



Breaking Away: A Harrowing True Story of Resilience, Courage, and Triumph

By Patrick O'Sullivan

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In the tradition of *Playing with Fire* and *The Crazy Game* comes a new memoir about a troubled hockey life.

Patrick O'Sullivan was a kid with skills, with natural gifts that catapulted him into the spotlight and made NHL scouts rave. O'Sullivan seemed destined to become one of the next great hockey players in the world. But then it all went horribly wrong.

In *Breaking Away*, Patrick O'Sullivan gives readers a disturbing account of ten years of ever escalating physical abuse and emotional cruelty at the hands of his father. When Patrick proved more skilled than other eight-year-olds, John O'Sullivan decided to dedicate his life to turning his son into the player he had always dreamed of becoming. Shouting at the top of his lungs, John O'Sullivan was the over-involved parent. Many of Patrick's teammates and their parents and coaches thought it ended there. Few had an idea of the dysfunction and violence at the O'Sullivans' home.

Breaking Away is a story about abuse, but it is also a story about triumph, as O'Sullivan revisits the ghosts of his past.

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Editorial Review

Review

“Patrick O’Sullivan’s story is the ultimate cautionary tale in all of sports. . . . That Patrick O’Sullivan survived his childhood to play in the NHL is a testament to his talent. That he tells it all in *Breaking Away* is a testament to his courage.” (Bob McKenzie, TSN, and author of *Hockey Confidential*)

“A tragic and at times disturbing account of abuse. . . . I hope that writing this brave and honest book and raising awareness of this troubling issue allows Patrick to find peace of mind.” (Elliotte Friedman, *Hockey Night in Canada*)

“An inspirational story and a cautionary tale. You find yourself rooting for a kid who lived through a nightmare just to play hockey and pursue his dream. . . . No one should have to go through the awful stuff that Patrick endured growing up.” (Bobby Ryan, Ottawa Senators)

“Patrick O’Sullivan had the will to survive in awful circumstances that would break almost anybody else. That he survived and played professional hockey prove his strength of character. *Breaking Away* is not just about the damage done but also moving on and at long last finding happiness.” (Todd Marinovich, former NFL and CFL quarterback)

About the Author

PATRICK O'SULLIVAN was the OHL and CHL rookie of the year in 2002 and the AHL rookie of the year in 2005. He remains the all-time leader in games, goals, assists and points for the Mississauga/Niagara franchise in the OHL. He played 334 games over eight seasons with the Los Angeles Kings, Edmonton Oilers, Carolina Hurricanes, Minnesota Wild and Phoenix Coyotes in the NHL. He played in three World Junior Championships and is all-time second in games played for the USA in tournament history. He scored the gold-medal winning goal for the United States team at the world junior championships in 2004, the first gold medal in the team's history. The 30-year-old now lives in southwest Florida with his wife and two sons.

GARE JOYCE is a senior writer for *Sportsnet Magazine*. A former writer for *ESPN: The Magazine* and *The Globe and Mail*, Joyce has won four Canadian national magazine awards and been a finalist 21 times. He is author of seven books of sports non-fiction, including *When the Lights Went Out*, *Future Greats and Heartbreaks* and *The Devil and Bobby Hull*. Under the nom de plume G.B. Joyce, he has written two mystery novels, *The Code* and *The Black Ace*.

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Richard Glass:

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