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The Prince Of Tennis, Volume 1



Synopsis

There is a rumour going around that a 12-year-old boy is going to enter the 16-year-old and under tennis group. How can someone so young ever hope to compete with kids much older and more experienced than he? But this is no ordinary kid: he is none other than Ryoma Echizen, the Prince of Tennis!

Book Information

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Age Range: 11 - 15 years

Grade Level: 6 - 10

Customer Reviews

Ok, I honestly love Prince of Tennis. It's my favorite anime of all time, so I'll try to stay neutral in this review :D The story is very simple: Echizen Ryoma is a young boy with superb tennis abilities. He enrolls at Seishun Gakuen (or Seigaku for short), a school that has one of the best tennis teams in the region. He is quickly accepted into the team and becomes famous because he's the only freshman who was ever accepted (besides Tezuka). The story goes through 178 episodes of learning about teamwork and spirit (and you get to learn about tennis too!). His father is the well-known Echizen Nanjirou (also known as Samurai Nanjirou). He plays singles, but has also played doubles. Special moves: Drive A, Drive B, Twist Serve, Split Step, Nitouryuu, Twist Spin Smash, Buggy Whip Shot, Cyclone Smash, Super Rising (from Yuuta), Buggy Whip Shot (from Kaidou), Spot (from Shinji), Deep Impulse (from Shinjou). Seigaku's team is made up of 9 members: Tezuka Kunimitsu: the captain of Seigaku's tennis team. A complete genius both on and off the court, Tezuka is very mature for age (some even doubt he's a 3rd year student). He was also

a freshman when he was accepted into the team. He has a small problem with an arm injury that was caused by a jealous team mate back when he was still a freshman. Special move: Tezuka Zone (kinda like a black hole. Can't give too much away here ;)) Fuji Syuusuke: Noted as the "prodigy", Fuji is an opponent you do not want to face. He is constantly smiling and that helps to confuse friends and rivals alike. The only times he stops smiling is when he gets serious in a match (like against St-Rudolf's Mizuki and Rikkai Dai's Kirihara). He cares deeply about his brother, Yuuta.

I love tennis, I play regularly and often watch televised matches. I've perused some of the basketball and baseball manga from Japan and been rather lukewarm, so I wasn't expecting much from this series. It has been hailed as one of the more popular sports manga series in history, and was made into an anime series that was equally well received. I checked the first volume out from my library just to see what all of the fuss was about. Without getting too deep into the story here, the manga is about tennis (duh), but the story centers around a young Japanese phenom who just moved back from overseas. He is 12 years old, but regularly wins against opponents in the high school tournaments. Since he is so young, he encounters a lot of opposition, mainly from older players, but also from his peers. The reason I am giving a four star rating is because the series is good, but generally a little over the top. I do understand that artistic license is taken to make a manga series more engaging, but some of the panels are pretty out there. Like the first match where the players are hitting the balls into each other's faces and such. It's a bit much. And the reason this stands out is because within the first three pages he corrects an older player on his description of the grip styles - accurately. The author of this series was a pretty accomplished tennis player throughout his school years, and there is a lot of credibility in the occurrences. A lot of the training, the styles, the match formats, etc, are all realistically portrayed. The over the top-ness shows in the crazy matches themselves and the super human feats of tennis that each player seems to be able to perform. It's like a match between Federer Prime and Super Djokovich at times.

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