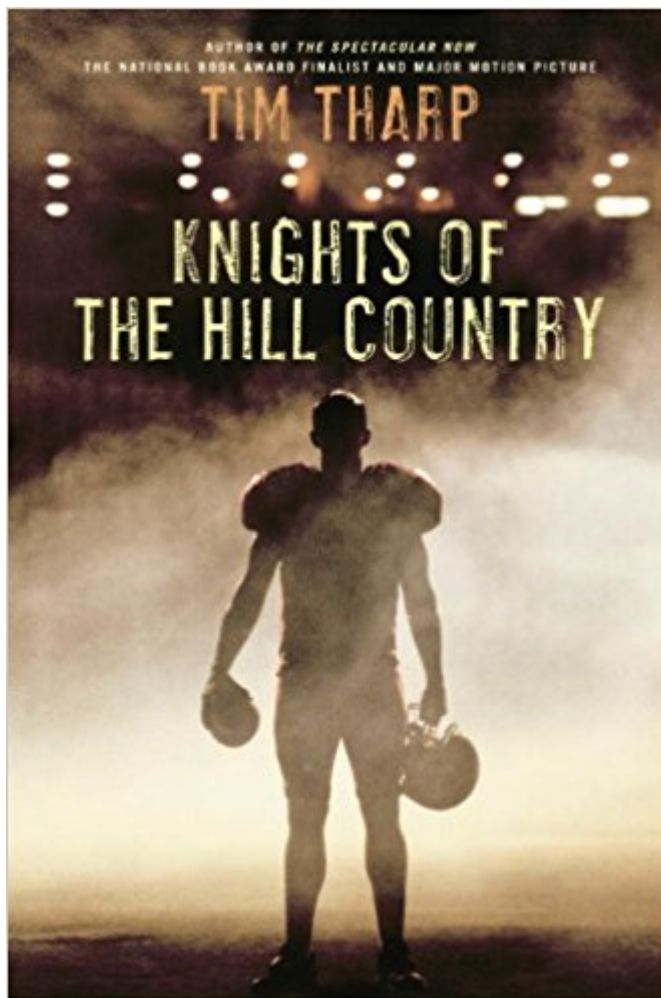


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Knights Of The Hill Country



Synopsis

Welcome to Kennisaw—where Friday night high school football ranks right up there with God and country. This year, the Kennisaw Knights are going for their fifth straight undefeated season, and if they succeed, they'll be legends. But the Knights' legacy is a heavyweight to carry for Hampton, linebacker and star of the team. On the field, he's so in control you'd think he was able to stop time. But his life off the field is a different story. His mom has a new boyfriend every week. He's drawn to a smart, quirky girl at school who seems totally wrong for a star athlete, and his best friend and teammate is growing uncomfortably competitive. This thought-provoking novel is the story of a boy whose choices will decide the kind of man he becomes.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

Grade 8 Up—Teachers don't recognize his smarts, he struggles with his mother's unsuccessful romantic relationships, and he is unsure of himself around girls, but when senior football star Hampton Green is on the field, everything clicks. His Oklahoma team, the Kennisaw Knights, has a five-year winning streak they are trying to take to the record books by securing the state championship one more time. Hampton's best friend, Blaine, has a shallow relationship with the prettiest girl in school and tries to drag Hampton into a similar stereotypical dating scene. Hampton, however, finds himself attracted to self-assured, intelligent Sara, whom Blaine says is not good for his image. As the championship unfolds, things get tense, and Blaine drags Hampton into a confrontation with an enemy from the opposing team, during which Blaine pulls a gun and Hampton

must finally assert himself. The teens voice comes in loud and clear, revealing a sensitive, likable character. Hamptons budding romance with Sara is touching and adds an interesting dimension. The conquering of insecurities and gradual self-realization Hampton experiences are reminiscent of Bert Bowden in Terry Daviss *If Rock and Roll Were a Machine* (Delacorte, 1992), and readers will root as much for his team as for Hampton to be true to himself. The dynamic football scenes will draw readers who enjoyed H. G. Bissingers *Friday Night Lights* (Da Capo, 2000). The covers hazy silhouette of a football player reflects the strong character inside who will eventually bring his own hazy life into focus. --Diane P. Tuccillo, City of Mesa Library, AZ Copyright © Reed Business Information, a division of Reed Elsevier Inc. All rights reserved. --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

In the hill country of Oklahoma, where high-school football ranks "next to God and country, and truth be known, sometimes came in first," Hampton Green is a star linebacker of the Kennisaw Knights, and he feels the weight of carrying on his team's fifth undefeated season like "one hell of a big sack of rocks." Things are heavy at home, too, where he often finds his single mother with a new guy. Blaine is Hamp's teammate and best friend, but he doesn't understand Hamp's interest in Sara, whose wild hair and baggy clothes separate her from the football players' girlfriends. Tharp's debut novel is a sensitive portrait of small-town life and a young athlete's growing awareness that he is more than just the sport he plays so well. Taut scenes on the football field and the dilemmas about choosing what feels right over what's expected are all made memorable by Hamp's unforgettable, colloquial voice, which speaks about feelings and football with the same unwavering, fully realized personality. A moving, sensitive debut from a writer to watch. Gillian Engberg Copyright © American Library Association. All rights reserved --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

Knights of the Hill country is more of a coming of age story than sports story, but teens who like realistic fiction will enjoy it. The characters are cliché, but interesting. Hampton is an unremarkable young the man. The kind of teen who would be invisible in his high school and small town, except for his phenomenal football skills. Fatherless Hampton feels indebted to his best friend since third grade, Blaine. Blaine's father became Hamp's surrogate father and taught Hamp everything Hamp knows about playing football. Blaine, the starting quarterback for the team, has become resentful of Hampton, watching Hampton's star rise while his sinks into mediocrity. Blaine's behavior spirals out of control as his anger at no longer being the town hero consumes him. Hamp is faced with a moral

dilemma - loyalty to his best friend or standing up to him and losing his lifelong friendship. As is probably true in many teen relationships, it is two female characters, Sara and Rachel, who see Blaine's true character before Hamp does. Sara tries to enlighten Hamp, but Hamp makes excuses for Blaine. Rachel at first tries to woo Blaine into better behavior, then kicks him to the curb. I found the plot of *Knights of the Hill Country* slow and the ending predictable. That probably won't bother teen readers. The descriptions of the football games were terrific and exciting. Too bad there weren't more games to liven up the story.

The book had well drawn characters and the plot lines were believable and in some cases compelling. Anyone whose ever suffered through high school (I sure did!) can relate to a lot of the issues the author goes in to of acceptance and rejection. It's a quick read and I would say thought provoking in its own way; especially how the characters confront their future as they move toward high school graduation. I'd recommend reading it. It's not on the same level as Tim Tharp's other well know book, *The Spectacular Now*, but a good read none the less. JRA

Enjoyed because it was about an excellent football team striving to go undefeated--do they ?. The usual list of guys those that are good in HS but won't make it in college --those that are natural and will --their love crushes --a bit of history about the football team is woven in that shows the prejudices that never seem to go away somehow .

Purchased for son, he said it was just ok.

Apparently, this book is written for teenagers. I'm glad I didn't know that before I started reading it. I'm 49 and I loved it. Took me back to the days when I played high school football and was deciding what kind of person I was going to be. It's one of those books that you wish would never end and unfortunately I was able to read it in an evening.

The author paints a realistic picture of the glory and often pressurized atmosphere of high school football in the south. The characters are realistic and remind me of my youth. The hero is a guy I would cheer for. Great job, Tim!

Just another excellent book by, Tim Tharp. The football sequences were as close as to being on the field that I have had the experience to enjoy since last playing myself.

Writing with real sensitivity (and avoiding cliches), Tim Tharp tells the story of young man discovering his own value while realizing that he has been worshipping what turn out to be very flawed heroes.

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