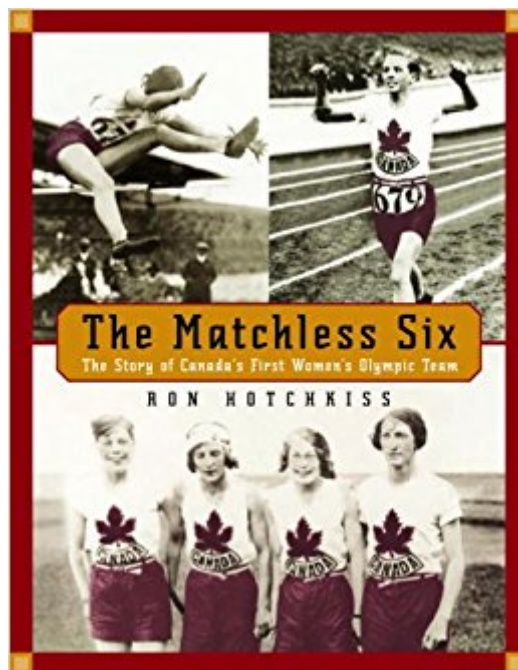




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The Matchless Six: The Story Of Canada's First Women's Olympic Team



Synopsis

It is July 1928, and Canada's first women's Olympic team "The Matchless Six" is heading to Amsterdam, the site of the ninth Olympiad of the modern era. Canada's finest female track-and-field athletes, having survived rigorous training and the grueling selection process at the Olympic Trials, were determined to take their big talent and big dreams to the top. Meet Jane Bell, Myrtle Cook, Bobbie Rosenfeld, and Ethel Smith, the "Flying Four" who comprised Canada's first relay team; Ethel Catherwood, the "Saskatoon Lily" who became the champion high-jumper and the most photographed female athlete at the Olympic Games; and Jean Thompson, the youngest member of the team at seventeen, who became one of the world's most outstanding middle-distance runners. It was an impressive achievement: "A team of six from Canada, a country of less than ten million, competed against 121 athletes from 21 countries, whose total population was 300 million. Impressive indeed. For many years, historian Ron Hotchkiss has been fascinated by "The Matchless Six," the conquering heroines who took Amsterdam by storm. His extensive research has led to this riveting account, full of black-and-white archival photographs, of the events leading up to and following that fateful summer in the history of Canadian sport.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

Grade 7 Up Hotchkiss provides detailed information on the six Canadian athletes who won the track-and-field event in 1928, the first Olympics that included women. The personalities and

accomplishments of Jane Bell, Myrtle Cook, Bobbie Rosenfeld, Ethel Smith, Ethel Catherwood, and Jean Thompson are highlighted with biographical information, including how they were chosen, how they trained, the effects of the journey to Amsterdam, and the joys and challenges they faced. The experiences of the Matchless Six that led to the competition, along with details about their growth as a team, show how remarkable their accomplishments were. Average- to poor-quality black-and-white photographs of the women, and of the men who both assisted and hindered their progress, dot the book. Accuracy is supported by quotes from newspapers, sports writers, coaches, and managers. The immense emotion of the team watching the Canadian flag and hearing The Maple Leaf Forever is felt through the clear style of writing. Anyone interested in the history of the Olympics, the history of women in the Games, or of track and field will find the book worth reading.

—â œJanice C. Hayes, Middle Tennessee State University, Murfreesboro Copyright
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Gr. 5-8. Six women represented Canada at the 1928 Amsterdam Olympics. After experiencing both heartbreaking losses and triumphs, they beat the competition by earning the most medals in track-and-field events. In fact, women's participation at the competitions was a trial, but immediately afterward, the decision was made to keep women's events on the program. Despite some controversial protests and votes made by Canadian officials at the games, the women's team was well received by the crowds and lionized upon its return to Canada. Hotchkiss does a good job of introducing each athlete as an individual as well as recording the making of the team and its experiences before, during, and after the event. Illustrated with black-and-white photos, the book provides a fresh slant on the history of the Olympics and on women's athletics in the early twentieth century. Carolyn Phelan

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