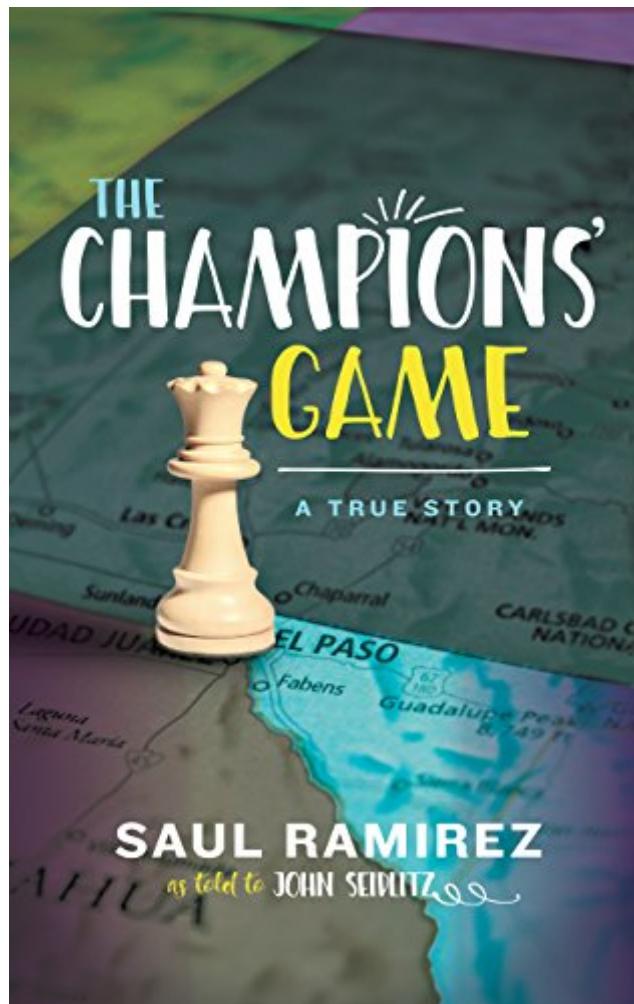


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# The Champions' Game: A True Story



## Synopsis

In April of 2015, a team of 12 middle schoolers—"border kids"—from South-Central El Paso surprised the country by competing in the national chess championships. For these kids, dreams of beating highly privileged students from "fancy" schools in upper-crust neighborhoods aren't on the radar. They have bigger issues to deal with in life. Which is why it borders on the miraculous that they choose to voluntarily—even enthusiastically—commit countless hours every week to the practice of a game that they had known virtually nothing about until two years ago when art teacher Saul Ramirez started a chess club at Henderson Middle School. The Champions' Game follows Ramirez's original 12 champions through their triumphs—and failures—at local, state and national chess competitions. Under Ramirez's caring but firm tutelage, the rising stars of El Paso hunker down, deal with the daily challenges of life and shrug off troubling national news riddled with racism and division, instead trusting Ramirez to mentor them in their new extracurricular passion—chess.

----- "An inspiring, true story." - Kirkus Reviews (starred review) "A movie-ready narrative about how [Saul Ramirez]-a scrappy, dauntless Henderson Middle School art teacher-took a dozen students, most from underprivileged or lower-income backgrounds, to the 2015 National Chess Tournament and won. [ The Champions' Game] is a love letter to these students, to chess, and to El Paso." - Kirkus Reviews (starred review) "Accessible for all readers, this story is a natural for the big screen: check and mate." - Kirkus Reviews (starred review)

## Book Information

File Size: 2226 KB

Print Length: 157 pages

Publisher: Canterbury Press (May 8, 2017)

Publication Date: May 8, 2017

Sold by: Digital Services LLC

Language: English

ASIN: B0711HWHMJ

Text-to-Speech: Enabled

X-Ray: Not Enabled

Word Wise: Enabled

Lending: Not Enabled

Enhanced Typesetting: Enabled

Best Sellers Rank: #642,337 Paid in Kindle Store (See Top 100 Paid in Kindle Store) #17

in Kindle Store > Kindle eBooks > Teen & Young Adult > Biography > Sports #71 in Books > Teens > Biographies > Sports #91 in Kindle Store > Kindle eBooks > Children's eBooks > Biographies > Sports & Recreation

## Customer Reviews

Saul Ramirez should be the nation's teacher of the year! The way he loved, cared, taught, inspired his students was amazzzzzing! The way he weaves the game of chess with the game of life inspires us all! Everyone will love reading this book! :)

This is the story of a middle school in El Paso, Texas that had a devoted art teacher who wanted to build a national chess championship. Saul Ramirez develops his rule for chess play which he applies to rules for life. I could see this becoming a film like "The Queen of Katwe."

This book has the power to change lives, especially those of marginalized children. When the vision of a great coach is merged with the desire of young people to chart their own course in the world, great things happen. I've met these champions and their coach. Their story, while compelling and fun to read, is merely the beginning. They have nothing but great things awaiting them in the years ahead.

What an amazing book! I loved reading about how these students and their teachers persevered! Not only a great book about chess but how the rules can be applied to real life.

What a wonderful book! It was very motivating and a reminder why educators chose their profession; to make a difference in the lives of students! !

Saul's story is an engaging illustration of the power of chess to transform lives and communities. I have watched teachers discover the value of chess in the classroom and enthusiastically introduce chess to their students to impact literacy, math, critical thinking, and life skills. The Champions Game is an up-close journey of a teacher, his school, and his community as they realize the changes that follow when students learn the Royal Game. For any educators who wonder if chess could make a difference in their schools, this is a must-read!

As teachers of diverse learners, we always struggle to find relevant, culturally responsive and

authentic literature, especially for middle school kids. This book meets all three! The story is not only current but real. It's a story of success. Yes! This book is positive and full of corazon. Thank you for telling your story Saul. This gives us teachers hope and helps us to believe that with passion and high expectations, we can help young kids reach their dreams. I want to buy a class set!

An inspirational true story of middle school children from a penurious background in El Paso, Texas that beat the odds to become national chess champions. Receiving tutelage from their tenacious coach, Saul Ramirez, he himself a chess champion with anakin upbringing. The reader is treated to how purpose was instilled and nurtured in Ramirez's life during his formative years and how that foundation was built upon and fostered to the next generation. Using the principles of chess and relating it to life Ramirez and his protégés achieve great triumphs. This story reminds me of *Lean on Me* (1989) and *Stand and Deliver* (1988) movies. It should be on the cinematic screen too.

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