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Boost



Synopsis

Thirteen-year-old Savvy's three-point shot is deadly. But she gets pushed around on the basketball court. Her older sister, Callie, is on varsity cheerleading, but she's not light enough to be a flier - her coveted position. Both girls need to boost their level of competition to get into the action. How far are they willing to go to be the best?

Book Information

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Best Sellers Rank: #531,202 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #69 in [Books > Children's Books > Growing Up & Facts of Life > Difficult Discussions > Drugs](#) #91 in [Books > Teens > Literature & Fiction > Sports > Basketball](#) #188 in [Books > Teens > Literature & Fiction > Social & Family Issues > Drugs & Alcohol Abuse](#)

Age Range: 12 and up

Grade Level: 7 and up

Customer Reviews

Starred Review. Grade 6 – 9 • Savvy Christopher and her older sister, Callie, each have their own "one thing," and when they move from Arizona to Rhode Island, that's what they rely on to help them adjust. Savvy quickly shows her stuff when, not yet in high school, she is accepted on the elite 18-and-under basketball team. Callie's passion is cheerleading, but stress has caused her to gain weight, and she is devastated to find that she no longer qualifies to be one of the fliers on the squad at her new school. She goes on a strict exercise and diet regime, and Savvy, realizing how quickly her sister is losing weight, brings it to the attention of their parents. They put a stop to Callie's use of over-the-counter diet aids, which does nothing to improve the already strained relationship between the sisters. In October, one of Savvy's basketball games is interrupted by a detective who has been alerted to a bag of steroids in her locker. She insists that they are not her

pills, but the fact that she has been on prednisone for a bad case of poison ivy does not help her case. Savvy and her coach are temporarily suspended, and Savvy finds that even close friends regard her innocence with some doubt. As with *Mad Cat* (HarperCollins, 2005), Mackel has turned a tough subject in the world of teen competitive sports into a highly readable blend of intense action, interfamily relationships, and intrigue. Readers will come away with a better understanding of the controversy surrounding steroid use, and with an appreciation for a talented voice in young adult literature. --Kim Dare, Fairfax County Public Schools, VA Copyright © Reed Business Information, a division of Reed Elsevier Inc. All rights reserved. --This text refers to the Library Binding edition.

Savvy Christopher and her family have just moved to a sheep ranch in Rhode Island in the wake of her father's crippling accident. Thirteen years old, and already six foot two inches tall, Savvy plays basketball well enough to earn a place on an 18-and-under squad, The Fire. Her older sister Callie is a cheerleader and lands a spot on the varsity squad. The pressures to perform at the highest level, combined with Savvy's precarious family situation, the rigors of life on the ranch, the politics of elite competition, and all the regular trappings of hormonal adolescence push the sisters to the breaking point. After a rival player finds steroids in Savvy's gym bag, her family's tenuous integrity crumbles, leaving her alone on all fronts. Mackel packs plenty of dramatic turbulence into Savvy's eighth-grade year. With careful characterizations and honest relationships, she keeps the trouble contained and directed, though, much as Savvy herself organizes her gangly limbs and driven energy into focused athletic success. Grades 6-9. --Thom Barthelmess --This text refers to the Library Binding edition.

I teach Language Arts to 6th graders. This one explores enhancement drug use among high school athletes. The main character is a basketball star. She does not use enhancement drugs, but is accused when someone else on her team plants them in her gym bag. It is rare to find a good book featuring female athletes, like this one. I ordered this copy because my original classroom copy is worn out. This novel has a good message and the basketball players love it especially.

I love all the suspense that was going on throughout the book. It grabbed my attention and wouldn't let go until the final page

I loved this book. Although I would recommend it for an older and mature person, I think it was very

well written. Savvy stayed strong through all the rough times she was going through. This book had a powerful and meaningful message saying that no matter how hard things get, they will always get better.

Explains my life in every way possible. Made me cry so so hard . Must read like now .

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It was a very good book. It was full of some betrayal and victory moments. I really don't read a lot of books but I just couldn't stop reading this one. I would consider this book to any person.

Amazing book. Stood up until 2 am to finish it! My new favorite read. Recommended to all! Best book ever!!!

I love reading young adult literature. As an English teacher for 13 years, I have read quite a bit of variety, but am always entertained by YA novels with strong female leads. Savvy Christopher, Mackel's main character does not disappoint. Her story unfolds gradually revealing several familiar conflicts teens face. At first, I expected Savvy to be an addiction victim, but Mackel does an amazing job of avoiding that. Instead, Savvy is a victim of her own drive and push to achieve. Because of this, and because of the familiar conflicts, Savvy will appeal to young readers. The story is sincere and realistic. Nothing about Mackel's writing is sensational. Though circumstances Savvy faces are not familiar to all teens, her feelings and conflicts are. Savvy, just like any teenager wants to belong. She wants to succeed. She seeks approval in her own way. Savanna also dares to be different than everyone, despite her circumstances. These traits, and an incredible first-person perspective, quickly captivate readers and pull them into an unforgettable story. I also appreciate Mackel's ability to address serious issues without being preachy. Readers will identify with the ideas presented and accept them because of Mackel's informative and genuine style. She teaches the reader. Even the fallen adults who surround Savvy seem genuine and familiar. This is important in YA literature, because kids want stories which develop identity despite adult expectations and restrictions. Mackel's Boost does this well. I read a chapter of this book to my 8th graders and immediately hooked several readers. My next step is to buy several copies for my classroom to create a lit circle which students will compete to participate in. With the creativity and skill Mackel used in writing this book, recruiting students who will love it will be a slam dunk.

Please check out my student-run blog - where all we do is review current teen fiction! [...] Do you play basketball? I sure don't. Why you ask? Well, I'm as clumsy as an elephant trying to stand on one leg. But that didn't stop me from loving the book, *Boost*. Savvy Christopher and her family moved onto a ranch in Rhode Island, leaving behind their beautiful home in Texas and all their friends. I would hate moving that distance, wouldn't you? Anyways, Savvy is an amazing basketball player, and even though she's only 13, she's 6 foot 2. (Whoa, talk about your WNBA player!) Savvy plays basketball well enough to earn a spot on the U-18 team, The Fire. The season is going great for Savvy, until a rival player sees steroids in Savvy's gym bag. This is where everything starts going down hill. Savvy tries to keep everything under control, but it's as hard as splitting an atom into smaller and smaller pieces. The worst part is, she's not allowed to play in her team's basketball tournament because they need the drug testing results first, to see if she was really taking steroids or not. I was on the edge of my seat reading to find out if the pills were really Savvy's. What was that? You want to know if the pills were hers? Well, don't expect me to tell you! Go get that book and get reading! I can easily say that Kathy Mackel is an outstanding author. The beginning starts off automatically interesting, with Savvy trying out for The Fire. Her practice makes perfect, and what do you know, she's on the team! And she's not just on the team; she becomes the star player of the team. This book gave me a mixture of feelings at all different points. Happy, mad, frustrated, giggly, depressed, heart broken and most of all... ecstatic! I was mostly ecstatic throughout the book because there were so many points that I wanted to jump and scream for joy. When they won their first game against Power, I knew then and there that no one could beat them. At many points I wanted to hop into the book and be a character, because it seemed like the characters in the book had more fun than real people. Bottom line, this book was stupendous in so many different ways. As you could see, I loved this book to the bottom of my heart. Reviewed by Megan C.

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