



**** UNDER STRICT EMBARGO UNTIL 10PM 20TH SEPTEMBER 2021 ****

Arsène Wenger secures The Telegraph Sports Book of the Year Award at The Telegraph Sports Book Awards, as Ruqsana Begum’s inspiring read *Born Fighter* wins The Telegraph Autobiography of the Year Award.

The inaugural Clays Sports Writing Award was won by Ed Caesar’s excellent *The Moth and the Mountain*, delighting a judging panel, chaired by Clare Balding.

The inaugural Clays Sports Writing Award was judged by a stellar panel including Clare Balding, Christine Ohurugu Olympic Gold medalist, Darren Gough, Talksport’s outstanding broadcaster, Chairman of European Rugby Simon Halliday, Sky Sports Head of Boxing Adam Smith, Oliver Brown Telegraph Chief Sports Writer and Beijing Olympic Rowing silver medalist Annie Vernon. The unanimous winner was Ed Caesar’s *The Moth and The Mountain*.

Judging Chair, Clare Balding said:

“It’s been a real pleasure to judge an outstanding and varied group of books for the Best Sports Writing Award for 2021. The Moth and the Mountain was a great winner and I hope people will read this tale of daring adventure. I’m delighted that the National Literacy Trust are the charity of choice as they do a wonderful job of increasing access to books and spreading the joy of reading”

Eddie Hearn, Boxing’s leading promoter, won the iPRO Hydrate Sport Health and Fitness Book of the Year for *Relentless*, winning the people’s vote against boxing rival Tyson Fury, Olympic Gymnastics Gold medalist Max Whitlock, Italian football legend Gianluca Vialli, Joe Wicks and Chloe Madeley.

Eddie Hearn reflected:

‘I’m delighted to have won the iPRO Hydrate Sport Health and Fitness Book of the Year award alongside some brilliant nominees. This award is particularly special as it’s voted for by the public and

I thank everyone that's supported the book. This book was a challenge that I undertook during lockdown and although it's business lead, it's focus is on mindset, achieving goals and a will to win.

At times it almost felt like a personal counselling session and enabled me to learn a lot about myself and how to determine what 'success' really is. Thanks to Hodder & Stoughton for taking on the challenge with me and I look forward to the autobiography when I'm old and grey-er'.

Arsène Wenger secured The Telegraph Sports Book of the Year Award at The Telegraph Sports Book Awards, with his long-time friend David Dean picking up the award on Arsène's behalf. Arsène's book, **My Life in Red and White** also picked up Sports Bestseller of the Year award alongside the overall title in a stellar night for the Arsenal legend.

The inspirational Muay Thai world-champion, Ruqsana Begum, won the prestigious Telegraph Best Autobiography of the Year Award with **Born Fighter**. Ruqsana's book reveals that her toughest battles have taken place outside the ring: hiding her passion for fighting from her parents, suffering with ME in her daily life, losing her identity during an arranged marriage – and then finally, breaking free.

The Telegraph Sports Book Awards are delighted to have once again teamed up with the National Literacy Trust as official charity partner for 2021, and as a partner on the Children's Sports Book of the Year. This year's award went to former Welsh and British Lions Rugby International James Hook & David Brayley for **Chasing a Rugby Dream**.

The National Literacy Trust is a charity dedicated to improving the reading, writing, speaking and listening skills of children who need it most, giving them the best possible chance of success in school, work and life. Over the past 20 years, the charity has improved the literacy skills of more than a million children through the power of sport.

In a massive year for football, The CLOC Football Book of the Year chronicled the rise and fall of French Football, **Sacre Bleu : Zidane to Mbappe**. With a foreword by fellow winner Arsène Wenger, this year's Best Sports Book of The Year winner, and interviews with leading figures in French football, Spiro asks what went wrong for France and what, ultimately, went right.

Philippe Auclair, chair of a judging process, led by award partners, The Football Writers' Association reflected:

"Despite the most difficult of environments for writers and publishers, 2020 will be remembered as a great vintage for football writing, one of the best and richest on record. This was reflected in both the FWA jury's longlist and shortlist, perhaps the most diverse in terms of themes, genres and writers since the FBOTY Award was launched.

There was a clear winner in the end, a near-unanimous choice: Matt Spiro's Sacré Bleu (Biteback Publishing), which managed to weave within a superbly-written account of the rise of Les Bleus as a major force - perhaps the - major force in world football from the Zidane-inspired 1998 World Cup win to the present day, with a sharp and superbly-documented analysis of what their success meant for French society at large, and how it has contributed to re-define French identity.

Yet, whilst it dealt with subjects which would normally be the preserve of sociologists and political analysts, Sacré Bleu remained a great read, the kind of book you leave with regret and are happy to be re-acquainted with. It is a worthy addition to the superb roll of previous FBOTY winners. It also demonstrates, along with the titles which made up longlist and shortlist, how football writing is as vibrant as it has ever been."

The Pinsent Masons International Autobiography of the Year was awarded to Barry Geraghty for **True Colours**. His autobiography is about resilience, the mental strength required to enable the great to continually prevail against ever increasing odds - a must-read for all sports fans.

The 3rd Arbuthnot Latham Rugby Book of the Year, judged by the Rugby Union Writers' Club, went to Rob Kitson's **Exe Men**, defeating a plethora of rugby Internationals including James Haskell, Joe Marler and former England Captain Dylan Hartley.

The Heartaches Cricket Book of the Year sponsored by long time friend of the late Bob Willis and long term supporter of the Sports Book Awards, Sir Tim Rice was given to Ashley Gray's **Unforgiven The Missionaries or Mercenaries**.

The Illustrated Book of the Year brings together the most beautiful and original visualisations of sport. We asked the judges to critique these books by their covers and stunning imagery throughout. Winner of this year's award is Daniel Melamud with **This is Cricket**, aptly presented in this year's cricketing venue, The Kia Oval, Home of Surrey County Cricket.

The final people's vote category for Sports Entertainment Book of the Year was won by comedian Paul Tonkinson's hilarious and inspiring book about running and redemption, **26.2 Miles to Happiness**.

The Vaaru Cycling Book of the Year was won by Matt Rendell's **Colombia Es Pasion**, in a category overseen by, among others, BBC Sport's Olympic Cycling commentary team Jill Douglas & Simon Brotherton.

The 19th Sports Book Awards was sponsored for the third time by The Telegraph and hosted by Sky Sports Golf Presenter Sarah Stirk during Ryder Cup week. The awards also paid tribute to the late former England Cricket Captain and Sky Sports presenter Bob Willis, brother of our Chairman David Willis and a huge supporter of the awards.

The Telegraph Sports Book Awards 2021 winners in full:

Category	Book title	Author/s	Publisher
Pinsent Masons International Autobiography of The Year	True Colours	Barry Geraghty	Headline
Children's Book of The Year, in partnership with The NLT	Chasing A Rugby Dream	James Hook	Polaris Publishing
Illustrated Book of The Year	This Is Cricket	Daniel Melamud	Rizzoli
iPRO Hydrate Sports Health and Fitness Book of The Year	Relentless	Eddie Hearn	Hodder & Stoughton
Arbuthnot Latham Rugby Book of The Year, in association with RUWC	Exe Men	Rob Kitson	Polaris
The Heartaches Cricket Book of The Year	Unforgiven	Ashley Gray	Pitch Publishing
CLOC Football Book of The Year, in association with The FWA	Sacré Bleu	Matt Spiro	Biteback Publishing

Sports Entertainment Book of The Year	26.2 Miles to Happiness	Paul Tonkinson	Bloomsbury
VAARU Cycling Book of The Year	Colombia Es Pasión	Matt Rendell	Weidenfeld & Nicolson
The Telegraph Autobiography of The Year	Born Fighter	Ruqsana Begum	Simon & Schuster
Clays Sports Writing Award	The Moth and The Mountain	Ed Caesar	Viking
Sports Bestseller of the Year	My Life in Red and White	Arsene Wenger	Weidenfeld & Nicolson
The Telegraph Overall Book of the Year	My Life in Red and White	Arsene Wenger	Weidenfeld & Nicolson

The Telegraph Sports Book Awards 2021 are grateful to our sponsors and partners, including The Telegraph, CLOC Printing, Clays, The Football Writers' Association, Pinsent Masons, VAARU Cycles, Arbuthnot Latham, Rugby Union Writers' Club, Sir Tim Rice's The Heartaches, iPRO Hydrate, our hosts Surrey CCC, and our charity partners, The National Literacy Trust.

For more information about The Telegraph Sports Book Awards 2021, visit <http://sportsbookawards.com/>

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For more information about this story or anything else related to the Sports Book Awards, please contact Omar Khan on 07764 299902 or contact Agile by emailing Amy Cousins on amy@agile-ideas.com

NOTES TO EDITORS

About The Telegraph Sports Book Awards:

The Telegraph Sports Book Awards is the major annual promotion for sports writing and publishing, the awards exist to highlight the most outstanding sports books of the previous calendar year, to showcase their merits and to enhance their reputation and profile. The awards started in 2002, with the first award ceremony in 2003.

About AGILE:

Agile is a leading independent marketing agency, delivering campaigns and prizes across the publishing, arts, and cultural sectors.

Founded in 2004, our mission is simple: to shine a light on stories. We put great writing at the forefront of our campaigns, embedding brands within the creative, allowing our clients to take centre stage.

Alongside an extensive project management proposition, Agile offers end-to-end sponsorship services, working with both brands and rights holders to source, negotiate and manage perfectly aligned partnerships.

To find out more: www.agile-ideas.com

About the National Literacy Trust:

Our mission is to improve the reading, writing, speaking and listening skills of those who need it most, giving them the best possible chance of success in school, work and life. We run Literacy Hubs and campaigns in communities where low levels of literacy and social mobility are seriously impacting people's lives. We support schools and early years settings to deliver outstanding literacy provision, and we campaign to make literacy a priority for politicians, businesses and parents.

Our research and analysis make us the leading authority on literacy and drive our interventions. Literacy is a vital element of action against poverty and our work changes children and young people's life stories. Our new site [Words for Life](http://WordsforLife.com) provides simple, fun and educational activities for children and young people aged 0-24 to support learning at home and help them feel more confident.

Visit literacytrust.org.uk to find out more, donate or sign up for our free email newsletter. You can also find us on [Facebook](https://www.facebook.com/literacytrust), [Twitter](https://twitter.com/literacytrust) and [Instagram](https://www.instagram.com/literacytrust).

About Khan Consulting

Working with brands and rights holders to provide innovative and creative marketing solutions in challenging times.

We specialise in providing sponsorship and marketing services to clients in the fields of sport, media and entertainment. Working with a network of consultancies with affiliates across the world – in Europe, the USA, Australia, Hong Kong, Philippines, UAE, Barbados and India – we support a range of high profile clients to create sustainable business plans and projects.