



Amazing Pace: The Story of Olympic Champion Michael Phelps From Sydney to Athens to Beijing

Amazing

Paul McMullen

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A vibrant portrait of American swimmer Michael Phelps--the most decorated Olympian of all time--from an obscure and awkward 14-year-old to the most scrutinized competitor at the world's biggest sporting event.

Before he was old enough to have a driver's license, Michael Phelps had a world record. Before he ever took a college class or turned 20, he had earned distinction by winning 8 medals--6 gold and 2 bronze--at the Athens Olympics, the most in non-boycotted Games. Along the way, he captivated an American television audience and confounded the critics who questioned his ambition.

Amazing Pace is the most revealing look we have had at this remarkable athlete based on five years of observation by respected *Baltimore Sun* journalist, Paul McMullen. Highlights include:

- Phelps's unusual training regimen which shuns weight-lifting and cross-training and concentrates almost entirely on swimming--4 million yards per year, an average of 11,000 yards per day, every day
- The impact of parental separation and remarriage on Phelps' adolescence, specifically, how these affected familial support of an Olympian when it was needed most
- The emotional highs and lows of competitive athleticism, Phelps' decision to turn professional at the young age of 16, and the guilt and pressure that accompanied Phelps' surpassing his siblings' swimming careers
- Dramatic reporting from the 2004 Olympic Games; including the injury and personal missteps that threatened his life and career in the aftermath of his achievements in Athens

McMullen's careful research adds unprecedented and dramatic context to the life of a young athlete who has achieved rock star status among swim fans, who seems remarkably cool on the outside while inside his competitive fire burns with an intensity that has rarely been matched.

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