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The true story of the NFL's oldest rookie In 1976, Vince Papale was thirty, a former schoolteacher and part-time bartender, and a season ticket-holder for his beloved Philadelphia Eagles. When he heard that Coach Dick Vermeil was holding open tryouts, he decided to give it a shot. Shocking himself and the coaches, he ran an explosive 40-yard-dash in just 4.5 seconds--a world-class time--and was offered a contract on the spot. When he joined the team, Papale became the oldest non-kicking rookie in NFL history, a fan favorite who played for four years and was named a team captain. *Invincible* is Vince Papale's story, and a tie-in to the Disney Pictures film of the same name starring Mark Wahlberg as Papale and Greg Kinnear as Vermeil. But more than just a tie-in, it tells Papale's story in his own words, covering subjects not included in the film. Like *Rudy*, *Glory Road*, and *Rookie*, it is the true story of an ordinary man who achieves an extraordinary goal.

Invincible: My Journey from Fan to NFL Team Captain Details

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Kelton M says

This book, *Invincible*, by Vince Papale, with Chad Millman, is an autobiography about beating all odds to make a dream come true. Vince Papale was a boy who grew up in a bad neighborhood in Philadelphia with a mentally ill mother and an extremely judgmental father. His father seemed to pin his own regrets onto Vince. Throughout his life all he knew and the one constant was he loved the Eagles. It started as a distraction from his hard childhood and grew into an obsession. In his high school career he tried many sports. He played baseball, and he was one of the fastest runners on the track team. He also played basketball, but he only played one year of high school football. He went to college on a track scholarship. After college he ran into a group of guys in Philadelphia and joined a rough touch league. He also ended up as a teacher at the same high school he went to, as well as the track and JV football team. His dream was always to play professional football. He tried out for the semi-pro league. While playing for the semi-pro league, he was recruited for the newly established World Football League. He quit his teaching job to pursue his football career. Unfortunately that league only lasted two seasons then went bankrupt. Vince then retreated to substitute teach at his old high school and bartend. That is where he was in life when the Eagles announced open tryouts for any Eagles fan in Philadelphia. Even though he had doubts about whether or not he could make it, one of his close friends coerced him into trying out. In hopes to realize his dream and also follow in the footsteps of his favorite player, Tommy McDonald, he showed up at the try outs with everything on the line. There were many more hopefuls there than Vince had expected to see. It was going to come down to who was good enough and who wanted it the most.

I really liked the book because it was a good read, it keeps you interested, it's about football, and it's a true story. There is something motivational about seeing someone beat all odds to accomplish what seems impossible. I would recommend this book to guys and girls who like sports or an underdog scenario.

James says

Everyone loves to root for the underdog and this is the definitely the underdog story. Vince Papale was track star who became a teacher. With no experience with football in college he was able to make it onto a NFL team, no easy feat.

His stories emphasizes the fact to do not take what is given to you, if you think you deserve it, fight for it. Lessons we can all live by. However, while the message he gives across is invaluable the rest of the story is not. Vince had a difficult life growing up, there is no doubt about that but his story just seemed to drag along. I know he is trying to build a foundation letting the reader know where he came from but the way it was presented seemed uneven. Some parts had great detail while others very little, especially the parts about his later wives and how they effected him.

This is a decent read, although longer than it should be. Don't expect a constant gripping story every moment, imagine more like a turbulent, lazy Sunday story with a fairy tale ending.

Tony Wren says

The author of this autobiography *Invincible* was Vince Papale. He was a former schoolteacher made NFL superstar. He was a beloved and devoted fan of the Philadelphia Eagles. He was a season ticket holder, who would give anything to get on the field. When one fateful day he got his chance at an open try-out for all Philadelphians. After longer internal debate he decided to go to the try-outs and to his own surprise he did very well. Actually he did amazing and made the team. That's just a small summary of the book.

I would recommend this book to any person in need of motivation or who who loves sports. This book is great for all ages because of the message it displays. The message of whihc you can do anything if you want it bad enough and work hard enough for it. The truth behind this book also makes it just that much more astounding as a reader. Along with the great message it send it is also very relatable to anyones life; with the use of modern era stuff such as text, sports, and other cultural aspects throughout the book. So all in all if your looking for a book to motivate and inspire or just want a good book to read i recommend this with full enthusiasm.

Lisa says

Vince Papale, who was the oldest NFL rookie and played for the Eagles, tells his inspiring story in this book and in the movie "Invincible".

Although I saw the movie many years ago and I knew where the story was going, I enjoyed listening to this audio book. I do like biographies, and especially those where people like Vince work hard and find success.

Vince has his ups and down, especially with women/marriage.

This is an especially good book for high school NFL fans that could use a little motivation to work harder.

Ian Allan says

The movie *Invincible* was very good. If you are a casual football fan, then maybe best to just stick with the movie. If you are a fan of the NFL and followed the game closely in the '60s, '70s and '80s, then it makes sense to look further into the story of Vince Papale. There's a lot more to the story than simply what made the movie. With a movie, you're restricted by having to present it in about 100 minutes. So you've got cut huge portions out. In this case, all of Papale's childhood is removed. He was a great track athlete in high school and college. That disappears. He flunked out of college but got a second chance. That's gone. His high school and semi-pro football doesn't make the movie. Papale played for the WFL's Philadelphia Bell. If you remember the World Football League, then this is a book for you. Bill Bergey shows up in this book; great player for the Bengals and Eagles. I also learned the following. Papale caught the first pass in the history of the WFL. His first pass attempts (his way) were in a Week 14 game against the Seattle Seahawks in the final year of their exhibition season. The Eagles were instrumental in the creation of the Shamrock Shake -- using proceeds to fund the first Ronald McDonald House. This is the kind of stuff you're getting into. If you're a true football fan, give this one a look.

Angelina Brown says

Loved this book. It was inspiring to hear Vince's story, and I think after reading, people will look differently at some situations in their life. I loved reading about how Vince Papale overcame so much to accomplish a dream of his.

Courtney Stockstill says

This book is about an average guy who became the special teams captain of the Philadelphia Eagles NFL football team. It was actually much better than I expected! It presented the idea that any average normal person can achieve what they want if they really try hard and commit to their goals in life. I know it's harder than that, but still the efforts you put into your life have a huge effect upon the direction your life takes.

The following part, may be right... may be wrong... I don't know, it's just what I understand to be... and somehow it seems to parallel the message I got from the book. (I bet no one else gets a message like this from a football jock book!!!)

The Pauline letters from the Bible teach us that we should try to perform our jobs to the best of our ability, and that we should not sit around and be idle. In the time of Paul (just after Jesus was crucified), the people were told that the second coming of Christ was to happen soon, some of them thought that meant within the next week or two, so they quit their jobs... Paul told them that soon could actually mean much longer than a week or two, (maybe even thousands of years), so he told them they needed to go back to their jobs so they could support themselves and their families and be useful to their society.

Mahlon says

Invincible chronicles the unlikely rise of Vince Papale, from playing sandlot football with his buddies, to becoming an NFL rookie at 30, when he earned a spot with the Philadelphia Eagles. He eventually played 3 years with the team, becoming a standout on special teams. This story is proof that you should never give up on your dreams, because sometimes they really do come true :)

This book was a pleasant surprise to me because I had seen the movie first, and assumed that it followed the story pretty closely, while this is true for the most part, the movie left out the important fact that Vince had actually had a year and a half of pro-football seasoning playing for the Philadelphia Bell in the now defunct World Football League. They also neglected to mention that he was a track star in college, and that he worked out constantly in the off-season to stay in top shape. All these added details only increased my admiration for Vince Papale. At 224 pages, *Invincible* is a short, but uplifting read.

Robbie says

Name Robbie Sheets

Book title *Invincible*

Author Chad Millman

Pages 212

Why did you choose to read this book? My sister got me this book for my birthday I've seen previews of the movie but never knew who the person was.

Genre: non-fiction true sports story.

Setting: Philadelphia.

Description of main character: Jock runner/football player.

Plot summary: a guy name Vince makes in the NFL at age 30.

Main conflict or problem: Vince has to overcome a bad childhood he tries many jobs but is at right place at the right time.

How the problem resolved is: He lives his dream.

What is your opinion of the book & why: I like the message of the book to never give up and is like me in a way tryout for the JV baseball team.

Kate says

I picked up this book because my dad got it as a gift from my cousin on Christmas, and encouraged me to read it after him. He thought that I would really like it, because he really enjoyed it, and he doesn't usually read. It is basically an autobiography, and it tracks football star Vince Papale from the time he was a young kid playing football with his friends in the backyard to his tryout for the Eagles at the astounding age of 30. Spoiler alert (but not really): he makes it. It is certainly very inspirational, and definitely gave me the motivation to go try harder in my sports, to put in the physical effort to become a better player.

Vince is pretty much the definition of an underdog, which makes it that much more fun to root for him (except for when he played the Giants, in my case), hoping that despite the odds being against him, he will make the team, make the catch, and be successful. It was a fun, quick read, and I would recommend it to any football fans. If you don't like to watch football, however, I don't think this book is for you, because they do a lot of describing plays and different aspects of the game and reference many famous players and coaches.

David Meyer says

The writing itself isn't great, but it made me a believer that Papale was a big part of the actual writing, which I appreciate. The true story of Papale's life is quite a bit different than made out to be in the movie *Invincible*. A lot of the story about Papale's childhood was interesting to read and might've even enhanced the movie. As a Philly sports fan, it was pretty easy to get into the story, but the descriptions of NFL football and training camps in the 60s through 80s could make any fan excited. Definitely a fun read.

On a different note, I bought this book (which was written in 2006) at a flea market. In the middle of the book, I found what the previous reader appeared to be using as their bookmark, a copy of the ESPN Monday

Night Football scheduled from 2006. Stuff like that makes me happy for some reason.

Kasey Wenger says

This book was just as I expected it to be. There is a movie that is based on the same true story and it is pretty much identical to this book. Vince Papale was just a normal thirty-year old man who didn't have much to go for except being a hometown bartender and teacher until the Philadelphia Eagles, his favorite NFL team, had spring tryouts. Vince attended them, and with a 4.5 second 40 time, he was accepted onto the team. This story truly does show that hard work and desire after what you truly want does pay off and will have a positive ending to it. I liked the movie just as much as the book and one thing I liked about this book was that it showed how Vince was just a normal guy and then an NFL star. One thing I disliked was how he was treated by the players when he was in spring training.

Steven McGovern says

Class act

Better than the movie and an inspirational story . Makes Rocky sound plausible . One of best true life stories I've read .

Trevor says

I read the book *Invincible* by Vince Papale. This book is about a man named Vince Papale and his life, growing up in a poor neighborhood in Philadelphia to becoming an NFL team captain. I enjoyed this book because it was so motivational. Growing up Vince didn't live in a good environment. With his dad always working and his mom slowly being taken over by mental disease. He was very small compared to the other kids growing up, playing on the "Under 100 pound football team". Vince was always a great athlete among the neighborhood kids. In 8th grade he was recruited to the track team. Being on the track team he learned discipline.

I would definitely recommend this book! I would recommend it to someone that has an interest in football since the book is about Vince Papale's journey to the NFL. Even someone that doesn't know much about football would like this book since it is so inspiring. Some reasons why I would recommend this book first because it may inspire the person reading it to fulfill a lifelong dream. Also, it is a great read for someone that likes football because the book takes place in the 1960's -70's so there is a lot of football history in it.

J.S. says

I loved playing football with my friends as a kid. Since my hometown didn't have a team I remember picking a favorite from a poster the kid next-door had of all the different helmets. I picked a cool silver one with a blue star - the Dallas Cowboys (they had a great season that year and went on to win Super Bowl XII with a rookie named Tony Dorsett). But if I ever saw Vince Papale playing for the Eagles I don't remember the name.

Papale was a kid from a Philadelphia working-class neighborhood who also loved football. He played one year in high school, but spent college running track and pole-vaulting. But later he fulfilled his dream of playing for the Eagles when he made the team at 30 years old - an "old man" - and was voted team captain the next year due to his intensity and love of playing. He remembers his experiences - in surprising detail - from games throughout his life, talks about his accomplishments, and life after his short career.

For me, the beginning was the best part. I could relate to some of his reminiscences of his youth, and I even liked hearing how he became a junior high teacher and how the kids looked up to him. Much of the rest of it, though, wasn't as interesting as it probably is for those who knew him when he played and had that connection.

Brock says

I Just started and I think it is pretty good so far.

Kathy Jordan says

Inspirational, great story

For anyone that thinks their dreams are unreachable, read this book. Mr. Papale is living proof that being "dirt poor" doesn't mean you have to give up your dreams.

Jordan says

Jordan Schwartz

1/7/13

The book I read was *Invincible: My Journey from Fan to NFL Team Captain* by Vince Papale. This memoir was about Papale and his voyage from being raised in a bad neighborhood to becoming a great football player for the Philadelphia Eagles from 1976 to 1978. What I mean by a "bad neighborhood" is there was a lot of crime and poverty. There are many differences between *Invincible* and *Believe*, the book I read earlier this school year written by Eric LeGrand. *Believe* was about a man who got paralyzed from a major football hit and is trying to recover. However, the books are very similar because the writers talk about sports, overcoming obstacles, and inspiring others.

The theme of these books is people should keep a good mindset for the future and never give up even in bad circumstances like living in poverty like Papale or being paralyzed like LeGrand. The future is life going ahead and this relates to Papale and LeGrand. Another day is a chance to prove something to themselves that they can move on and have a better future.

Vince Papale was on the Eagles and was a team contributor on the football field. Dick Vermeil was his football coach when he was on the Eagles and he was emotional because they had a good relationship and he didn't want that to end when he cut Papale from the football team. He got cut from the football team because of the wear and tear Vince had in his body. One of Papale's obstacles is that his mom had a mental illness. One time she was going to jump off a bridge and Vince's dad saved her. Vince's dad was one of the obstacles he had to overcome because he was very critical and not supportive of Papale when he played football in his childhood. LeGrand wanted to overcome being paralyzed and playing football again. However, his mother was a significant part of his life because she helped him through being paralyzed. Even

though both mothers were important people in their lives, one mother had a mental illness which was one of Papale's obstacles and the other mother helped LeGrand through being paralyzed. *Invincible* was one of the greatest books I've ever read because Vince played for the Eagles which is my favorite team. It was interesting hearing the story that Vince had to dig out of to get to the NFL with the Eagles. I was inspired by Papale and the obstacles he overcame to get to the big stage that people dream of. The book should be read by football fanatics especially by Eagles fans because people who love football probably know this player. Another person who should read this book is a kid who lives in a bad neighborhood like Vince Papale who wants to succeed in their goals. This book was a worthy 4.5 out of five stars.

Ryan says

Invincible is an inspiring Novel about the life of Vince Papale, an underdog older walk on to the Philadelphia Eagles. after reading this story it gives you motivation to pursue your dreams and what you believe in. I would definitely recommend this book to a friend or anyone that has interest in football.

Charlie Obrecht says

The book I read was *Invincible* by Chad Millman. It tells the story about a South Philadelphia hero that made it all the way to the NFL. I picked this book because I love the game of football and also because I am from Philadelphia. I am a huge Eagles fan and root for them every year. The book is about a poor kid who grew up with a dream that many young boys can relate to, including me. That is playing for our hometown football team, the Philadelphia Eagles. He struggled through life as a kid, but that is what motivated him every day. This book has gotten tremendous reviews and also made a movie out of it. The movie got awards based on how popular it was, it is actually one of my favorite movies. I would certainly recommend this book to everyone, not just sports fans. It is a story, not just about football, but about struggling early in life and striving through the hard times.

The author, Chad Millman, used a lot of descriptive language that made actions that happened easy to visualize in my head. He described Vince making football plays that I could see in my head. I could even compare some plays to what I do on the football field. I was in to the book the whole time, reading every word because I was so interested in what was going on during the life of Vince Papale. The story of Vince having a tough life, dealing with family issues growing up constantly would keep any reader occupied. I could not see individuals not liking the style used unless they are completely opposed to sports and would not even give this book a chance. The book would remind me of just watching a movie, making you visualize the action events like you would see just watching any sports movie.

I would not really relate myself to this story, other than having the dream of playing in the national football league. My life has not been that hard, but everybody struggles at some point in their life. Without struggles, nothing would be accomplished in life. Best friends of Vince were introduced, his estranged family was described in the beginning of the book, and his teammates were introduced when he was put on the roster for the Eagles. The author tells about who Vince's friends are, and who his enemies are. The boys who he grows up with are the ones that push him through the hard times he had as a kid. Opponents on the football field were described; he exchanged words with some of the other players when they tried to pick on him during games. Not an opposing player, but he also hated his quarterback for his USFL team that he played for. The author vividly described his mother being severely ill, always doing very odd things and arguing with the family a lot. This was an effective way of describing the main characters.

This book grabbed me, being a football fan, especially an Eagles supporter. I love the game and most likely

any football book would get my attention. Invincible is plotted in chronological order, from when Vince was a project boy, all the way to retiring from the NFL. A key intriguing moment in the story is when Papale first tries out for his USFL team. He is met with athletes around him pursuing the same dream as him, but with actual football experience. Desire and passion kept Vince's dream alive, teaching the youth to acquire those same traits when they are young. I hear plenty of stories from grandparents about how it was living in the city at that time. If you were from Philadelphia, you "Bleed Green".

Reading this story as a seventeen year old has made me look back on my life. Thoughts flow through my head about how I could have used more desire and compassion in the things I did. Those traits can range anywhere from sports to school, working hard gets you somewhere. I wish I would have had more desire and passion in my life; it would have made me a better man that I am right now. I would recommend this book every single day. Invincible can be read by anyone, not just sports fans. It tells a story of chasing a dream and accomplishing it because of two traits everybody needs. Desire and Compassion.
