



Soccerland (The International Sports Academy)

By Beth Choat

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"One day I'm going to play for the U.S. Women's National Team." That's what Flora Dupre promised her mom, before her mom died of cancer. Flora and her mom had created a place called Soccerland, an escape world where they went and just talked soccer. And now Flora's dream of playing for the U.S.A. might be coming true. Flora's received the invitation of a lifetime: the chance to try out for the Under-15 U.S. Girls' Soccer Team, an opportunity that could put Flora on the road to making her dream a reality and reaching the real "Soccerland." But when Flora arrives at the International Sports Academy, the level of talent there is like nothing she's ever seen before. Flora struggles to hold her own, grappling with new positions on the pitch, injuries, a frustrating coach, and contempt from other players. But Flora is a big, strong Dupre girl—and she's not going to go down easy.

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Editorial Review

From School Library Journal

Gr 5-8-A love of soccer was something Flora Dupre shared with her mother. In the final months of her mother's life, the two would relive their favorite games in a place they called Soccerland-a way to escape the reality of the painful chemo treatments. Two years later, as the best soccer player in her school, her town, and even her state of Maine, Flora feels confident that if she had a chance to try out for the Under-15 National Team, she would be on her way to her ultimate goal of one day playing in the World Cup. Her chance comes with an invitation to a National Team Identification Camp at the International Sports Academy. At camp, Flora is challenged as never before by players of the highest caliber, a coach who seems to have nothing but criticism, and a trio of mean girls who consistently put her down. With the memory of her mother telling her to follow her dream, Flora will have to channel all her skills, her determination, and her mental toughness to succeed. Author and sports journalist Beth Choat narrates Flora's story (Amazon Children's Pub., 2010) with a steady, straightforward performance. While she doesn't really differentiate between characters, her unadorned style allows the focus to stay on Flora and her goal. Athletes, especially soccer players, will relate to the highs and lows of Flora's experience, and all listeners will admire her absolute determination to achieve her dream.-Amanda Raklovits, Champaign Public Library, ILα(c)
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From [Booklist](#)

With the singleminded determination that a lot of young athletes will relate to, Flora Dupre is interested in one thing and one thing only: playing in the Olympics and World Cup as a member of the U.S. Women's National Team. She's by far the best soccer player in the not-exactly-talent-fertile state of Maine, but when she's asked to the tryouts for the Under-15 Girls' Soccer Team, she encounters all sorts of physical and mental challenges that she has never dealt with before. A few subplots, especially those concerning Flora's family back home, feel undeveloped and purposeful, and her repeated internal monologues expressing just how much she wants to play for the national team get hammered home a few too many times, but the soccer-specific details are handled quite well. Choat, a longtime sports journalist, obviously knows the ins-and-outs of an elite training facility, so teens either looking to live vicariously through Flora, or those who share her singular focus, will likely enjoy this novel. Grades 7-10. --Ian Chipman

About the Author

Beth Choat has been a sports journalist for nearly two decades. She has written for Sports Illustrated for Kids and been a staff journalist for Sports Illustrated, ABC Sports, and three Olympic Committees. She has covered world, Olympic, European, and national championships from the inside, where she has observed and been told first-hand what it's like to be a young, female, world-class athlete. Beth Choat's expertise is sports; her passion is the empowerment of young women. She lives in the desert Southwest with her husband.

Users Review

From reader reviews:

Jetta Butler:

Have you spare time for a day? What do you do when you have a lot more or little spare time? Yeah, you can choose the suitable activity for spend your time. Any person spent their own spare time to take a stroll,

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