

PEACHTREE
DISCUSSION GUIDE

Soccer Team Upset

Written by Fred Bowen

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Ages 7–12 | Realistic Fiction
Fred Bowen Sports Stories Series
AR • AC • Lexile • F&P • GRL R; Gr 4



ABOUT THE SERIES

Fred Bowen’s fast-paced middle-grade stories offer readers themes of competition, cooperation, facing change, gender roles, overcoming challenges, and new experiences. In addition, they feature play-by-play action, snappy dialogue, and engaging plots. Bowen’s books are not the usual sports-fiction fare; each book loops in a little sports history and includes back matter with fascinating glimpses into that history and the heroes who made it happen.

ABOUT THE BOOK

It is the beginning of the soccer season and Tyler is pumped. His team is stacked with awesome players and they have a real shot at being league champions. But then a couple of the stars consider leaving to play on a travel team and Tyler is furious. Then he finds out that star power isn’t the only way to win games.

THEMES

Seeing change as opportunity
Staying positive/optimistic | Friendship
Perseverance | Sports | Soccer | World Cup

WRITING PROMPTS & DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

aligned with Common Core Reading Standards

DIRECTIONS

Use details from the text to support ALL of your responses.

CHAPTER 1

Describe what kind of team the Cougars are. Tyler says Zack will not leave the Cougars because the Cougars have a “perfect team.” What could be another reason why Tyler thinks Zack will not leave the Cougars?

CHAPTER 2

Describe how the boys at the park act together. Do you think they are all friends?

CHAPTER 3

List the reasons why Zack wants to play for the Panthers. How does Tyler feel about Zack wanting to play for the Panthers?

CHAPTER 4

Compare and contrast how Tyler feels about his team now with how he felt about his team in chapter 1. What are some good things that happen to Tyler because Zack and the two other players left to join the Panthers?

CHAPTER 5

How does Tyler feel about Zack showing up at the Cougars first game and giving Tyler advice?

CHAPTER 6

Compare the Panthers games with the Cougars games. What is different? What is the same?

CHAPTER 7

What is Tyler's reaction when Zack tries to practice with the Cougars? Compare how Tyler and Mario feel about Zack.

CHAPTER 8

There is an expression that goes like this: "It is better to be lucky than good." How does that expression apply to the game?

CHAPTER 9

What is Tyler's initial reaction to Zack's invitation to play with the Panthers? Why do you think he reacts that way? How does he feel when he actually plays with the Panthers? Why does Tyler turn down Coach Wexler's invitation to play with the Panthers?

CHAPTER 10

The Cougars seem to be getting better as a team. What are some reasons for their improvement?

CHAPTER 11

Compare how Mario feels about the season with how Tyler feels about the season.

CHAPTER 12

How would you describe how Tyler feels about Zack? How would you describe how Zack feels about Tyler? Refer to scenes or actions in the story to support your answer.

CHAPTER 13

Tyler says, "I thought teammates were important." What does he mean by that? Mario says, "Being friends is important too." What does he mean by that?

CHAPTER 14

How does the setting in this chapter contribute to the humor in the chapter?

CHAPTER 15

How is Mr. Robertson's message about "one play" and any team being able to beat another an encouraging message in this story?

CHAPTER 16

Mikey, a substitute defender, scores the winning goal. How does Mikey's scoring that goal fit in with what the whole story is about?

CHAPTER 17

Compare Tyler's reaction to Zack's wanting to play touch football now with his reaction to Zack's wanting to play in chapter 13. How is it different and why do you think it has changed?

OVERALL QUESTION

In a few words, write down what this whole story is about (the overall theme or big idea). Explain your response.

"THE REAL STORY" FOLLOW-UP QUESTION

How does the information in "The Real Story" relate to the theme or the plot of the whole story?

REVIEWS

"The books in the Fred Bowen Sports Story series are fast-paced, and at just over 100 pages, they're perfect for reluctant readers.... Young readers will devour these stories, along with their painless lessons, and still have time to join their friends for games."

—*School Library Journal*

"Bowen does fantastic sports books.... He is definitely the new Matt Christopher."

—*YA Books Central*

"Excellent reading for sports-oriented students ages 7–12. The exciting narrative and page-turning action keep junior reader interest peaked."

—*Midwest Book Review*

"Fred Bowen never disappoints. His many action-packed novels speak to the hearts and minds of young sports lovers, and he demonstrates know-how and grace in writing about baseball, basketball, soccer and football."

—*Washington Parent Magazine*

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Fred Bowen is the author of Peachtree's popular Fred Bowen Sports Story series. A lifelong sports fanatic, he has coached youth league baseball, softball, soccer, and basketball. His kids' sports column "The Score" appears each week in the KidsPost section of the *Washington Post*. Bowen lives in Maryland.

www.fredbowen.com

Available in the Fred Bowen Sports Story series

BASEBALL:

Dugout Rivals
The Golden Glove
The Kid Coach
Lucky Enough
Perfect Game
Playoff Dreams
Throwing Heat
T.J.'s Secret Pitch
Winners Take All

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Off the Rim
On the Line
Outside Shot
Real Hoops

SOCCER:

Go for the Goal!
Out of Bounds
Soccer Team Upset



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Discussion Guide prepared by Peggy Jackson

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