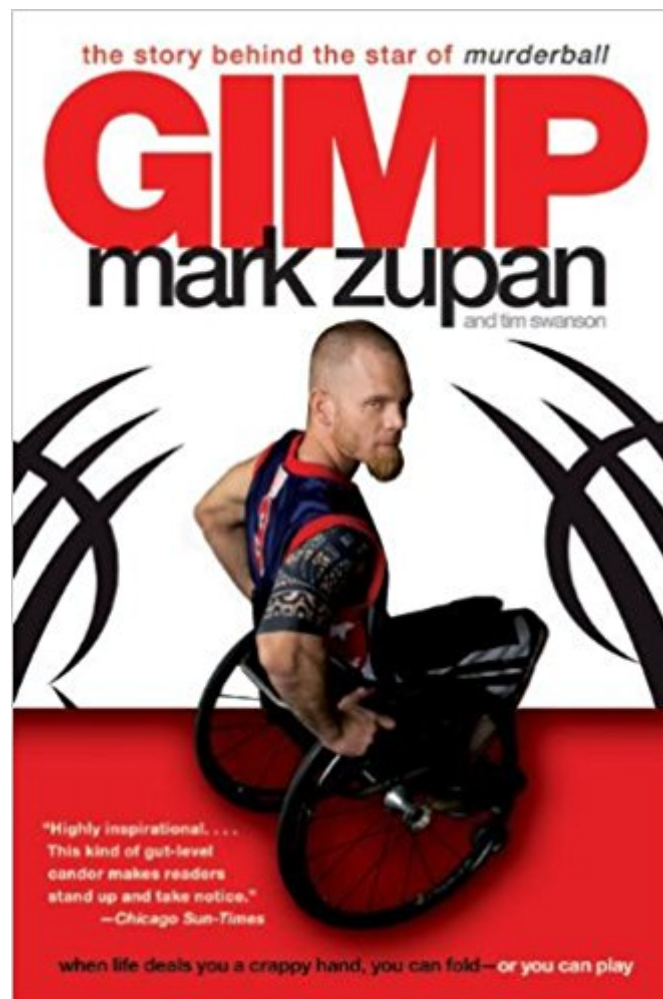




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GIMP: The Story Behind The Star Of Murderball



Synopsis

College soccer star Mark Zupan had been out drinking one night and had passed out in the back of his best friend's pickup truck when his friend got in the driver's seat, decided to take the truck for a spin, and accidentally crashed it. Thrown into a canal and stuck in frigid water for fourteen hours, Mark was finally rescued and learned soon after that he'd broken his neck. He'd most likely be a quadriplegic and spend the rest of his life in a wheelchair, doctors told him. At first Mark's only goal was to walk again. When that proved impossible, he fell into the depths of anger and despair, retreating from the world and the people closest to him. But love, friendship, and a new sport, quad rugby (a.k.a. "murderball"), helped Mark create a new existence that's truly exceptional. *Gimp*, the no-holds-barred memoir of a Paralympic athlete and the star of the Academy Award-nominated documentary *Murderball*, is an inspiring, defiant, and revealing celebration of spirit and will that confounds readers' prejudices by offering proof that a guy in a chair can still do amazing things: have sex with his girlfriend, party with his friends . . . even crowd-surf at Pearl Jam shows.

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Customer Reviews

"I hate being called handicapped," says Zupan, whose competitiveness at quadriplegic rugby brought him national attention as one of the stars of the Oscar-nominated documentary *Murderball*. A passionate athlete before breaking his neck in an automobile accident when he was 18 years old, Zupan, now 31, is determined to play just as hard as ever from a wheelchair. But with his team's performance in the 2002 Paralympics already covered in the documentary, the sport that made him famous is relegated to a comparatively small portion of this memoir. Instead, Zupan focuses on the

slow recovery process after his accident. Refusing to gloss his story, he speaks frankly and humorously about subjects like "quad sex." While watching the best friend who caused the accident tear himself apart with guilt, he describes how his own bottled-up frustrations impeded his recovery, leading him to stalk his ex-girlfriend and, years later, to be convicted on a drunk driving charge. As in the film, Zupan makes an unforgettable impression with his raw, brash energy. Copyright © Reed Business Information, a division of Reed Elsevier Inc. All rights reserved. --This text refers to an alternate Paperback edition.

In 1993, after a night of hard drinking, 18-year-old Zupan curled up for a nap in the bed of his buddy's truck. A freak turn of events later, he was hurled out of the truck and into a canal, where he clung to life--and a tree--for 14 hours. Suddenly a quadriplegic (although with some movement in his arms and legs), the author faced a long and difficult recovery. This memoir chronicles that recovery and Zupan's rise to fame as a superstar in the sport of quadriplegic rugby, also known as Murderball (and also the title of the award-winning documentary that featured Zupan). Like quadriplegic artist John Callahan's *Don't Worry, He Won't Get Far on Foot* (1990), the book is alternately funny, biting, snarky, self-indulgent, and moving. Despite the hardships Zupan has endured, he firmly believes he's a lucky guy, and that optimistic attitude is what makes his memoir so enjoyable: it really is a story about success and tackling life on one's own terms. David Pitt Copyright © American Library Association. All rights reserved --This text refers to an alternate Paperback edition.

This story is more than a story about Murderball. When I began dating a Gimp - paraplegic from mid back down, this book helped me understand a lot about my, now ex-boyfriend's, life. It helped me understand the desire for independence, how much he could do for himself and that my trying to help him all the time was NOT best for him. It's also a very real look at the challenges that CAN BE overcome and conquered! Very inspiring, yet REAL!!

Mark Zupan, with the help of a co-author, delves into his life as a Paralympian in quad rugby (aka Murderball) player. For folks in disability studies, a good chunk of this book reads like a typical pre-injury/post-injury narrative, including excruciating detail about "overcoming" and becoming "inspirational." A lot of it is embedded in supercrip narratives, but I found it interesting to compare to the documentary *Murderball*. For a non-academic reading of the book, Zupan's sarcasm comes through most of the writing and makes it more interesting than the typical autobiography of someone who acquired a physical impairment in adulthood.

This is a great book. Zupan writes very clearly and his competitive spirit and indomitable character are really something to admire, plus he seems like a cool dude. Really an example of turning a serious misfortune into an opportunity to demonstrate awesomeness. Purchased a signed copy from a seller that I would buy from again, after trying to find a way to contact Mr. Zupan directly. It's made out to Ben, which is my nephew's name. Will give it to him someday, and hope that he enjoys the read as much as I did.

Liked the writing. Purchased this book because I encountered this man in the building where I work several months back. I guess we work in the same building. I would like to tell him that I downloaded the book that night, but only just read recently. I overheard on the elevator that he had written a book while listening to a conversation he was having with one of his co-workers. That conversation prompted me to ask him the name. I really did like the writing style and I would like to thank him for sharing his story. It would not be an easy story for most people to share. Real people stories ARE better than fiction. I highly recommend it to anyone who enjoys non-fiction, or anyone for that matter.

I am currently in a wheelchair due to having Lupus, not a spinal cord injury as the author of this book has. Although I have great function, I could so empathize with Mark. I actually feel like I know him after reading his book. He doesn't spend time feeling sorry for himself or asking others to pity him. He goes on and has so many accomplishments that most able bodied people are left scratching their heads asking, "What in the world am I doing with myself?" He talks about THOSE subjects that a lot of people in wheelchairs would just like to avoid (for good reason and I don't begrudge that) and answers lots of questions that AB's (able-bodied) and newly disabled people might have. Hell buy this book even if you DON'T KNOW ANYONE WITH A DISABILITY! It's an awesome read into the journey of a truly awesome person. I'd love to read a sequel Mr. Zupan. I know life keeps throwing challenges your way and you "wheel" your way right through them. Awesome awesome awesome awesome book. I'll never forget it and glad I picked it up.

Sometimes, people who have been "handicapped" in some manner end up withdrawing into themselves. A few of them are downright miserable. Mad at the world for being stuck in the situation they're in... the best they can hope for (because they're depressing to be around) is to have people feel sorry for them. Mark Zupan (who, hopefully, you know from the astoundingly-good, and

deserved-to-win-the-Oscar documentary, MURDERBALL), is NOT one of those people. He doesn't WANT anyone to feel sorry for him. (In fact, he doesn't even want to be seen as a "role model," or an "inspiration," though [sorry Mark!], to a lot of people, he is.) Mark was an athletic, fun-loving 18-year-old, having a blast in South Florida when everything he knew changed in an instant. Sleeping off a night of heavy partying in the back of his buddy Chris Igoe's parked pickup, he had no clue when his friend got in and (also drunk) drove off. Not too long thereafter, Igoe swerved off the road and Mark ended up flying out of the truck-bed, over a fence, and into some dense foliage overhanging a small lake. (Igoe had no idea Mark was in the truck bed, so when the police came, they never looked for him.) Mark regained consciousness, only to find himself unable to move (he didn't know it yet, but he was paralyzed from the neck down), hanging upside-down from a branch with his nose just inches from the water... and getting closer by the moment. He hung there for 14 hours, before a workman heard him yelling for help. And that's just the START of the story! In the years that followed, he has not only become one of the star players of the sport known as Quad Rugby (a.k.a. Murderball), his attitude about his "situation" (whether he likes it or not!) has helped untold numbers of others* to better cope with their own situations.* I know of what I speak. My young and lovely wife has been in a wheelchair for several years due to Multiple Sclerosis. After seeing the movie MURDERBALL --and *especially* after meeting Zupan at a tournament, her attitude went from "good" to fantastic. She's no longer "the girl in the wheelchair." She's simply my wife, who's fun to be around, and who's interested in doing the things she CAN do, rather than fretting about the things she can't. -Jonathan Sabin

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