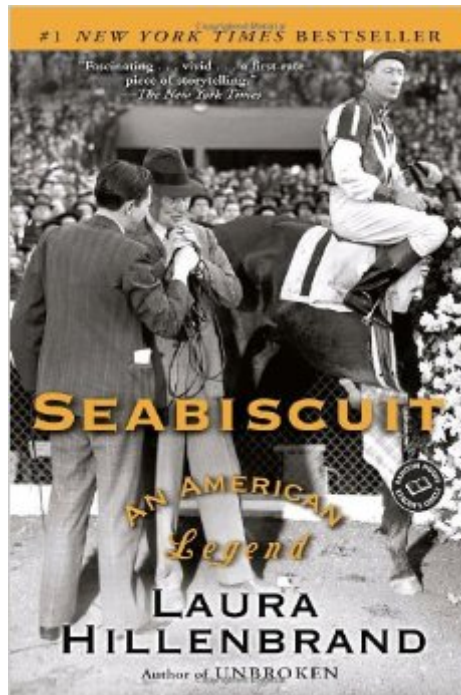


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Seabiscuit: An American Legend (Ballantine Reader's Circle)



Synopsis

Laura Hillenbrand, author of the runaway phenomenon *Unbroken*, brilliantly re-creates a universal underdog story in this #1 New York Times bestseller. *Seabiscuit* was one of the most electrifying and popular attractions in sports history and the single biggest newsmaker in the world in 1938, receiving more coverage than FDR, Hitler, or Mussolini. But his success was a surprise to the racing establishment, which had written off the crooked-legged racehorse with the sad tail. Three men changed *Seabiscuit*'s fortunes: Charles Howard was a onetime bicycle repairman who introduced the automobile to the western United States and became an overnight millionaire. When he needed a trainer for his new racehorses, he hired Tom Smith, a mysterious mustang breaker from the Colorado plains. Smith urged Howard to buy *Seabiscuit* for a bargain-basement price, then hired as his jockey Red Pollard, a failed boxer who was blind in one eye, half-crippled, and prone to quoting passages from Ralph Waldo Emerson. Over four years, these unlikely partners survived a phenomenal run of bad fortune, conspiracy, and severe injury to transform *Seabiscuit* from a neurotic, pathologically indolent also-ran into an American sports icon. From the Hardcover edition.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

This fascinating work of non-fiction is one of the best books I've read in a long time. Unlike a lot of historical non-fiction, this intriguing story did not read like a textbook - it read like fiction and not once did I find myself skimming the details ... too interesting to skim through! When I first heard about this story, I wasn't sure about it - after all, I really know (or should I say "knew") very little

about horse racing. Despite my misgivings, I soon realized that a major purpose of this book was not only to teach the reader about this sport via Seabiscuit's career but also to memorialize the amazing individuals (Charles Howard, Tom Smith, Red Pollard, George Woolf, etc.) who defied all odds to make such a successful racing career possible. I especially liked the chapters dealing with the difficulties of life as a jockey - the way the jockeys punished their bodies to the extreme for the honor of participating in a harrowingly dangerous sport was truly unbelievable...and I thought ballerinas were harsh on their bodies when it came to weight loss! Red was my favorite character and I can't help wondering if the author felt a particular kinship with the jockey as a result of her own struggles with Chronic Fatigue Syndrome - after all, she did have to push her own body beyond her normal physical limits to complete her research and write this amazing book! Ms. Hillenbrand successfully incorporated the story of Seabiscuit's racing career into the historical context of the era. Seabiscuit was a much needed diversion for Americans who were suffering the depths of the Great Depression. ...And perhaps, through Laura Hillenbrand, Team Seabiscuit is still providing us all with an inspirational diversion from today's distressing headlines!

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