

JIMMY CONNORS SAVED MY LIFE

In *Jimmy Connors Saved My Life* author Joel Drucker provides the most thorough examination ever attempted of one of the most complex characters in recent sports history. Jimmy Connors won a record 109 professional tournaments, including eight major championships, and during the 1970s was the world's No. 1 ranked player for a then unprecedented five consecutive years. But his place as perhaps the most important player in tennis history was forged as much by the forcefulness of his fiery personality as the power of his groundstrokes. Connors ignited a tennis revolution. As Drucker writes in this illuminating work, Connors bulled tennis into a multi-million-dollar era of national television, rich endorsements and international celebrity. He personified 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.

Through meticulous research, dozens of interviews (including many hours spent with Connors over the years) and his own first-hand experience, Drucker recounts Connors' life story, following him from his St. Louis working-class beginnings under his taskmaster mother and grandmother, through his early successes, and on to his major triumphs and rivalries against the likes of Bjorn Borg, John McEnroe and Andre Agassi. Ultimately revealed is a man who, controlled by his mother, despised by many rivals and censured in the press for his on- and off-court volatility, became the game's first TV superstar and achieved all his life's ambitions save one: happiness.

But more than a biography, *Jimmy Connors Saved My Life* is a tale of how, through a life-long obsession with Connors, Drucker found meaning and serenity in his own life. Connors once confided to Drucker that "no other writer knows me as well as you do." That was because Drucker, as a teenage fan and later as a journalist, had soaked up every bit of information he could about his hero and, after their

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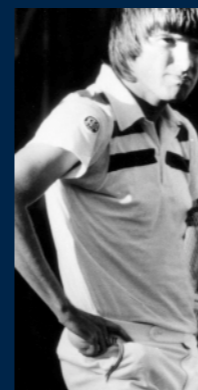


JOEL DRUCKER JIMMY CONNORS SAVED MY LIFE

A Personal Biography

Introduction by MARY CARILLO

JIMMY CONNORS
SAVED MY LIFE



JOEL
DRUCKER

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"Whether you like the son of a bitch or you hate him, the fact is that Jimmy Connors is the most important tennis player of the last 50 years...He changed the way the game was played by the pros, perceived by the fans and produced by television networks...He made tennis matter."

MARY CARILLO, FROM HER INTRODUCTION TO "JIMMY CONNORS SAVED MY LIFE"



"Joel Drucker . . . knows the man (Connors) personally and understands the player and his sport as well as anyone I know."

JOHN FEINSTEIN, BEST-SELLING
AUTHOR OF "CADDY FOR LIFE"

"Joel Drucker knows tennis as well as any writer in the U.S. and writes about it with intelligence and verve. *Jimmy Connors* makes a fascinating subject for him to examine."

FRANK DEFORD,
"SPORTS ILLUSTRATED" COLUMNIST

"Joel has brilliantly captured Connors' contradictions and his us against the world mentality. I wonder if Jimmy will learn something about himself in this reading."

CLIFF DRYSDALE,
ESPN COMMENTATOR AND
FOUNDING ATP PRESIDENT

"This book jumps right off the pages. With tremendous courage and insight, Drucker gets straight to the heart of why we're so obsessed by the 'greats'. His portrait of Connors is as relevant as anything I've ever read about an athlete."

SALLY JENKINS, CO-AUTHOR OF THE
LANCE ARMSTRONG BESTSELLER,
"IT'S NOT ABOUT THE BIKE"

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initial meeting in 1982, became a confidant of the tennis superstar. For a time, Drucker believed they were genuinely close, only to eventually realize that Connors, selfish, narcissistic and paranoid, had no close friends.

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. What results is much more than a fascinating biography of a major sports figure. *Jimmy Connors Saved My Life* is the story of two successful journeys: a single-minded march to superstardom, and an emotional passage to self-discovery.



JOEL DRUCKER is a writer and television commentator who ranks among the world's preeminent tennis essayists of the past quarter century. His work has appeared in every significant American tennis publication, several

major newspapers and scores of national general-interest magazines. He served as the technical editor for Patrick McEnroe's book, *Tennis For Dummies* and, in 1999, *Tennis Week* magazine honored Drucker as its "Writer of the Year." Drucker's extensive television resume includes credits as a co-producer and writer at CBS, ESPN, HBO, TNT and The Tennis Channel. He is also an on-air commentator for the international broadcast of the U.S. Open. A graduate with high honors from the University of California at Berkeley, Drucker lives in Oakland.

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