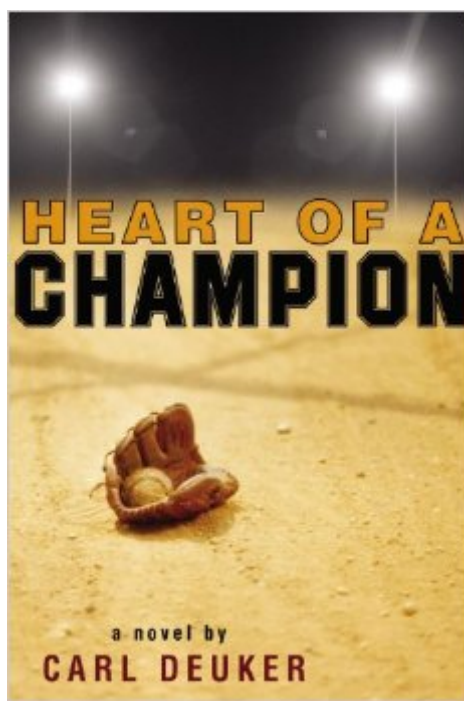


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# Heart Of A Champion



## Synopsis

Jimmy Winter is a born star on the baseball field, and Seth Barnam can only dream of being as talented. Still, the two baseball fanatics have the kind of friendship that should last forever. But when Seth experiences an unthinkable loss, he's forced to find his own personal strength--on and off the field. An ALA Best Book for Young Adults An ALA Best Book for Reluctant Readers A New York Public Library Book for the Teen Age Pennsylvania Young Reader's Choice Book of the Year

## Book Information

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Best Sellers Rank: #15,126 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #4 in [Books > Teens > Literature & Fiction > Sports > Baseball & Softball](#) #8 in [Books > Teens > Literature & Fiction > Social & Family Issues > Drugs & Alcohol Abuse](#) #64 in [Books > Teens > Literature & Fiction > Social & Family Issues > Friendship](#)

## Customer Reviews

HEART OF A CHAMPION tells a story about two very different boys, and what brings them together. Seth's father recently died, and he's feeling lost. He meets Jimmy Winter and so the story begins. Seth and Jimmy learn about life while they learn about baseball. They celebrate their victories and their failures on the field and in life. This book deals with important issues such as death, divorce, alcoholism and peer pressure. Deuker's dialogue is realistic, and you can hear the crack of the bat in his baseball descriptions. The plot moves along quickly, and keeps interest levels high. This is a good book even for someone who really doesn't read much for pleasure. I highly recommend it.

Heart of a Champion is an inspiring story by Carl Deuker. This book, which is based on a true story, is extremely well written and has very realistic characters. This book follows two boy's adolescence as they live and die around their favorite sport, baseball. The characters are brought together from

two different backgrounds, through their love of the game. As they enter high school they mature as adults and overcome personal challenges that come their way. This book appeals to any baseball fan or someone who is interested in a realistic story about friendship and life. The main characters, Jimmy and Seth, go through the typical changes of an average teenager. This aspect of the book allows adolescents to relate to some of the problems that they also face. Jimmy's character is one of the most complex characters that I have ever read about. Readers will be surprised at Jimmy's mindset and his personality changes throughout the story. The other main character, Seth plays the role of the more responsible and mature friend who must keep Jimmy grounded. This story takes place in California in the 90s. When Jimmy and Seth are 8 they meet each other on the playground. They decide to play catch and this starts a long lasting friendship. Every Saturday for 5 years they meet each other on the playground to play catch and hit flyballs. When the two part their ways on the playground and start high school, they find out they are going to the same school. They join the high school baseball team and go through 3 seasons of high caliber championship baseball. But in their senior year, Seth starts to see his best friend spin out of control. This is an excellent book and I would recommend this to anyone who is interested in a good, pageturner.

Jesse Johnson 2/5/03A reader's first impression of Heart of a Champion is a tale of courage and how friends, help friends get through things. It is a great book to read specially if you enjoy realistic fiction and sports stories. The main plot of the book is about a boy named Seth who lives with his mom because his dad died of cancer and they moved into a new town. Seth has trouble making friends because he is quiet and humble. Then one day when he is at the park a boy named Jimmy and his dad ask Seth if he would like to play baseball with them and Seth decides to give it a try. Seth is not very good at baseball but he really likes it so he keeps on playing and getting better. Seth and Jimmy get to be real close friends and do all kinds of stuff together. They grow up together and eventually reach high school. They both try out for the team but Seth makes the Junior Varsity team but Jimmy makes the Varsity team and becomes popular at school. Jimmy starts to make poor decisions and Seth knows that he will get in trouble if he hangs out with Jimmy. Jimmy is the wild and outgoing type, Jimmy likes to party and does not concentrate on his school work that good. Seth is the quiet type and he likes to work on his school work more. He is also an honor student and has really good grades. Seth isn't that popular, but Jimmy is popular and hangs out with the cool group. As you know Seth and Jimmy are the main characters. Seth is more motivated on his school work and baseball. Jimmy is more motivated to baseball and wants to be a pro baseball player. I wonder how much he wants to play baseball because he makes a lot of mistakes that could hurt

him in the long run. *The Heart of a Champion* is a real good book that teaches you about courage, persistence, and good friendship. I really enjoyed the book and I thought that there were no boring spots in the book. The author keeps you wondering what's going to happen next after every chapter.

I'm normally not a sports reader ...to be truthful I only picked up this book because it won an award for reluctant readers and that is precisely what I have in my classroom, reluctance. This story is masterfully crafted and the words practically bleed with the passion for the game. The action describing the games is poetic and thrilling. He makes baseball sound like a symphony -- pointing out the cadences and nuances lost to the layman. I found myself biting my nails on for the outcome of the games or refusing to put it down to see which team pulls ahead for the championship. Relegating this book to simply a fantastic sports story is selling it short. This book is really about the power of friendship and how it is expressed on the field. This story is reminiscent of the movie *Amadeus* where we see a masterful talent through the eyes of another exceptional player. Unlike that movie we have a tender, compassionate friend who recounts how this player affected and changed his life through the art of baseball. I say art because Deuker made me see the game in a different way ...which I never thought possible. I finished the book reaffirming why I became an English teacher ... yes it's to connect students with outstanding reads like this one but it's also because of my students that I picked up this book. I feel like I should dedicate this read and review to them because I am so much better for having read this story.

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