



The Wild Soccer Bunch, Book 1, Kevin the Star Striker

By Joachim Masannek

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When the last of the snow has finally melted, soccer season starts! Kevin the Star Striker and The Wild Bunch rush to their field. They have found that Mickey the bulldozer and his gang, the Unbeatables, have taken over. Kevin and his friends challenge the Unbeatables to the biggest game of their lives. Can the Wild Bunch defeat the Unbeatables, or lose their field of dreams forever? Can they do what no team has done before?

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Editorial Review

Review

Exciting! With more energy than a party of second graders hyped up on birthday cake, the characters on the Wild Bunch soccer team get themselves in and out of trouble, chapter after chapter for an exciting ride to the last page. The kids are totally relateable, and totally serious about their soccer. Their passion is wonderful to watch, and things get even better when their parents try to control them. There's no controlling this Wild Bunch, and while the kids do things that would make any parent flinch, these are just good kids caught in the grip of their uncontrollable passion for soccer. Kevin, the star striker, leads off the series by challenging the best soccer team in their area to a match. Afterwards, the team wonders how they can beat the Unbeatables when they don't even have a coach. Enough said about the plot, just know that it's a page-turner. This is the kind of book that gets kids reading and begging their parents for the next book in the 13 book series. In the world of books for young people, it's nice to run across a series where no one turns into a hideous creature or fights evil chapter after chapter. Just clean-cut wholesome fun, with important lessons on teamwork and supporting your friends thrown in for good measure. Written by Joachim Masannek, this series is a winner. The illustrations by Jan Birck, bring the characters to life, showing the humorous situations the characters get themselves into. All around wonderful book. --Amazon.com

This is a real gem! I gave this book to my niece who is a soccer player and it changed her life! When she discovered that a girl can be a soccer star on a boy's team, it was so empowering for her! Now she is a real go getter on her own team. This book is about camaraderie, team work, team spirit, friendship and winning! All great things that kids should know and understand. We can't wait for the next in the series - this is a real gem! --Amazon.com

This is the start of a great series that every young soccer fan is going to go wild over! UAAHH! UAAHH! Spring had sprung (well, almost) and all the guys were raring to go. Wilson Street, a slushy street on the north side of Chicago, was home to The Wild Bunch. Kevin, the ball-hog, and his pals were raring to get outside and play soccer. Kevin, Danny, Tyler (his bro), Alex, Julian, Roger, Diego, and Joey began to pummel their walls shooting at imaginary goals. BAM! The excitement began to mount until things began to break and they got grounded. Everyone that is except for Roger who was watching in helpless disbelief as the giggling daughters of his mother's friends put curlers in his red hair. It was no great loss because he was a lousy player anyway. When Alex The Cannon put a ball through the only surviving window in the house, out the door and SMACK dab into his Dad's head they all knew they were going to be g-r-o-u-n-d-e-d. And they all were (except Roger). BAM! BAM! BUMMER! Every self-respecting nine-year-old had enough brains to figure out how to get around rules and escape the clutches of their parents and before you know it they were headed for the soccer field. Unfortunately, Mickey the Bulldozer, the kind of guy who attracts other jerks just like himself, was just coming onto the field with the Unbeatables. Mickey may have been the Darth Vader of our world, according to Kevin, but when Danny called him a moron there was trouble in Chicago. BIG trouble! It was challenge time. The Wild Bunch was looking smack dab into the faces of trouble. Mickey, Humungous Henry, Octopus, Jaggenaut Jim, Mow-down, Kong, and Rick the Grim Reaper were going to hammer those measly midgets into the ground. The game was set, the deal was struck. The winner was going to be able to keep the field forever. Dozer kicked the ball and hit the wooden fence so hard that one of the planks splintered into a thousand pieces. The Unbeatables might have been losers, but they were much older, bigger, and some nasty. The only hope for The Wild Bunch was a coach named Larry, a guy with a bum leg who reeked of beer and wore an eight-day-stubble. Did they have a chance or were they going to get ground into the field like unwanted ants at a picnic? This is the start of a great series that

every young soccer fan is going to go wild over. The reader will love the refreshing realism of the story and chuckle over some of the language and phrases. For example, when Kevin got mad at Larry he yelled out, Kiss my cleats. One of the boys is also homeless, living in a car and can't afford cleats, doesn't have a jacket, and has a mother who drinks. The story is full of fun, humor, excitement, and just the right amount of drama to keep even the most reluctant reader kicking his way through these pages to find out what happens in the end. No spoilers, here, but it was exciting and riveting. If your youngster is a soccer fanatic, this is one book you're simply going to have to add to your list! This book courtesy of Wild Soccer USA (Sole Books) in exchange for an honest review. --Amazon.com

About the Author

If you don't already know, The Wild Soccer Bunch is a worldwide children's book phenomenon, having sold over 9 million books in 30 countries! Writer Joachim Masannek based the series on his own experiences as soccer coach to his young sons. Masannek's initial idea was to create a series of 13 books, each one narrated by a unique member of the team. This idea was inspired by his belief that soccer is the most inclusive of all team sports. In fact, Masannek said, in soccer, every member of the team, regardless of his/her athletic ability, has an opportunity to be directly involved in the game. Everyone gets to run around, kick the ball, and enjoy their time outdoors. Masannek could never have anticipated the huge success that followed the release of the debut book in the Wild Soccer Bunch series in Germany. Soon, this soccer dad's artistic endeavor had millions of fans around the world, not to mention the wild success of book sales, films, and even merchandise. In fact, Masannek has written and directed five Wild Soccer Bunch feature films, breaking box office records in the process. These days, Masannek tours extensively, personally reading the books to underprivileged children across the world. If your child goes to bed wearing soccer cleats so they won't miss one minute of field time in the morning, he or she will fall in love with the Wild Soccer Bunch. And even if he or she is not the world's biggest fan, the book's universal themes of teamwork, leadership, diversity, and self-acceptance will still make an impact, and maybe even get them out and kicking a ball around! The series is a great way to introduce boys and girls alike to soccer, or any team sport; above all, the series is a fun read that will broaden the horizons of all kids, ages 8-14. Joachim Masannek, Born in 1960, studied German and Philosophy in college. He also studied at the University of Film and Television; worked as a camera operator, set designer and screenwriter in Films and TV. His children's book series The Wild Soccer Bunch has been published in 28 countries. As the screenwriter and director of the five The Wild Soccer Bunch movies, Joachim has managed to bring about nine million viewers into the theatres. He was the coach of the real Wild Bunch soccer team, coaching his sons Marlon and Leon.

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