



The Highest Number in the World

Roy MacGregor , Geneviève Després (Illustrations)

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A riff on *The Hockey Sweater* for girls, an intergenerational story of the shared love of the sport, and a celebration of the storied Number 9 in hockey.

9-year-old Gabe (Gabriella) Murray lives and breathes hockey. She's the youngest player on her new team, she has a nifty move that her teammates call "the Gabe," and she shares a lucky number with her hero, Hayley Wickenheiser: number 22. But when her coach hands out the team jerseys, Gabe is stuck with number 9. Crushed, Gabe wants to give up hockey altogether. How can she play without her lucky number? Gabe's grandmother soon sets her straight, though--from her own connection to the number 9 in her hockey-playing days to all the greats she cheered for who wore it, she soon convinces Gabe that this new number might not be so bad after all.

A lovely intergenerational tale and a history of the storied number 9 in hockey, *The Highest Number in the World* is a must-have for any hockey fan.

The Highest Number in the World Details

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Author : Roy MacGregor , Geneviève Desprès (Illustrations)

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From Reader Review The Highest Number in the World for online ebook

Kimberly says

Oh, I like this book! A young female hockey player deals with the disappointment of not getting her desired number on her jersey, instead getting #9. She wallows in misery until her grandmother (a former hockey player herself, neat!) gives her a pep talk and teaches her the history of the number 9. I enjoyed seeing a positive portrayal of a female athlete who is passionate about her sport, AND I learned something! Hooray!

Me says

Wow.

I have a copy of the Hockey Sweater in my closet (bilingual as well!). I didn't think highly of the government when they got rid of the quote from the Hockey Sweater on the \$5 bill. My favourite hockey team is Montréal, mostly because of Maurice 'Rocket' Richard (not that I don't like their new team). I remember so much of the Hockey Sweater, and I went into this book biased.

I was simply putting it on display, and I saw a little CH on one of the pages. It isn't so much for Montréal fans, that bedspread has an awful lot of teams. Opening it and reading the front flap, I thought that this is a girl's newer version of the Hockey Sweater. It may be, but it is still awesome.

I never played hockey as a child, I danced instead. I guess that I never thought of Wickenheiser as an idol, by the time I had chosen Maurice 'Rocket' Richard, there hadn't been as many women's golds.

This book is beautiful. It's wonderful to have a Hockey Sweater that's newer and for girls too. Plus it's written by Roy MacGrégor, who wrote the wonderful Screech Owls.

The review is far from objective. I have no idea if a child would enjoy it. Is it written well? Probably. Were the drawings great? No clue. I still loved it though.

Marie-Pier Dodier says

Hockey.

Stephanie Morrow says

You can read this review and others like it over at [The Nomadic Reader](#).

This book was provided to me free of charge from TundraBooks in exchange for an honest review.

I signed up to review children's books a while ago, but this is the first time I was actually selected. I was

very excited. I love books for all ages, and reading out of my 'usual' age group lets me learn about what others are reading and also helps me promote books to friends and family with children in that age group. Reading is reading, after all.

This book is beautiful, and resonated with me as a Canadian and of course a lover of hockey. Not just one Canadian team either, there are references throughout the book to many Canadian hockey teams and players. Hockey is something we should be proud of, and something we should learn about. I feel that this book opened up some great discussion topics about the sport in general, while also touching on some more serious topics.

Gabe (Gabriella) Murray is a young 9 year old girl, and she loves hockey. All of her life she has wanted to be just like her hero, Hayley Wickenheiser. That's where the interest starts. Hayley Wickenheiser isn't just a made up character, she's a real person, the first woman to play full-time professional hockey in a position other than goalie. She wears the number 22. Gabe ends up getting a different number, and she isn't too pleased by that. She wants to quit and give up – but her grandmother comes along and shows Gabe all of the wonderful things about being the number 9, and explains the significance of numbers that have been retired.

The entire book is a lovely learning experience wrapped inside of a happy story about a young girl. The illustrations were detailed but not overpowering, I loved spending time on each page to make sure that I saw everything.

Perfect for children ages 6-10 (boy or girl), this book is a must-read for any fan of hockey or potential future fan.

4/5 stars

Cassie says

I received an eARC copy of this book from the publisher via NetGalley. Here is my honest review.

There are many layers to this book that draw you in. Working with preschoolers, one lesson we work on is: you get what you get and you don't throw a fit. This can be a difficult process to learn, but one that is really important as we go through life. We have all been disappointed at some point and this book introduces dealing with disappointment in a neat way. Living in Texas, hockey isn't the first sport that comes to mind; jerseys are common across the spectrum though.

It was also fun to see the main character portrayed as a young woman. With the introduction of grandma, the story quickly highlights how far acceptance for female athletes has come. The grandmother also provides insight on how our perception can make a huge difference. Young children have a fascination with big numbers, reciting something along the lines of:

six million, three hundred, two thousand, twelve, 8 million, five hundred and forty-two.

This book shows that even a single-digit numeral can be pretty impressive.

Mathieu Fortin says

Livre audio écouté avec les enfants en voiture.

J'ai été ému par l'histoire. Ma fille a aussi été très allumée d'entendre l'histoire d'une petite qui joue au hockey.

Alice says

3.75 stars Read this book in Canada at the Toronto Library, Yorkville Branch on my trip to Toronto! I am a hockey fan (though no Canadian teams...go Colorado Avalanche) and I thought this one was a great girl power story. I great sports story an a great Family story! Love the Hockey Sheets on her bed!! Go #9!!!

Jen says

OLA Blue Spruce nominee 2015. Gabe (never Gabriella!) is a fantastic hockey player who is excited to play for a new team and wants to be just like her hero Hayley Wickenheiser who wears the number 22 on her hockey jersey. When Gabe is forced to wear the number 9 instead, she is crushed. With some sympathetic support from her grandmother, Gabe comes to realize that maybe the number itself doesn't matter, because there are inspiring players who've worn every number.

Soft-washed, accessible, child-friendly illustrations (reminicent of the Peanuts characters) depict Gabe's emotions and the history her grandmother provides her, often alternating between child-like crayon drawings, black and white photo style, and full-colour line-drawings.

The story is long-winded, providing details from hockey history that fans will enjoy and those of us less-hockey-fannish will learn from. My students were particularly struck by the notion that Gabe got so upset about a simple number--"you get what you get and you don't get upset" was the refrain they used. Several discussion prompts for this story could include: the concept of luck, women in hockey history/gender roles, being flexible and adaptable.

Beth Cato says

I received this through the LibraryThing Early Reviewers program.

I don't normally review books of this length--32 pages--but this book is so fantastic that I'm glad to spread the word. It arrived in the mail yesterday, I skimmed through, and immediately told my husband--the hockey fanatic in the household--"You have to read this. It's the most adorable book ever." So he read it a short time later and came back to me with a grin. "You're right. This *is* the cutest book ever." My son then grabbed the book to read.

I requested the book because it's on-target for my son, who is age eight; it's about hockey, which my kid loves; it's about numbers in hockey, and my son is autistic and fixates on numbers; and it's by Roy MacGregor. I've read some of his middle-grade Screech Owl series and enjoyed his writing. The guy knows hockey. I expected the book to be good, but I didn't expect to get a little teary-eyed, too. It's a touching book. A little girl obsesses over the number 22 for her hockey jersey because it's the number of her hockey hero, Hayley Wickenheiser, but her new hockey team gives her the number 9 instead. She hates it. Wants to quit

the team. Then her grandma arrives on scene. Grandma wanted to play hockey as a kid and even disguised herself as a boy to do so, and she explains about the great hockey history of number 9. Their relationship is just plain beautiful and real.

The illustrations are fantastic and full of detail--I love the NHL bedding set--and add to the joy. I don't have a single bad thing to say about this book. Really, if you have a child age six to ten, girl or boy, who loves hockey, you need to get this book. Be ready to sniffle and say, 'Awww.'

Andréa says

In America, I don't see many kids books about hockey -- soccer, yes, hockey, not so much -- so reading this one was a refreshing change of pace. Roy MacGregor and Geneviève Després did a great job at making the book appealing for both girls and boys. Sure, the main character, Gabe, is a girl, but the colors in the artwork and the sport of hockey are anything but girly!

There are some good lessons in here, too, including overcoming disappointment and the better opportunities girls have for playing sports today compared to when their grandmas were girls.

(I have to admit I don't know much about hockey or hockey players, but I know more now after reading *The Highest Number in the World!*)

Note: I received a digital galley of this book through NetGalley.

Michele Knott says

I love this book for the reason we need to remember to not forget that kids hold on to things that we may not understand, but we can't ignore them.

Gabe is a hockey enthusiast who is not only passionate about her sport, but also about a famous hockey player. Wearing her idol's number is a dream for her. Unfortunately she does not get that number and she is crushed. Lucky for her, she has a grandmother who understands.

Love the girl power in this book!

Lynn says

I totally missed the hints on the cover as to what the "highest number in the world" would be!

New words: shrine, replica. And so many times I see analogies that have nothing to do with the subject matter, but MacGregor writes, "Gabe's heart felt as if a skate had just run across it." A perfect comparison that youngsters will understand.

The importance of listening to stories by a grandparent is presented.

The gouache illustrations are mostly one page, sometimes several pieces of action on one page, support the text, and have little background, thus focusing on the relevant action.

All my girl hockey players will love this.

Kristina Silverbears says

Although I am not a hockey fan, I did like this book. Primarily I appreciated the way the main character, Gabriela, embodied the spirit of feminism, without even realizing it. She had to be told, for example, that during her grandmother's day girls were not allowed on the hockey team. The author provided great examples of women in authority (the coach is female (it's a co-ed team), Gabriela's idol is a female hockey star, and the grandmother is a former player as well) without making the book about women in hockey. I appreciated also that though Gabriela is teased by her co-players, it is mostly friendly, and not at all about her being a girl.

Becca says

No, you're crying about hockey and feminism and grandparents.

Lee-Ann Slegers says

I really enjoyed this book because the story was easy for any child to understand and learn something. This isn't just a book for girls. This isn't just a book for hockey players. And it definitely isn't just for girls who are hockey players. Mr. MacGregor did a wonderful job at showing who if you look at disappointment a different way it is possible to see it as an opportunity to discover something else and just as thrilling. The Highest Number in the World references a number of great Canadian hockey players and helps pay tribute to them. Both my daughter and I couldn't help but fall in love with Grandma Gabriella! Gabe, the heroine in the story is a typical 9 year old who has her heart set on something only to have the hopes dashed but thanks to grandma she is able to recover quickly and take pride in the number she actually was assigned. It is fantastic that the majority of the supporting characters are female as well. Extremely well done!
