



Jimmy Connors Saved My Life: A Personal Biography

Joel Drucker

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Jimmy Connors is seldom considered when one discusses the best tennis players ever. Nevertheless, he was the most successful, with an all-time best 109 tournament victories through the 1970s and 1980s including eight major championships, and during the 1970s he was the world's No. 1 ranked player for a then unprecedented five consecutive years. In this carefully researched, admiring account of Connors' blue-collar rise through the tennis ranks shepherded by Gloria, the ultimate tennis mum, sports journalist Joel Drucker describes how mother and son pushed their way into the aristocratic tennis oligarchy with determination and hard work. Though popular as a charismatic and energetic joker on court, Connors wasn't always nice, had a temper and projected a mild paranoia. The chip on his shoulder that carried him out of Belleville, Illinois, to a number-one world ranking also antagonized the press, his opponents and the tennis establishment. But it was Connors' determination that inspired Drucker to pursue his career, hence the book's title. He has combined meticulous research and dozens of interviews with his first-hand experience to craft a book that is both a comprehensive biography of Connors and a memoir of the author's life. Connors ignited a tennis revolution, personifying the notion that an athlete could be both a sports superstar and cultural icon, and by a fusion of rage, desire, ambition and talent Connors showcased the sport as no one before him. In chronicling the life of the enigmatic superstar, Drucker reveals in candid detail the profound emotional impact Connors had on him as his own life intersected and ultimately clashed with the tennis superstar.

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