



Surfing USA!: An Illustrated History of the Coolest Sport of All Time

Ben Marcus

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Surfing is not just a sport; it is a pop-culture phenomenon. Surfing has created legends, while seizing the spotlight in every aspect of beach culture, in movies, in fashion, and in music. Surfing has evolved from its mystical beginnings in Polynesia, where it was valued as noble, positive, and deeply imbued with spiritual meaning but condemned by critics (mostly religious conservatives) who considered it “pagan, immoral, and corrupting.” And we’ve come a long way from pre–World War II days, when Hawaii’ was as remote as Timbuktu; when itchy wool swimsuits and heavy hardwood surfboards were the norm.

We’ve matured since the 1950s and 1960s, with their trendy popularity—the culture and fashion, the movies and music, from “Gidget” to the Beach Boys and those bushy, bushy blond hairdos—to today, when the glitz of sophisticated marketing campaigns and media-savvy surfers are “de rigueur.” Yet, through the years, surfing has maintained its reputation as a refuge for non-conformists; the often-below-the-radar individualistic lifestyle defies a dry chronicle neatly tied up with a bow.

A comprehensive history of the sport by Ben Marcus, a man who lived it and who knows and loves it like nothing else, *Surfing USA!* is anything but dry; it truly captures the glamour and excitement of this extreme sport. If you are still in awe of that first surfboard, still stoked by hanging ten, or still dreaming of that elusive wave, then this book is for you. Ben Marcus, the former editor of “Surfer” magazine and current freelancer for such publications as “Surfer’s Journal,” brings you up close and personal to the exciting world of surfing.

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