

SPORT

Read all about it! Sporting books may help during these times of social distancing

Special feature

With the coronavirus pandemic having decimated live sport across the globe, fans will have plenty of extra time to get through off the field.

The Press Association news agency has taken a look at 10 sports books to read to help enthusiasts get through their social distancing.

In no particular order, they include:

Behind the Mask: Tyson Fury, My Autobiography

Currently in the top five of Amazon's sporting books list, lineal heavyweight champion Tyson Fury opens up on his struggles with mental health issues and the rise of the "Gypsy King" to the very pinnacle of the sport.

In the build-up to his sensational victory over Deontay Wilder in Las Vegas, a documentary also aired on ITV – all still available on catch-up to help pass the hours.

I, Robot: How to Be a Footballer 2

Following on from Peter Crouch's best-seller, the former striker continues his own unique insight into the beautiful game.

"Gareth Bale's magic beans, the Golden Rhombus of Saturday night entertainment, and why Crouchy's dad walks his dog wearing an England tracksuit from 2005," are all covered.

The Medal Factory: British Cycling and the Cost of Gold

Author Kenny Pryde examines the rise of British Cycling, Team Sky and INEOS from "amateurish beginnings through a sports-science revolution to an all-conquering, yet flawed, machine".

Sir David Brailsford, Peter Keen, Shane Sutton, Fran Millar, Chris Boardman and Sir Chris Hoy are among the interviewees who tell their side of the story.

The Great Romantic: Cricket and the Golden Age of Neville Cardus

Duncan Hamilton claimed the 2019 William Hill Sports Book of the Year for a third time with his "comprehensive biography" of venerated cricket writer and music journalist Neville Cardus.

It was the sixth cricket book to win the award – and the first since Hamilton's book on Harold Larwood won in 2009.

To Hell and Back: Niki Lauda, An Autobiography

Formula One driver Niki Lauda,



Tyson Fury at the post-fight press conference following his win over Deontay Wilder. Picture: PA

who died in May 2019 aged 70, reflects on his career, from the drama of his crash at the Nurburgring in 1976 to returning to racing and eventually reclaiming his World Championship title.

The Austrian's rivalry with British driver James Hunt was made into a Hollywood blockbuster 'Rush' – which can also help fans pass some time while in the pit lane.

Frankel: The Greatest Racehorse of All Time and the Sport That Made Him

Simon Cooper looks back on the life of retired champion Frankel, unbeaten in his 14-race career, the highest-rated horse in the world from May 2011.

Available to download now on Kindle Edition, the hardback will be out on May 14 – by which time sports fans should hopefully know a bit more about how soon live action might return.

Rory Best: My Autobiography

Widely regarded as one of Ireland's great rugby union captains, Rory Best retired after the 2019 World Cup in Japan.

The veteran hooker recalls a famous victory over New Zealand, which ended the All Blacks' record winning streak of 18 Test victories, as well as the 2018 Grand Slam.

You're Better Than That!: How To Fix Modern Football

Former Norwich, Blackburn, Chelsea and Celtic forward Chris Sutton gives his own insight into how to "right football of its wrongs".

Now a media pundit, Sutton is "a man on a mission, determined to get under the skin of the game", with the paperback edition out in May.

Kobe Bryant: The Mamba Mentality

Following his retirement from professional basketball, Los Angeles Lakers superstar Bryant gave a personal perspective of his 20-year professional career.

Bryant's death in a helicopter crash in January, which killed all nine people on board including his daughter, left sports fans around the world sharing in the family's grief at their loss.

The Price of Football

Football finances expert Kieran Maguire details how clubs operate as businesses and explains how to get to grips with their balance sheets.

The examinations from Maguire, a senior teacher in accountancy at the University of Liverpool's Management School, will give an insight into just how a lack of live action is likely to impact on clubs around the globe.

Swimming



Some of the St Albans District Secondary Schools' swimming team.

St Albans District Secondary Schools swimming team continued their run of successes at the Hertfordshire Inter-District Swimming Championship just days before the big sport shutdown kicked in.

The team won the competition for the fourth year in a row.

Led by captains Lucy Jordan-Caws of St Albans Girls' School and Harpenden St George's Joe Richardson, the 33-strong squad won half of the events at the gala and four out of the six age categories.

Hannah Brooke broke an individual record and was

also part of the inter girls' medley relay squad along with Emma Craig, Caitlin Hartley and Florence Crowley who did the same.

The final record breakers were the senior boys' medley team of Thomas Jobson, Charlie King, Daniel Martin and Richardson.

The district medalled in almost every event too with Elizabeth Standen, Cub Maddison, Megan Gray, Caitlin Hartley, and Billie Grant all coming close to records.

Ellie Holliss, Lucas Hartley, Arvin Rodriguez, Oscar Brice, and Oliver Blight also achieved wins in their events.

Boxing



Ben Callum flanked by manager Mickey Heltiel (left) and trainer Andy Smith.

Saturday was meant to be a historic day for St Albans boxer Ben Callum but it wasn't to be.

He was due to make his professional bow at Harrow Leisure Centre but the event was shelved after the British Boxing Board Of Control cancelled all events to help try and halt the spread of coronavirus.

He said: "I've worked so hard in training leading up to this fight so it is a big disappointment. I was really looking forward to putting on a show and had over 200 supporters from St

Albans coming to support me.

"But I'll just be patient and will wait for things to calm down with this virus."

Trainer Andy Smith, who runs ShoeSmiths Heelbar in The Maltings said: "The event being cancelled was the news we were dreading but as the fight-date drew closer we knew it was inevitable.

"We just have to get on with things now and prepare for when the everything has died down. Ben will be stronger, fitter and sharper as he'll have had a longer camp"