

Champions, Cheaters, and Childhood Dreams: Memories of the All-American Soap Box Derby

Melanie Payne

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With scrap lumber and a dream, young Bob Turner became the first All-American Soap Box Derby world champion in 1934. Over the next seventy years, pushed by curiosity, ingenuity, and determination, thousands more follow in his footsteps to try--for at least one day--to become the most famous kid in America. Champions, Cheaters, and Childhood Dreams provides a history of the race from its beginning on a hillside in Dayton, to the corporate-sponsored star-studded event it became in the 1950s and 1960s. It chronicles an era of near-obscurity after the event was rocked by the withdrawal of its major corporate sponsor and by a legendary cheating scandal.

Through first-person accounts, the book reveals influences of the Great Depression, World War II, the Civil Rights and feminist movements, Vietnam, and Watergate, which helped shape the race, transforming it from a simple amateur event into an American icon.



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