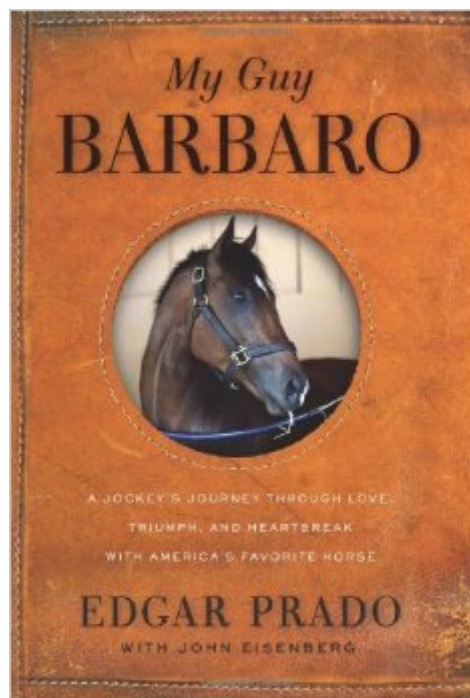


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# My Guy Barbaro: A Jockey's Journey Through Love, Triumph, And Heartbreak With America's Favorite Horse



## Synopsis

A new superstar appeared on the American sports landscape in the spring of 2006: Barbaro, a three-year-old racehorse, won the Kentucky Derby by six and a half lengths, the largest margin of victory in sixty years. Barbaro's impressive performance immediately stirred talk of a possible Triple Crown. But in the opening yards of the Preakness Stakes two weeks later, the horse suffered a catastrophic leg injury that ended his undefeated career and left him fighting for his life. Edgar Prado, a native of Peru and one of the world's top jockeys, rode Barbaro to glory and then stood beside him for months as the horse valiantly struggled to survive and millions of fans held their breath. Having ridden in more than twenty-five thousand races over the previous two decades, Prado thought he had been around too long to fall for any one horse, but Barbaro "intelligent, charismatic, and resourceful in sickness as well as in health" stole his heart. In *My Guy Barbaro*, Prado recounts his own story, a tale of grit and dreams that moves from his impoverished childhood in Lima, Peru, to the winner's circles of the greatest racetracks in the world, and memorably chronicles his emotional time with Barbaro before, during, and after the horse's breakdown. Their bond was special and immeasurable. With Prado still reeling from a wrenching personal loss, Barbaro lifted his spirits by giving him "the ride of a lifetime" in the Derby. When the tables turned and the horse needed support two weeks later, Prado was there, going out of his way to make a succession of visits to the New Bolton Center, the animal hospital in Pennsylvania where Barbaro underwent more than two dozen surgeries and was ultimately put down. Barbaro made worldwide headlines for eight months, and now Prado's poignant, clear-eyed narrative takes us where no reader has gone before "onto Barbaro's back in the heat of a race and into the intensive care suite where Barbaro's life-and-death drama played itself out. *My Guy Barbaro* is a heartwarming, unforgettable story of a man and his love for a beautiful animal and an irreplaceable teammate.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

This is a beautifully written book. It must be very difficult for two people to collaborate on a book and come out with a single cohesive voice and style, but this book has that. Edgar Prado is a brilliant jockey and a fine man with a loving heart. This book conveys that and adds a unique new perspective to a remarkable story. The first time he saw Barbaro, Edgar was riding another horse in the Laurel Futurity. As Barbaro broke away from the pack to win by eight lengths, Edgar says, "My horse had basically stopped running when he saw Barbaro pull away. I swore the sight had depressed him. But it had thrilled me. When you see a horse accelerate and finish like that,... you know you're seeing something special." He describes his feelings after a phone call in which he and trainer Michael Matz agreed that Edgar would be Barbaro's new jockey: "I smiled as I hung up. I was being handed the keys to a Lamborghini." Edgar talks about the significance of Barbaro starting out as a turf horse and switching later to dirt. Previously, Barbaro had been saddled on hard concrete floors in paddocks before racing on dirt tracks. However, preparations for the Preakness were different. "Now he was being saddled on grass, which excited him. He was a turf horse at heart,... He was never happier than when he was running on grass. The longer he stood on the grass, the more excited he became. He breathed harder. His muscles tensed. He was noticeably pumped up by the time I got on him." Barbaro was "agitated, impatient, a little too eager to get going" in the post parade. Edgar implies that this might have been a factor in the subsequent tragedy. I really enjoyed this book and highly recommend it, but I cannot give it a five-star rating.

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