

Some good movies on sports

Chariots of Fire – “Best Picture” Oscar for 1982; fictionalized story of British track team in 1924 Olympics. Themes include honor, professionalization, social class, motivation for competing.

Baseball

Eight Men Out - Fictionalized story of Chicago White Sox accepting bribes to “fix” the 1919 World Series

The Life and Times of Hank Greenberg - Documentary about the first Jewish major league baseball star

42 - Fictionalized story of Jackie Robinson’s breaking the color barrier in MLB

Moneyball – Very entertaining adaptation of Michael Lewis’s book on the Oakland A’s and their manager Billy Beane (Brad Pitt)’s attempt to use a statistical approach to rebuilding the team

Basketball

Hoop Dreams – Outstanding 1994 documentary that follows 2 inner-city Chicago boys through their high school basketball careers as they try to make it to a good college program and to go pro

Hoosiers – Very satisfying drama about a high school coach in Indiana. Strong performances by Gene Hackman and Dennis Hopper.

He Got Game – Spike Lee directs Denzel Washington as an imprisoned dad who must convince his basketball-phenom son to attend college.

Football

Friday Night Lights – TV series about a coach, his family, and a winning high school football team, in a small Texas town. Outstanding.

The Blind Side – The story of Michael Oher, a homeless boy who is mentored and becomes an All American football player. Based on the book of the same name; very popular film, with Sandra Bullock as Leigh Anne Tuohy, the woman who takes Oher into her family.

Any Given Sunday – Solid drama about a coach and a talented, last-chance 3rd-string QB. Great cast headed by Al Pacino and Jamie Foxx. The business side of the pro game is portrayed pretty realistically.

Remember the Titans - Fictionalized story of newly appointed coach (Denzel Washington) and his high school team on their first season as a racially integrated unit.

Jerry Maguire – Tom Cruise stars as an agent who is down to his last client, a talented and underpaid football player (Cuba Gooding Jr.). Very entertaining; the focus is on relationships, ethics, and the business side of pro sports.

Boxing

Ali – Will Smith stars in this biographical film about Muhammad Ali

When We Were Kings – 1996 Documentary about 1974 heavyweight championship bout in Zaire between Ali and George Forman. Excellent.

Women in sports

A League of Their Own – Fictionalized story of a women’s pro baseball league during WWII when so many male players were off fighting the war. Cast includes Geena Davis, Madonna, and Rosie O’Donnell.

Bend It like Beckham – Girls overcoming family and cultural resistance to playing soccer in England.

Million Dollar Baby – Clint Eastwood directs and stars with Hilary Swank in this powerful drama about a young woman who wants to be trained to box professionally.

Girl Fight – Starring Michelle Rodriguez, this smaller movie tells the tale of a girl from a tough part of Brooklyn who takes up boxing without her father’s knowledge.

...and Some Classics

The Karate Kid (1984) – Ralph Macchio is the bullied boy who learns martial arts from a master

Breaking Away – Small town high school kids training for a bike race.

Knut Rockne, All American – How the Notre Dame coach changed the game.

Pat & Mike – Katherine Hepburn & Spencer Tracy as a female athletic star & her trainer/manager

National Velvet – A girl, her horse, and England’s Grand National race; Elizabeth Taylor is the girl.

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