

[PDF] Word Freak: Heartbreak, Triumph, Genius, And Obsession In The World Of Competitive Scrabble Players

Stefan Fatsis - pdf download free book



Books Details:

Title: Word Freak: Heartbreak, Triumph

Author: Stefan Fatsis

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Description:

Like a cross between a linguistic spy and a lexicographic Olympic athlete, journalist Stefan Fatsis gave himself a year to penetrate the highest echelons of international Scrabble competition. *Word Freak* is the account of his journey. It's a wacky grab bag of travelogue, history, party journal, and

psychological study of the misfits and goofballs whose lives are measured out in Scrabble tiles.

Fatsis gives us all the facts about Scrabble--from the story of the down-on-his-luck architect who invented the game in the 1930s to the intricacies of individual international competitions and the corporate wars to control the world's favorite word game. He keeps the reader turning the pages as we get involved in the lives of the Scrabble obsessives: men and women who have a point to prove against the world and have chosen Scrabble as their playground and their pulpit. As Fatsis goes on his own quest to attain the coveted 1600 rating, we actually get obsessed with him as he lies awake at night pondering moves and memorizing lists of words. For anybody who is interested in words, *Word Freak* provides an entertaining and absorbing read. --*Dwight Longenecker, Amazon.co.uk* --
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From Publishers Weekly It takes a special kind of person to be able to rattle off all the words that start with the letter q but don't require a u or to immediately recognize that the same letters used for the word "troutmania" can also spell "maturation" and "natatorium." These talented individuals are the subject of Fatsis's tell-all on the professional Scrabble realm's inner sanctum. The Wall Street Journal sports reporter (and author of *Wild and Outside*) began simply as a curious journalist but was soon obsessed, befriending dozens of experts in his passage from "living room player" to the continent's 180th (or so) best player. The book entertainingly and admiringly portrays the irreverent crowd that lives, eats and breathes Scrabble, interspersing mini-profiles with updates on Fatsis's progress and historical facts about the game. Among the cast of characters familiar with words like "eloiners" and "loxodrome" are "G.I." Joel Sherman, who directs the Manhattan Scrabble Club despite his dental problems, asthma attacks and lactose intolerance; Matt Graham, a stand-up comedian who let Scrabble fill the void when he got fired from his gig at Saturday Night Live; and Steve Williams, a Harvard grad with psychiatric problems, also the winner of the 1977 New York City championship. Fatsis gives an in-depth Scrabble history, too from portraying Alfred Butts, the game's meticulous Depression-era inventor, to explaining how Hasbro manages to sell over one million sets a year with minimal advertising. Journalistic, expressive prose helps transform this potentially dry account of some word-obsessed oddballs into a funny, albeit vertical, glimpse at one of America's quirkiest special-interest groups. (July 10)Forecast: Are there 25,000 hardcore Scrabble fans out there? Hard to say, but Houghton Mifflin is counting on it, and in order to reach them, the house is taking an NPR sponsorship (Fatsis is an NPR contributor) and sending the author on a six-city tour. He is booked on the Today Show.

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