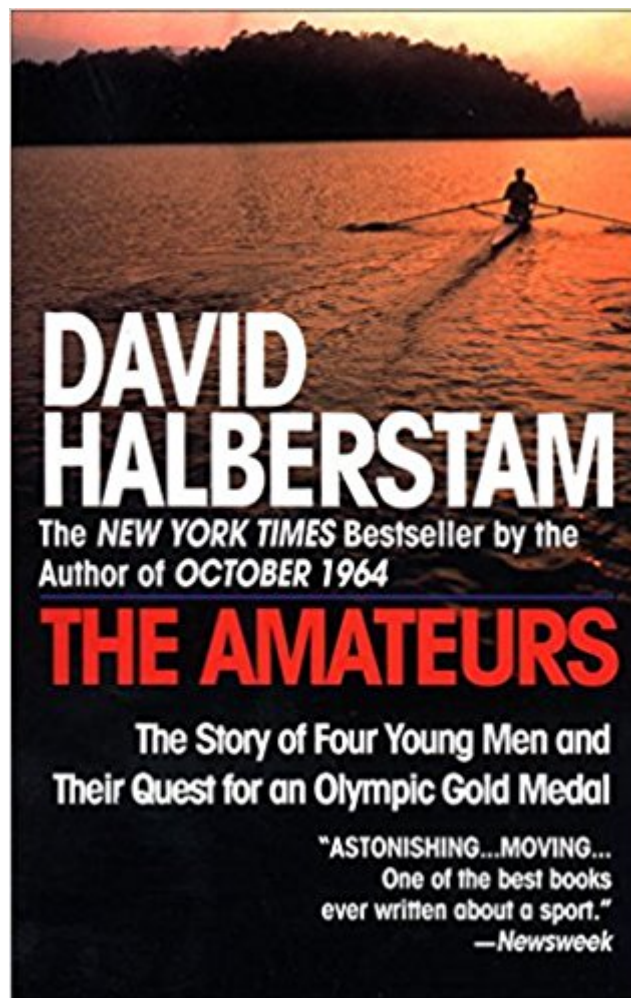




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The Amateurs: The Story Of Four Young Men And Their Quest For An Olympic Gold Medal



Synopsis

"Astonishing . . . Moving . . . One of the best books ever written about a sport." *Walter Clemons Newsweek "A PENETRATING, FASCINATING AND REMARKABLY SUSPENSEFUL NARRATIVE." *David Guy Chicago Tribune In *The Amateurs*, David Halberstam once again displays the unique brand of reportage, both penetrating and supple, that distinguished his bestselling *The Best and the Brightest* and October 1964. This time he has taken for his subject the dramatic and special world of amateur rowing. While other athletes are earning fortunes in salaries and-or endorsements, the oarsmen gain fame only with each other and strive without any hope of financial reward. What drives these men to endure a physical pain known to no other sport? Who are they? Where do they come from? How do they regard themselves and their competitors? What have they sacrificed, and what inner demons have they appeased? In answering these questions, David Halberstam takes as his focus the 1984 single sculls trials in Princeton. The man who wins will gain the right to represent the United States in the 84 Olympiad; the losers will then have to struggle further to gain a place in the two- or four-man boats. And even if they succeed, they will have to live with the bitter knowledge that they were not the best, only close to it. Informative and compelling, *The Amateurs* combines the vividness of superb sportswriting with the narrative skills of a Pulitzer Prize-winning correspondent. "RIVETING." *Christopher Lehmann-Haupt The New York Times "[A] MASTERFUL JOB . . . Maintains the suspense to the very last stroke . . . Halberstam makes us care about the four men, their disappointments and the brutal testing of their friendships." *Dan Levin Sports Illustrated

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Customer Reviews

The author of *The Powers that Be* and *The Best and the Brightest* tells of the dedication, competition and camaraderie of the athletes who represented the U.S. in single-scul racing events in the 1984 Olympics. "Here is Halberstam at his best," PW wrote. Copyright 1986 Reed Business Information, Inc. --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

"Astonishing . . . Moving . . . One of the best books ever written about a sport." *Walter Clemons Newsweek "A PENETRATING, FASCINATING AND REMARKABLY SUSPENSEFUL NARRATIVE." *David Guy Chicago Tribune In *The Amateurs*, David Halberstam once again displays the unique brand of reportage, both penetrating and supple, that distinguished his bestselling *The Best and the Brightest* and October 1964. This time he has taken for his subject the dramatic and special world of amateur rowing. While other athletes are earning fortunes in salaries and-or endorsements, the oarsmen gain fame only with each other and strive without any hope of financial reward. What drives these men to endure a physical pain known to no other sport? Who are they? Where do they come from? How do they regard themselves and their competitors? What have they sacrificed, and what inner demons have they appeased? In answering these questions, David Halberstam takes as his focus the 1984 single sculls trials in Princeton. The man who wins will gain the right to represent the United States in the 84 Olympiad; the losers will then have to struggle further to gain a place in the two- or four-man boats. And even if they succeed, they will have to live with the bitter knowledge that they were not the best, only close to it. Informative and compelling, *The Amateurs* combines the vividness of superb sportswriting with the narrative skills of a Pulitzer Prize-winning correspondent. "RIVETING." *Christopher Lehmann-Haupt The New York Times "[A] MASTERFUL JOB . . . Maintains the suspense to the very last stroke . . . Halberstam makes us care about the four men, their disappointments and the brutal testing of their friendships." *Dan Levin Sports Illustrated

The best factual account of rowing ever. The sacrifice and the dedication, and the loneliness of the sport, as well as the exhilaration, is captured precisely by this great writer and former oarsman.

As an old college oarsman, who knew Halberstam when he was an undergraduate, I was attracted to the book, which I came across after I had read *Boys in the Boat* and wondered who else had written

about rowing. This book, unlike "Boys", focuses on single scull competition and has less back story, but to anyone interested in athletics, it should be of interest.

the book gives insight into a sport that requires dedication from competitive rowers with a minimum of accolades from the public. It is an inside the sport gamer and the athletes are self driven. It is too inside for a general read and bogs down into the inside of the sport. Interesting but not compelling.

For me, an uninteresting sport that David made interesting. I found the human interaction enjoyable and representative of where friendship and competition collide.

Halberstam is a great author, and this is another tremendous book. Since I have been an oarsman myself for many years, I particularly enjoyed and understood the efforts of these great athletes. Unless or until you have experienced the pain of a 2000 meter race it is hard to truly imagine the sacrifice of these athletes. The author does a great job in capturing the journey to the Olympic trials and the Olympics itself.

A well written account of young men in quest of a Olympic medal in the 1984 Olympics. The challenge that they faced was to beat out the others seeking to represent the USA in rowing single sculls. While the winner of the competition fails to medal in Olympic finals (he comes in 4th), one of the others ends up with a gold medal in the two-man boats. An intriguing story of the trials and tribulations of these men as they struggle with both physical and mental anguish in their pursuit. A more recent book on rowing, *The Boys in the Boat*, written about the Washington 8 man-crew heading to the 1936 Berlin Olympics, has both the drama of the rowing but also several other parallel sub plots. It is a well written and compelling story whether you are interested in the sport of rowing or just like great books.

An excellent read all round. This is the second Halberstam book I've read ('The Education of a Coach' - about Bill Belichick) and the high standards are maintained. Halberstam's ability to present wide-ranging research into a palatable read is unsurpassed in sporting literature. This is so much better than the usual, barely literate, drivel produced by retired sportsmen in order to make a quick dollar or two. I'm now very much looking forward to Halberstam's book on Michael Jordan.

Interesting behind the scenes reporting on some of the main personalities who competed to

represent the US in the sculling events in the 84 Olympics. A mixture of training insights and overview and palace intrigue. Great way to learn about the sport.

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