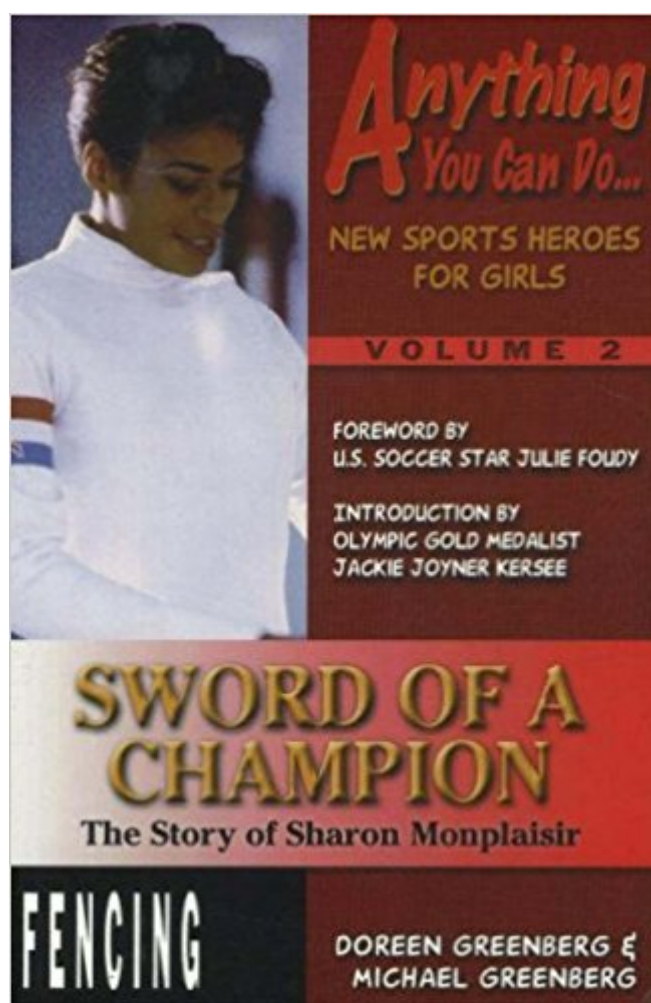


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# Sword Of A Champion: The Story Of Sharon Monplaisir (Anything You Can Do... New Sports Heroes For Girls)



## Synopsis

A dreamer from the wrong neighborhood, Sharon Monplaisir had always been teased at school for her hand-me-down clothes and her giant glasses. She felt more comfortable with her books about exotic places and exciting adventures. Sharon had read about sword fighting and great warriors in her books, but she didn't know if she'd be brave enough to even go to the first day of practice for the school fencing team. Little did she know that walking through the gym doors would change her life forever.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

Grade 4-8-Informative, instructive, and motivational biographies on basketball-star Lieberman-Cline and Olympian-fencer Monplaisir. Written to promote girls' participation in sports, each biography is based on interviews with the athlete and stresses the gender challenges that she had to overcome. Irrepressible Lieberman-Cline never wavered from her competitive "tomboy" determination to excel on the playground and later on the basketball court despite objections from her mother. Timid, loner Monplaisir found her niche with a supportive high school fencing coach who encouraged her to expand her horizons and to develop her talent. A concluding "Sports Talk" section addressed to adults offers a discussion guide on topics from "Body Image," "Competing against the Boys," and "Lack of Family Support" to "Difficulties with the Coach" (Lieberman-Cline) and "Temper Tantrums" (Monplaisir). Research and understanding are enhanced by a career-highlights chronology and specific sport chronology. Both volumes serve a clear educational purpose. The childlike

black-and-white drawings do not enhance the realistic, factual presentations, but the upbeat, conversational tone may inspire readers. Gerry Larson, Durham School of the Arts, NC Copyright 2001 Reed Business Information, Inc.

From the Introduction by Jackie Joyner-Kersey: More than 25 years ago, the Women's Sports Foundation was founded to promote the lifelong participation of girls and women in sports and fitness. We have been very successful, and we have seen many changes over the years. At that time only one in 27 girls played sports; now it's one in three. And that's because more and more opportunities exist to be a female athlete and also to follow female sports heroes. Even with thousands of girls attending World Cup Soccer or cheering on their favorite WNBA team, we still have a long way to go. We need to get the message out to more girls. We need to let every girl know how great it feels to play sports and how very important it is to her whole being. We still have too many 11- and 12-year-old girls dropping out of sports or never even having had the chance to play at all. In fact, if a girl does not participate in sports by age 10, there is a less than 10-percent chance that she will be participating when she is 25. Research suggests that girls who participate in sports have a real advantage over girls who do not. Girls active in sports are more likely to be successful in school, less likely to get involved with drugs, and less likely to have an unwanted pregnancy. Sport and exercise can help to keep girls healthy, both physically and emotionally. The girl who is athletic feels stronger, eats and sleeps better, is more self-confident, and generally feels more positive about her life. For a very long time, boys have had unlimited resources, such as books, movies, and games about sports and their favorite sports legends. Sport is where boys have traditionally learned about achieving, goal-setting, teamwork and the pursuit of excellence. Girls and women should have these skills, too. We need to establish a large-scale network of resources about girls' sports and female athletes. And we need to give girls their own heroes. "Anything You Can Do..." is unprecedented in its concept of offering real stories of new heroes to young girls. These are the adventures of young girls coming from different backgrounds who go on to achieve excellence in sports. This series can open a whole new world for young girls. These books will give young girls a chance to explore the biographies of elite female athletes and their early sport experiences. The common thread that runs through all of these stories is a strong one - of perseverance and desire. Yet, each story is unique. Some are famous; some are not. Although the young reader may not always recognize the name of every athlete in the series, she may very well recognize herself, her friends and her teammates in these stories. Doreen and Michael Greenberg bring to this series a long dedication to providing positive sport experiences for girls. I like their philosophy that it is not as

important for the young reader to come away with the name of the person who won the big championship or the winning score, as an understanding of what it means to be a female athlete. And by including the unique "Sports Talk" section in each book, Doreen has the opportunity to use her expertise as a sport psychology consultant and researcher to discuss important issues with parents and teachers. These are issues distinctive to girls in sports, including competing with the boys, making sacrifices, dealing with coaches, anxieties about winning and losing, and concerns about body image. I am delighted that these books deal with a young girl's introduction to sports, the highs and lows of training and competition, and the reactions of family and friends, both positive and negative. It is so important for all of us to understand the young athlete as a complete person. Most of all, the books in this series are fun and exciting to read. They will inspire girls to follow their dreams - whatever they are.

Great story! My 9 yr old daughter takes fencing lessons, and it was an inspiration to find a true story of a female U.S Olympic winning fencer. Sharon Monplaisir went through a true rags to riches story, shows what determination, ambition and hard work can achieve.

What a wonderful, engaging, multifaceted book for adolescent girls.....and boys! Sharon Monplaisir's biography takes the reader through a wide range of emotions. The spirit and drive within Sharon's soul, from the depths of poverty to that as an Olympian, is an inspiration to us all. Anyone who has wanted to find a better life, but experienced doubt, and struggled to "fit in", can find hope within Sharon's many struggles. A noteworthy and heartwarming part of the book was when Sharon, representing the Women's Sports Foundation on National Girls and Women in Sports Day, addressed an auditorium of middle school aged boys and girls. A component of the book also worth its "weight in gold", is the section called "Sports Talk", which is meant to be an interactive platform for readers and their parents, teaches and coaches. It contains excellent research-based information and thought provoking questions for readers relating to issues of girls participating in sport, within the context of the book. This would be a terrific book to use in a middle school program, where integration of English, Social Studies, Physical Education, and Technology are sought.

With all the awful stories surfacing today dealing with modern athletes, we finally have a sports story to inspire youngsters --especially girls. Sharon Monplaisir is a true role model for our times. Kids should read this book. As the author of "The Art and Science of Fencing" and "The Inner Game of Fencing," and the editor-in-chief of FENCERS QUARTERLY MAGAZINE, I recommend it.

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