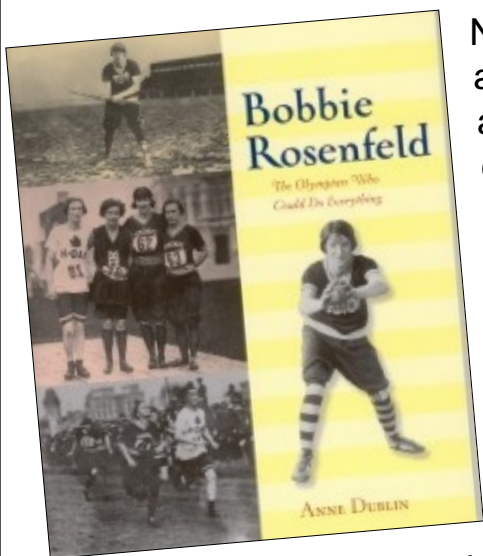


*Bobbie Rosenfeld: The Olympian
Who Could Do Everything*
by Anne Dublin



BOOK SUMMARY:



Not so long ago, girls and women were discouraged from playing games that were competitive and rough. Well into the 1950s, there was gender discrimination in sports. Girls were considered too fragile and sensitive to play hard and to play well. But one woman astonished everyone. In fact, sportswriters and broadcasters in this country agree that Bobbie Rosenfeld may be Canada's all-round greatest athlete of the twentieth century. Bobbie excelled at hockey, basketball, softball, and track and field, and she became one of Canada's first female Olympic medallists. Just as remarkable as her talent was her extraordinary sense of fair play. She greeted obstacles with courage, hard work, and a sense of humor, and she always put the team ahead of herself. In doing so, Bobbie set an example as a true athletic hero.

AUTHOR BIOGRAPHY:

Like Bobbie Rosenfeld, Anne Dublin came to Canada at a young age. She worked as an elementary school teacher for over 25 years, and taught in Kingston, Toronto, Winnipeg, and Nairobi. During her writing career, Anne has written short stories, articles, poetry, and a novel called *Written on the Wind*. Anne currently works as a teacher-librarian in Toronto.

Suggestions for Tutors/Instructors

Before starting to read the story, read (aloud) the outside back cover. You might want to read through the Table of Contents page (vii). You might also want to flip through the book, starting with the outside and inside covers, and look at the many interesting photographs and other visuals throughout this book.

Pre-Reading Questions

1. The enjoyment of sports often plays an interesting role in our lives. Which sports do you play and/or which sports events do you follow in the newspaper or on television?
2. This book is a “biography”. It is also called “non-fiction”. What do these terms mean? What do you think this book might be about?
3. What makes you interested in this book and this story?

Discussion Questions

Introduction

1. What were some of the reasons that girls were discouraged from playing sports before the 1950s?
2. People are sometimes called a nickname – a name that is different from their birth name. How did Fanny Rosenfeld become Bobby Rosenfeld? Do you know anyone who has a nickname? How did they get their nickname?

Chapter 1

3. Bobbie Rosenfeld was born in Russia. What were some of the reasons that Bobbie’s parents wanted to leave Russia and go to “a new world in Canada”?
4. Immigrants are people who come to our country from other countries. In 1903, 138,000 immigrants came to Canada. What were some of the countries that these immigrants came from? Why did they come to Canada?

Chapter 2

5. What are some of the challenges the Rosenfeld’s faced when they first came to Barrie? Do you think immigrants coming to Canada today have an easier time adjusting? What challenges do people immigrating to Canada face today?

6. Why did sports become more popular with women?
7. What major right did women win at the beginning of the 20th century?

Chapter 3

8. Chapter 3 describes Bobbie’s life in high school. What are some of the obstacles Bobbie faced in pursuing her love of sports? How is it different for girls today?

Chapter 4

9. How did team sports help develop communities? How did the various immigrant communities benefit from supporting sport teams?

Chapter 5

10. Canada in the 1920s was a time of many changes. What do you think were some of the biggest changes for women?

Chapter 6-7

11. Bobbie is called “all-round athlete”. What does this expression mean? What sports did she enjoy playing?

Chapter 8

12. What are the reasons given for keeping women out of Olympic competition?

Chapter 9

13. At the bottom of page 52 you will find the oath taken by Olympic athletes. What does this oath say about how women were viewed in the 1920s? Do you think the male athletes took the same oath? Why or why not?
14. Compare the women’s oath with the general Olympic oath on the bottom of page 63. How are they different?

Chapter 10

15. Who were the “Matchless Six”?

Chapter 11

16. What does the Olympic flag symbolize (page 62)?

Chapter 12

17. Do you think the Canadian team should have been able to protest the results of Bobbie's 100-metre race?

Chapter 13-15

18. After reading about Bobbie's Olympic experience how would you describe her personality and why?

Chapter 16-17

19. Even though Bobbie was no longer able to compete at an Olympic level she still continued to play sports. She went on to coach teams and write about sports. She never allowed herself to "give up" even though she suffered terribly from arthritis. Based on what you've read about Bobbie's personality how would you explain her determination? What did sports "mean" to her?

Chapter 18

20. How were the 1930s different from the 1920s (look back at Chapter 5)?

Chapter 19

21. How did attitudes towards women in sports change in the 1930s? What else influenced the development of women's sports (p. 103)?

Chapter 20-24

22. How did Bobbie use her position as sports journalist to further women's sports?
23. Why do you think women's sports have never been as popular as men's sports? Do you think this is changing now? Why or why not?
24. The outside back cover states that Bobbie "greeted obstacles with courage, hard work, and a sense of humour, and always put the team ahead of her self." In what ways do you agree or disagree with this statement?

ADDITIONAL ACTIVITIES

1. Page 138 lists several sites on the Internet. Choose one or two of these sites and write a few interesting facts that you found there.
2. A "timeline" lists events in the order that they occur. See page 135 for a timeline of Bobbie Rosenfeld's life. Build a timeline for your own life that lists at least five to ten significant dates and events in your life.
3. Create a timeline for the notable "women's events" included in the book. Begin with 1918 – Canadian women get to vote.
4. Complete the Word Search activity based on this book.