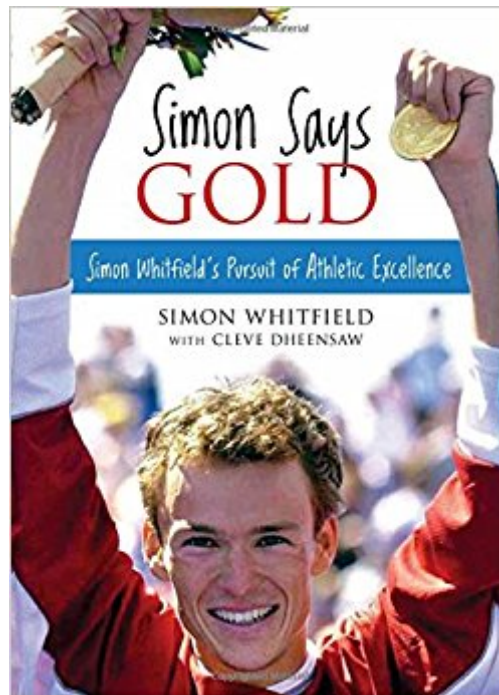




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Simon Says Gold: Simon Whitfield's Pursuit Of Athletic Excellence



Synopsis

From the moment Simon Whitfield burst onto the world stage at the 2000 Sydney Summer Games as triathlon's first Olympic champion, his winning personality and stellar athletic abilities have inspired young people around the globe. In *Simon Says Gold*, Simon describes his personal journey to Olympic glory as he recounts not only that glorious day in Sydney, but also the anguish of failing to repeat as Olympic champion in Athens in 2004, and his dramatic comeback at the 2008 Beijing Games, when his exhilarating race to a silver medal enthralled millions of fans around the world. Simon's stories of the highs and lows of his running career will captivate readers young and old, but his real message is that the simple pursuit of excellence is its own reward and will also inspire and motivate. Not everyone can be an Olympian. Simon Whitfield believes that true greatness is in performing to the best of one's ability. The reward is in the effort, not the outcome.

Book Information

Paperback: 118 pages

Publisher: Orca Book Publishers (October 1, 2009)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 1554691419

ISBN-13: 978-1554691418

Product Dimensions: 6.5 x 0.4 x 9 inches

Shipping Weight: 10.4 ounces (View shipping rates and policies)

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Customer Reviews

Grade 5
In 2000, Whitfield won a gold medal in the inaugural triathlon race held in the Sydney Summer Olympics. He was an unheralded contender, ranked 26th in the world; when he returned home to Canada, he found that he'd become an overnight sensation. He soon began to feel pressure to prove that his surprise win wasn't a fluke. The ensuing eight years held a few wins and a number of disappointments until he won a silver medal at the 2008 Olympics in Beijing.

Whitfield's prose is wordy, breathless, and relentlessly upbeat: "Athens forced us to take a step back and realize we needed to take care of the little details and rediscover the joy of sport that was lacking." Still, he tells his story with candor, and he sheds light on the dark side of early success and

the pressures athletes face. Sidebars offer more information on the sport of triathlon, and scrapbook-style color photographs enliven the tale. Participants and fans of track and field will enjoy Whitfield's insider's perspective and cheer his determined comeback. —Marilyn Taniguchi, Beverly Hills Public Library, CA Copyright © Reed Business Information, a division of Reed Elsevier Inc. All rights reserved.

Whitfield won the triathlon gold medal at the 2000 Sydney Olympics, didn't place in Athens in 2004, and then came back to win the Silver Medal in Beijing in 2008. Now he is furiously training for the 2012 Games in London. His honesty about his failures and uncertainty, as well as the dizzying excitement of victory, provides the drama in this action-packed biography. Occasionally, the inspirational messages feel forced, but the star's personal highs and lows (he remembers his first triathlon when he was a teen), along with the details about preparing for the triathlon's three sports—running, cycling, and swimming—will grab teen athletes and fans. The book design is browsable, with lots of color photos; information boxes about training, role models, coaches, related books and movies, sports science; and much more. Readers will look forward to cheering Whitfield on in 2012. Grades 7-12. --Hazel Rochman

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