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Payback Time



Synopsis

Through the eyes of a distinctly non-athletic protagonist—a fat high school journalist named Mitch—a veteran sports novelist Deuker reveals the surprising truth behind a mysterious football player named Angel. When Angel shows up Lincoln High, he seems to have no past—or at least not one he is willing to discuss. Though Mitch gets a glimpse of Angel's incredible talent off the field, Angel rarely allows himself to shine on the field. Is he an undercover cop, wonders Mitch? Or an ineligible player? In pursuit of a killer story, Mitch decides to find out just who this player is and what he's done. In the end, the truth surprises everyone.

Book Information

Lexile Measure: 750 (What's this?)

Paperback: 304 pages

Publisher: HMH Books for Young Readers; Reprint edition (February 28, 2012)

Language: English

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Product Dimensions: 5.5 x 0.8 x 8.2 inches

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

Average Customer Review: 4.5 out of 5 stars See all reviews (46 customer reviews)

Best Sellers Rank: #35,536 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #2 in Books > Sports & Outdoors >

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Difficult Discussions > Drugs #19 in Books > Children's Books > Growing Up & Facts of Life >

Difficult Discussions > Violence

Age Range: 12 and up

Grade Level: 7 and up

Customer Reviews

From the moment I picked up *Payback Time* I couldn't put it down. *Payback Time* is a fantastic book that allows its readers to relate to the protagonist in a number of different ways. Including his demeanor and struggles with weight and recognizing what he wants to do in his life. And it is through these struggles that we are able to see the protagonist, Mitch, grow. *Payback Time* is an interesting mixture of a young adult, sports, and mystery novel. It is this unique combination that allows Deuker to completely capture the audience's attention. Whenever the story starts to slow down readers will be swept up into an action packed description of a fourth and out play that Mitch

is reporting on, bringing a fresh sense to the book and reviving this adrenaline charged book. But the real excitement of the story is centered around Mitch, the protagonist, snooping around Angel, the mysterious football player who seems to old and is sensational, yet downplays how good he on the field. Angel's past slowly unfurls in front of Mitch, but when the mystery is solved, and the worst happens, it's up to Mitch to see what kind of person he really is and try to help fix the problem that he created. While most authors would flounder about with this kind crisis, and try to have the character make decisions that don't make any sense or have them have unrealistic conclusions. Deuker's characters are true and accurate. And it is through his sensational character development that he is able to show the change that Mitch makes, allowing his conclusion to really end with a bang. Between the exciting football games, the unfolding mystery of Angel, and Deuker's engrossing characters this is a great book. I personally couldn't put it down, and I would recommend it to fans of young adult sports books, mysteries, and anyone just looking for a good book.[...]

Payback Time was told in the first person by a high school senior called Daniel "Mitch" True. Mitch's observations of school situations and fellow students were amusing. I found myself comparing high school life to my own when I was a student. Nothing much has changed. Mitch is a talented writer for the school paper. His new assignment was to attend school games, football, volley ball etc. and then write the results of the games in the sports section of the school paper. Mitch was assisted by Kimi Yon, the paper's photographer. They both have press passes which allow them admission to watch each game and take photos.. We learn quickly the football coach is not exactly a bad man but he is a bit dishonest. He instructs Mitch to write rave reviews about one player and ignore others. This bothers Mitch but he must obey. In this book, football is the game of interest. While attending one of the practices, Mitch and Kimi observe a new player named Angel. They see him make some fantastic football moves. No one knows who this player is and from where he hails. He seems older than other students. Despite his skill, the coach ignores his talent and mostly he makes him a bench sitter. Why and what is going on regarding this new student? Mitch and Kimi decide to investigate the mystery of Angel's identity. When they are told by the coach and Angel himself to let him be, their curiosity about him increases.. This curiosity lead them on a type of Sherlock Homes investigation. This investigation is the only excitement in the book. After a few dangerous pursuits including a severe beating, Mitch does uncover the mystery of Angel's identity. Angel disappears and the story ends. Since this book is labeled a mystery, my feeling is the author devoted too many pages describing football maneuvers. I was getting very bored reading about all the passes, punts, touchdowns and injuries at the games. I seldom skip pages when I read a book but that is what I

found I had to do. The solution to the identity of the mystery man, Angel, did not require an education about football techniques. Perhaps this is primarily a man's book.

This book sounded really good from the write up on it. It has a little mystery and intrigue in the high school sport area. I really liked the start of the book and could relate to Mitch (danny). The story gets really good as Mitch and Kimi try to figure out just who Angel is and where he came from. The story at the end just falls flat and ends very abruptly. It finishes so fast that you feel like you missed a lot about what exactly happened and you want to read more about the characters and their lives.

If you're considering this book and haven't read Gym Candy or Runner, I would suggest reading those two books first. For a kid who loves football, this book might hold their interest. The ending was disappointing.

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