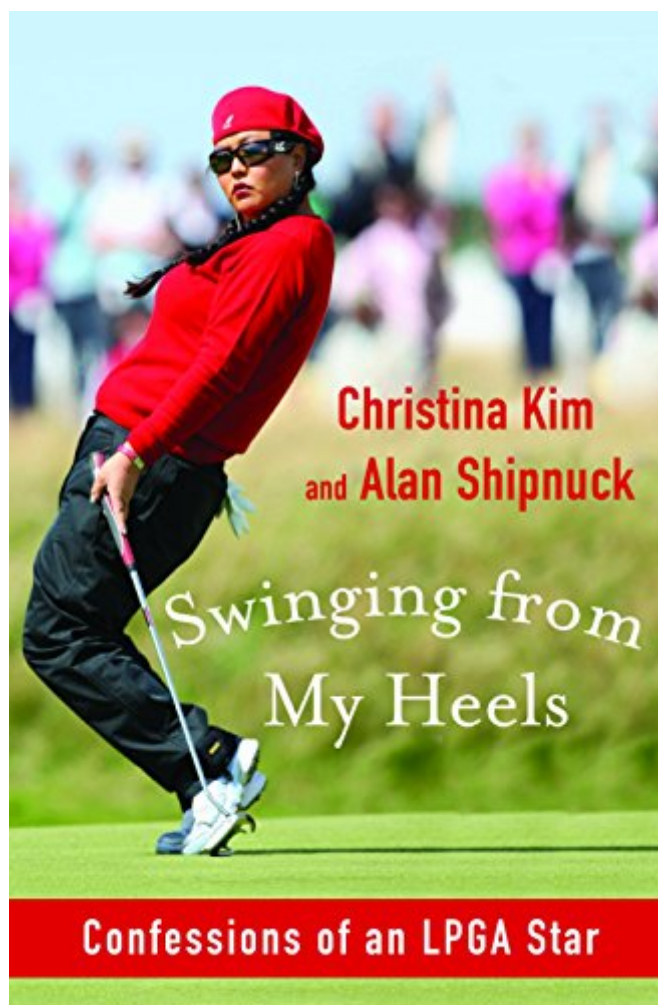


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Swinging From My Heels: Confessions Of An LPGA Star



Synopsis

Christina Kim is the brashest, bawdiest, funniest player on the Ladies Professional Golf Association tour. Golf fans know her for her colorful wardrobe, even more colorful on-course antics, and an explosive game. But in this rollicking account of the 2009 season, Kim invites readers deep into her life, providing an intimate diary of a young woman's struggles on and off the golf course, and revealing the glory and heartbreak of life on the tour. Once known as a prodigy who shot a 62 in her first LPGA event some six years ago, Kim has newly rededicated herself to realizing her potential, and she takes readers between the ropes for all the action, including her nail-biting near misses at two major championships. She also goes inside the team room at the Solheim Cup, revealing the hijinks and late-night gab sessions that bonded the victorious U.S. team. Along the way we get intimate portraits of her close friends on tour, including tour leaders such as Michelle Wie, Lorena Ochoa, Paula Creamer, Morgan Pressel, and Natalie Gulbis. In this courageous telling, no topic is out-of-bounds, as Kim dishes about the LPGA's sexual mores, the culture clash of an American-based tour increasingly dominated by Koreans, the tumultuous economic forces squeezing the players, and her own battles with body image and her traditional upbringing. Winsome and good-natured, but never afraid of a laugh line or choice profanity, Christina Kim provides a must-read for anyone who loves golf or has wondered about the inner self of a professional athlete.

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Customer Reviews

If you're an LPGA and/or Christina follower, you need to buy this book. Embarrassed to say, I'm only taking the time to review it now that Christina just won the Lorena Ochoa. I read the book before becoming an LPGA follower (mainly because Golf Channel has shamefully back-burnered most of the tournaments and it's hard to follow unless you love unearthing the remote at 1 AM), therefore, hadn't seen Christina play. She stands out for her masterful composure throughout the rounds, her playfulness and her sportsmanship. The book hits many personal notes and describes the tour in enough detail to satisfy the avid golfer. It does not get into her bout with depression which, IMHO, was unnecessarily played up by Golf Channel.....Christina is a champion; one with a sense of humor and irony and perseverance.....all I need to know.

"Swinging from My Heels" was a natural for me: Christina Kim is one of my favorite golfers. Alan Shipnuck is my favorite golf writer. In this book, Christina hooked me right from the start when she states that Shipnuck - who she describes as a "buddy going back to 2004" when he wrote a nice profile of her for SI - wrote her "all-time favorite golf book," "Bud, Sweat, & Tees: Rich Beem's Walk on the Wild Side of the PGA Tour. Indeed: Best golf book ever, hands down. This partnership doesn't disappoint. Shipnuck captures Christina's voice and uniquely vibrant personality on these pages. What's not to love about Christina Kim? The Kim family is the quintessential American success story. The daughter of hard-working, self-sacrificing immigrants from South Korea, her well-earned success represents the essence of the land of opportunity. Kim and Shipnuck detail the path to LPGA stardom that began when Christina's father, Man, stuck a club in her hand when she was 11 years old. A mere six years later, she vaulted into public consciousness for the first time with a stunning 62 at the 2001 U.S. Girl's Amateur Championship. \$3.5 million in Tour earnings later, she's become a touchstone for true fans of women's professional golf. The narrative of the book is an event-by-event recounting Kim's 2009 season. It ends up being quite a tale - but not for the golf itself. Kim's play is fair at best - un-confident putting and a penchant for late round collapses halve her earnings from the previous years. But the bigger picture is one of change, both personal and - for the LPGA itself - economic. On the personal side, Kim breaks up with a long-time boyfriend at

the book's outset. This leads to a rekindling of her relationship with her Dad. Despite the always tetchy dynamics of a Dad/coach-to-daughter/student relationship - not to mention the gulf of a traditional immigrant Dad who raised a uniquely American daughter - theirs is an obviously loving relationship. The book captures every nuance of this father/daughter partnership. Other evidence of change are Kim's turnover rate on caddies, putters and drivers throughout the year...each too numerous to count. For the LPGA, the changes of 2009 are almost uniformly negative...and many self-inflicted. 2009 is the year in which a rising wave of across-the-board discontent (players, sponsors, tournament hosts, administration) against LPGA Commissioner Carolyn Bivens reached a crescendo. In a player-organized putsch, Bivens is forced out. Kim, a proud LPGA players' board member and perceived Bivens supporter, is later voted out by her peers. There's evidence of what Bivens' had wrought in these pages: though the 2008 economic downturn was definitely a big contributing factor, Bivens pushed out traditional tour sponsors and alienated others, thus leading to a materially shrunken tour. Part of Kim's lower earnings can be attributed to fewer opportunities to play. At the tour's lower echelons, this wreaked havoc on lives and careers. Shipnuck's superb profile in SI of the death of Erica Blasberg brought this home in the starkest possible terms.

More than anything, this felt like an honest, clear-eyed look at a sport, professional women's golf, that I've been lucky enough to attend in person a few times. I'll also admit that I'm a golfer, and a fan of the LPGA in general and among others, Christina in particular, who I met for the first time in the autograph line before buying this book. That's going to color this review. I apologize in advance. I enjoyed the honesty, the thoughtful explanations of controversial issues, and the different perspective that Christina brought to the narrative. She didn't owe anybody an explanation of why she couldn't win a tournament in 2009, or the fines for swearing, or a defense of the Korean girls on Tour, any of that, but there it was, and that took courage. I really appreciated getting to know what I did as a temporary guest in Christina's world that I wouldn't know if I'd gone to 100 tournaments outside the ropes. She touched on just about everything we'd be interested in for her life as a professional golfer, inside and outside the ropes. We got to know her parents, friends, love interests, caddies, and other players through her eyes, and that was all much appreciated. The only issue I had with the read was that I wished we'd get as long an explanation about the issues she brought up (Korean players, Player Council stuff) as she did when she narrated in painstaking detail the shot-making decisions, caddie conversations and results during the second round of the Dinah Shore, for example. I know golf is her job, but those didn't seem equal. Especially if Shipnuck is transcribing, the turkey talk could be longer. All in all, well worth the read. You won't find many

athlete stories more real. And I think that helps the LPGA.

I've been interested in Christina Kim since I first watched her at the Samsung World Championship at Hiddenbrook Golf Course in Vallejo California. I took my youngest daughter there and she, along with Dorothy Delasin made it a point to talk to my daughter even though they were preparing to play the Sunday round. Just a nice person. I enjoyed this book because she provide some insight into the Tour. I don't expect to get all of the stories, only John Feinstein seems to be able to get those and he puts them in his books. It's nice to see someone who didn't grow up playing on a country club and got private lessons from the age of 5 reaching the LPGA and winning some events. She is the Jimmy Demeret of the LPGA, a very good player and fun to watch. That came across in her book and made it a fun read.

Interesting read.

Got this for my husband who enjoys following ANYthing about golf. He enjoys watching the women's tour. He was disappointed with this book because it was too much about her, and not enough about the big picture.

A great read!

Honest And up front reveal. I didn't know how much they all love being team mates for the solheim cup.

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