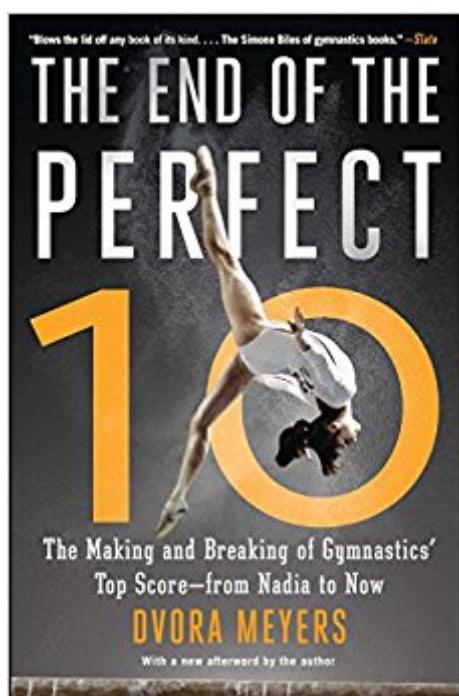


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The End Of The Perfect 10: The Making And Breaking Of Gymnastics' Top Score —from Nadia To Now



Synopsis

A “delightful and insightful” (The Wall Street Journal) account of the controversial world of gymnastics and its scoring system, which has propelled powerful and athletic American gymnasts to the top of the sport. It was the team finals of women’s gymnastics in the 2012 London Olympics and McKayla Maroney was on top of her game. The sixteen-year-old US gymnast was performing arguably the best vault of all time, launching herself unimaginably high into the air and sticking a flawless landing. But when her score came, many were baffled: 16.233. Three tenths of a point in deductions stood between her and a perfect score. But if that vault wasn’t perfection, what was? For years, gymnastics was scored on a 10.0 scale. During this era, more than 100 “perfect” scores were awarded in major international competitions. But when the 10.0 scoring system caused major judging controversies at the 2004 Olympics, international elite gymnastics made the switch to the open-ended scoring system it uses today, which values both difficulty and technical execution, making perfect scores a thing of the past—and forever altering the sport in the process. With insight, flair, and boundless love for the sport, gymnastics insider Dvora Meyers answers questions that fans have been asking since the last perfect score was handed out over twenty years ago. She reveals why successful female gymnasts like 2016 Olympics All Around medalists Simone Biles and Aly Raisman are older and more athletic than they have ever been before, how the United States became the gymnastics powerhouse it is today, and what the future of gymnastics may hold. Bolstered by dozens of exclusive interviews with professionals representing every aspect of the sport, *The End of the Perfect 10* is “the Simone Biles of gymnastics books” (Slate), a captivating look at elite gymnastics’ entry into the uncharted world of imperfection—and how it has created stronger athletes than ever before.

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Customer Reviews

"Delightful and insightful." (The Wall Street Journal) "If you want to impress your friends with your knowledge of gymnastics judging, read this fascinating book." (Bustle)

Dvora Meyers is a New York-based writer and journalist. In 2012, she provided all of the Olympic gymnastics coverage for Deadspin and Jezebel, chronicling the results of the competition as well as her own commentary. Her work on the sport has also appeared in ESPN, Slate, VICE, and The Atlantic. Her other non-gymnastics related writing has been published in The New York Times, Elle, Tablet, New York magazine, and several other publications.

As a gymnastics fan I've been reading Dvora Meyers' work on her blog and in various newspapers and online media outlets for a number of years. I consider myself very knowledgeable about the sport. When I ordered this book I had high hopes, but wasn't sure there'd be much new information for me. I was so pleasantly surprised. This is not just a book about the transition from the 10.0 to open-ended scoring. Rather, Meyers digs into the history of the sport to fully contextualize what both scoring systems mean and why the change became inevitable. She makes a convincing argument for why the new code serves the sport despite the popular refrain to 'bring back the 10' and tv commentators' inability to explain the new scoring to their every four year audiences. Ultimately this is an impeccably researched book that doesn't fall under the weight of its detail. Meyers has interviewed almost all the major players in the modern era of the sport, especially those in the US (the Karolyis are the notable exceptions who did not speak to her). What she learned from those interviews and her visits to gyms is woven in a first-person narrative along with research from a variety of gymnastics and popular sport publications. The book moves quickly and technical detail is balanced with allusions to popular culture. Meyers manages to keep the book interesting to gymnerds and accessible to those with casual interest in the sport alike. Easily the best book I've read on the sport. Bravo!

This is a very interesting book even for someone - like me - without a consuming interest in gymnastics. I am old enough that I remember well Nadia Comaneci's Perfect 10. OMG! A Perfect

10! So the concept of this book - the end of the Perfect 10 - was rather intriguing. Ah, I see. How do you score performers when Perfect 10s become common? How do you distinguish between performances when your grading scale tops out? The book is well written technically, but it is also quite readable with an engaging style that makes the narrative move right along smoothly. The author is a former gymnast herself so she has an affinity for the people she writes about and easily established rapport with those she interviewed. And this book is far more than an analysis of a scoring system. It is about people really, about athletes and coaches and even judges who are passionate about a sport they love and live. There are no photos in the book but the cover photo tells you all you need to know. Good book!

Please have this translated into Russian and send a copy to Valentina Rodionenko. Particularly the chapter about how the US has taken over not because the D+E code somehow innately favors their athletes or style of gymnastics, but because they put in years of hard work training and conditioning, and take care to develop their younger gymnasts so they don't have to rely on a few star athletes who have been around for eight years or more. More seriously, this is an interesting, well-written book that far outdoes the ghostwritten memoirs and children's how-tos forming the lion's share of the "nonfiction gymnastics book" genre these days. It reminds me in ways of some of the very detailed pre-Internet reference books printed in the 80s and early 90s that I found in my school library as a child, but updated to reflect the modern state of affairs. Even as a seasoned gymfan with a deep and detailed knowledge of the sport, I came across many facts and stories I did not know. It's incredibly well researched. There are some minor editing oversights (that's not what begging the question means) and the occasional esoteric vocabulary choice (naif? emend? reeeeally?), and the author for some reason chooses to provide a voice to the embarrassingly biased and contemptuous views of insufferable artistry snob Elizabeth Booth, but these minor flaws are more than made up for by the strength of the remainder of the book. It's the best nonfiction gymnastics book that's come out in recent memory, and it's accessible to casual fans while still being useful to the die-hards (a trait I wish NBC coverage could share). Hopefully the timing of its release will help it and its author to gain the publicity and audience they very much deserve.

This book is an interesting read. I recommend it to anyone interested in gymnastics. It helps understand gymnastics on the international stage with out the 10.

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