywhere. How can she be a role model when she's not even sure she made the right choice for herself? Didn't baseball used to be *fun*?



Hockey is Conor's life. His whole life. He'll say it himself, he's a hockey beast. It's his dad's whole life too—and Conor is sure that's why his stepmom, Jenny, left. There are very few things Conor and his dad love more than the game, and one of those things is their Doberman, Sinbad. When Sinbad is diagnosed with cancer, Conor chooses to put his hockey lessons and practices on hold so they can pay for Sinbad's chemotherapy.

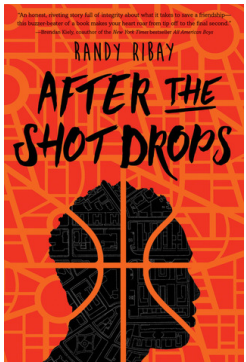
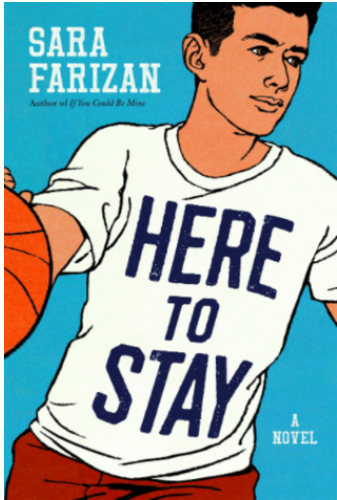
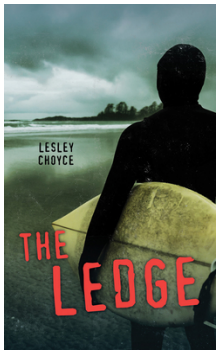
But without hockey to distract him, Conor begins to notice more. Like his dad's crying bouts, and his friend's difficult family life. And then Conor notices one more thing: without hockey, the one thing that makes him feel special, is he really special at all?



To everyone who knows him, West Ashby has always been that guy: the cocky, popular, way-too-handsome-for-his-own-good football god who led Lawton High to the state championships. But while West may be Big Man on Campus on the outside, on the inside he's battling the grief that comes with watching his father slowly die of cancer.

Two years ago, Maggie Carleton's life fell apart when her father murdered her mother. And after she told the police what happened, she stopped speaking and hasn't spoken since. Even the move to Lawton, Alabama, couldn't draw Maggie back out. So she stayed quiet, keeping her sorrow and her fractured heart hidden away.

As West's pain becomes too much to handle, he knows he needs to talk to someone about his father—so in the dark shadows of a post-game party, he opens up to the one girl who he knows won't tell anyone else.

	Bunny and Nasir have been best friends forever, but when Bunny accepts an athletic scholarship across town, Nasir feels betrayed. While Bunny tries to fit in with his new, privileged peers, Nasir spends more time with his cousin, Wallace, who is being evicted. Nasir can't help but wonder why the neighborhood is falling over itself to help Bunny when Wallace is in trouble. When Wallace makes a bet against Bunny, Nasir is faced with an impossible decision—maybe a dangerous one.
	For most of high school, Bijan Majidi has flown under the radar. He gets good grades, reads comics, hangs out with his best friend, Sean, and secretly crushes on Elle, one of the most popular girls in his school. When he's called off the basketball team's varsity bench and makes the winning basket in a playoff game, everything changes in an instant. But not everyone is happy that Bijan is the man of the hour: an anonymous cyberbully sends the entire school a picture of Bijan photoshopped to look like a terrorist. His mother is horrified, and the school administration is outraged. They promise to find and punish the culprit. All Bijan wants is to pretend it never happened and move on, but the incident isn't so easily erased. Though many of his classmates rally behind Bijan, some don't want him or his type to be a part of their school.
	Nick was used to being good at everything. Hockey, football, track, they all came easy to him. Surfing was his latest passion. That is, until the accident. Now partially paralyzed, Nick is angry, depressed and getting far too fond of his prescription meds. But his frequent visits to his physiotherapist, a Syrian refugee, and a budding friendship with a partial amputee who has also experienced firsthand the horrors of war help him start to piece his life back together. A story about overcoming the odds and changing your life for the better.