

Film List

This film resource list was assembled to help you research and develop programming around the themes of the HOMETOWN TEAMS exhibition. Work with your local library or a movie theater to host film discussions in conjunction with the exhibition. This list is not meant to be exhaustive or even all-encompassing – it will simply get you started. A quick search of the library card catalogue or internet will reveal numerous lists compiled by experts and fans alike. All titles are available on DVD unless otherwise specified. (* denotes a film mentioned in the exhibition).

Baseball: A Ken Burns Film *and* The Tenth Inning (1994 and 2010)

Documentary and companion book 1,140 min. Rated: G

Here is the story of America's national pastime, baseball, from master storyteller Ken Burns. It is an epic overflowing with heroes and hopefuls, scoundrels and screwballs. A saga spanning the quest for racial justice, the clash of labor and management, the immigrant experience, the transformation of popular culture, and the enduring appeal of the national pastime.

Bright Circle (2007)

Documentary KBOLI Productions 91 min. available on VIMEO.com.

This documentary explores the history of Native American participation and achievement in athletics. The 19th century saw the founding of "Indian Schools" — boarding schools that brought Native American children together from many different tribes, most often against their will. The objective was assimilation. In addition to the insistence on removal of tribal customs and conventions, the "Indian Schools" focused their male populations on sports, particularly football. Unintentionally perhaps, these institutions produced some of the best athletes and teams of the late 19th and early 20th century. Football, baseball, and basketball player and Olympic Gold Medalist in 1912, Jim Thorpe, honored as the greatest athlete of the 20th century, is one example. At the turn of the 20th Century, Native Americans dominated intercollegiate and professional sports, but over the past one hundred years, Native American participation in popular sports has decreased at an astonishing rate.

The Champion (1915)

Silent film (available on Amazon Instant Video) 31 min. Not Rated

Boxing appears to be the first sport filmed with Thomas Edison's moving picture in 1884. This Charlie Chaplin silent film also is among the earliest and also features **boxing**. Walking along with his bulldog, Charlie finds a "good luck" horseshoe just as he passes a training camp advertising for a boxing partner "who can take a beating." After watching others lose, Charlie puts the horseshoe in his glove and wins.

Cinderella Man (2005)

Drama 144 min. Rated: PG

Based on the life story of heavyweight **boxing** champion James J. Braddock (Russell Crowe) this common-man hero became one of the most surprising sports legends in history. His career appeared to be finished when he broke his hand in the ring. He was unable to pay the bills, the only thing that mattered to him--his family--was in danger. In a last-chance bid to help his family, Braddock returned to the ring. No one thought he had a shot. However Braddock kept winning. Out of a sense of pride, he uses a portion of his prize money to pay back the government money given to him while unemployed. When his rags to riches story gets out, the sportswriter Damon Runyon dubs him "The Cinderella Man", and before long Braddock comes to represent

the hopes and aspirations of the American public struggling with the Depression.

Endless Summer (1966)

Documentary 95 min. Rated: PG

There are any number of **surfing** pop-culture films prime for public programming (*Beach Party, 1966 Comedy

95 min. Rated: G starring Annette Funicello and Frankie Avalon) but *Endless Summer* documents the sport both here on the U.S.'s coasts as well as world-wide. Follow surfers on their quest to surf coasts from here to Africa and beyond!

***Field Of Dreams** (1989)

Family Drama 107 min. Rated: PG

Iowa farmer Ray Kinsella hears a voice in his cornfield tell him, "If you build it, he will come." He interprets this message as an instruction to build a **baseball** field on his farm, upon which appear the ghosts of Shoeless Joe Jackson and the other seven Chicago White Sox players banned from the game for throwing the 1919 World Series. When the voices continue, Ray seeks out a reclusive author to help him understand the meaning of the messages and the purpose for his field.

***Hoosiers** (1986)

Family Drama 114 min Rated: PG

Based on the true story of a small-town Indiana team that made the state finals in 1954, Gene Hackman stars in this movie chronicling the attempts of a coach with a spotty past, and a former star turned alcoholic to lead their high school team to an improbable **basketball** championship. Coach Norman Dale encounters several hurdles in his path: a feisty teacher determined to keep the best player from going out for the team, a town chock-full of second-guessing fathers, and a group of undisciplined athletes.

Eight Men Out (1988)

Family Drama 199 min. Rated: PG

Sadly, sports is full of scandal and this dramatizes the dark side of **baseball**. This is the story of the Chicago White Sox, or Black Sox as they came to be known, who accepted bribes to deliberately lose the 1919 World Series allowing the Cincinnati Reds to win. At the last minute, Buck Weaver and the great 'Shoeless' Joe Jackson turn back and try their best to win the game. In the end, eight players are banned from baseball for life.

***Friday Night Lights** (2004)

Drama 118 min. Rated: PG-13

Based the book *Friday Night Lights: A Town, a Team, and a Dream* authored by H.G. Bissinger, this film profiles the racially divided and economically depressed city of Odessa, Texas and their heroic high school **football** team, The Permian High Panthers. In Odessa, as in much of the country, there is one night that unifies and gives the town something to live for: Friday Night. The Panthers have a big winning tradition in Texas high school football, but in this 1988 season their superstar tailback suffers a career-ending injury in the first game of the season and hope is lost among citizens. The Panthers must rise from the ashes on their way to the championships, feeling like nothing like this might ever matter this much for the rest of their lives. The TV series based on the book and movie is also available on DVD.

The Greatest Game Ever Played (2005)

Family Drama 120 min. Rated: PG

A **golf** drama based on the true story of the 1913 US Open, where 20-year-old Francis Ouimet

becomes the first amateur to win the US Open by defeating his idol Englishman, Harry Vardon. This chronicles an era when golf was a sport only for the wealthy, and Francis came from an immigrant family that was part of the working class. This is adapted from Mark Frost's book *The Great Game Ever Played: Harry Vardon, Francis Ouimet and the Birth of Modern Golf*.

Hoop Dreams (1944)

Documentary 170 min. Rated: PG-13

This documentary follows two inner-city Chicago residents, Arthur Agee and William Gates, as they follow their dreams of becoming **basketball** superstars. We watch the boys become men from the beginning of high school until they start college. We follow their "Hoop Dreams" while along the way, there is tragedy, joy and a great wealth of information about inner city life.

***A League of Their Own** (1992)

Family Drama 128 min. Rated: PG

There's no crying in **baseball!** The fictional tale of the real-life All-American Girls Professional Baseball League, the movie stars Tom Hanks, Gena Davis, Lori Petty, Madonna and Rosie O'Donnell. Set during World War II, with major leaguers going off to fight, the movie shows women trying to just play ball at a time when females rarely got respect as athletes.

***Miracle** (2004)

Family Drama 136 min. Rated: PG

This is an inspiring true story behind one of the greatest moments in sports history - the 1980 United States ice **hockey's** team's triumphant Olympic victory against the Soviet Union. Coach Herb Brooks (Kurt Russell) had an inspirational dream – beat the seemingly unbeatable Soviets at their own game. Exhilarating non-stop hockey action and heart-racing suspense is set in context of the Cold War era.

Moneyball (2011) 133 min. Rated: Pg-13

Based on Micheal Lewis' book, *Moneyball: The Art of Winning and Unfair Game* (2003), this is the story of Oakland A's GM Billy Beane (Brad Pitt) who is handicapped with the lowest salary constraint in **baseball**. If he ever wants to win the World Series, Billy must find a competitive advantage. Billy's wisdom is to trust that the collected, often subjective, wisdom of baseball insiders (managers, coaches, scouts, and the front office) must be combined with statistics (stolen bases, runs batted in, batting average) – a cheaper analysis but long considered a relic of the 19th century. These observations often flew in the face of conventional baseball wisdom and the beliefs of many baseball scouts and executives.

National Velvet (1944)

Drama 123 min. Rated: G

This children's classic is based on the 1935 book by Edith Bagnold and explores what happens when you combine a headstrong young woman (Elizabeth Taylor – establishing her as “one to watch”), a former jockey (Andy Rooney) and a spirited **horse** won in a raffle. It also managed to spin off both a TV series, a TV movie version and a lesser-known sequel, International Velvet, in 1978.

The Natural (1984)

Family Drama 134 min. Rated: PG

An unknown middle-aged batter named Roy Hobbs (Robert Redford) with a mysterious past appears out of nowhere to take a losing 1930s **baseball** team to the top of the league in this magical sports fantasy. With the aid of a bat cut from a lightning struck tree, Hobbs lives the fame he should have had earlier when, as a rising pitcher, he is inexplicably shot by a young

woman. The film is adapted from Bernard Malamud's 1952 novel by the same name.

The Other Side of the Mountain (1975)

Drama 103 min. Rated: PG

Set in 1955 and based on the true story of **skiing** star Jill Kinmont. This eighteen-year-old is a truly talented, gifted skier and a shoo-in for the 1956 Winter Olympics. But Jill comes close to losing everything when she takes a near fatal fall off a mountain during the last race of the season. Paralyzed from the shoulders down, Jill now has to climb another kind of mountain-working her way up from total helplessness to leading a fulfilling life. With the help of family, friends, and an extraordinary man, Jill begins the quest up that mountain.

Pat and Mike (1952)

Comedy Drama 95 min. Rated: G

Pat Pemberton (Katherine Hepburn) is a woman's sports sensation - a champion in **golf**, **tennis**, and whatever else she decides to do. Knowing a good thing when he sees it, Mike Conovan (Spencer Tracey) becomes her manager. Mike has made his living fixing sports events, but he tries to go legit before Pat finds out his schemes. A perfect period piece that places women in sports in a timely context.

Pride of the Yankees (1942)

Biography Drama 128 min. Not Rated

One of several classic sports biographies, this one chronicles the life of legendary **baseball** great Lou Gehrig (Gary Cooper). Gehrig, played in 2,130 consecutive games before falling at age 37 to ALS, a deadly nerve disease which now bears his name. Gehrig is followed from his childhood in New York until his famous 'Luckiest Man' speech at his farewell day in 1939.

***Remember the Titans (2000)**

Family Drama 113 min. Rated: PG

Based on the true story of a newly appointed African-American **football** coach (Denzel Washington) and his high school team – forced by desegregation and consolidation of three Virginia high school teams to become one in the early 70's, on their first season as a racially integrated unit .

Rocky (1976)

Drama 119 min. Rated: PG

Rocky was the first sports film to win Best Picture - written by and starring Sylvester Stallone as Rocky Balboa - a struggling boxer trying to make the big time. When heavyweight champion Apollo Creed visits Philadelphia, his managers wants to set up an exhibition **boxing** match between Creed and the struggling boxer, touting the fight as a chance for a "nobody" to become a "somebody". The film goes on to spawn five sequels.

***The Rookie (2002)**

Family Drama 127 min. Rated: G

This inspirational family film is based on a true story. High school teacher and coach Jim Morris (Dennis Quaid) thought his dream was over. He'd had his shot playing **baseball**, blew out his shoulder, and retired without ever reaching the big leagues. Then, in 1999, he made a bet with his perpetually losing team: If they won the district championship, Morris -- who threw a 98 mph fastball -- would try out for the majors. The team went from worst to first, and Jim was soon on the road to becoming the oldest rookie in the major leagues!

Rudy (1993)

Family Drama 114 min. Rated: PG

Notre Dame Fighting Irish **football** is legendary. Based on a true story set in the mid 70's Rudy Ruettiger (Sean Astin) grew up in a steel mill town where most people ended up working, but dreamed of playing football for Notre Dame. There were only a couple of problems. His grades were a little low, his athletic skills were poor, and he was only half the size (5'6" 165 lbs.) of the other players. But he had the drive and the spirit of 5 people and set his sights upon joining the team.

The Sandlot (1993)

Comedy Family 101 min. Rated: PG

It is the early 60's and the beginning of a magical summer of **baseball**, wild adventures, first kisses, and fearsome confrontations with the dreaded beast and its owner (James Earl Jones) who lived behind the left field fence of the neighborhood sandlot. Fifth grader Scotty Smalls has just moved into this small town and the kids call him a dork – he can't even throw a ball. But that all changes when the leader of the neighborhood gang recruits him to play on the nearby sandlot field. Soon, the nine boys become best friends, Scotty is part of the team, and their leader has become a local legend.

***Seabiscuit** (2003)

Drama 141 min. Rated:PG-13

Based on a inspiring true story of three men – a jockey, a trainer, and businessman (Toby Maguire, Chris Cooper and Jeff Bridges) – and the undersized **racehorse** who took the entire nation on the ride of a lifetime. Set in the 1930's this is a lovingly realized version of Laura Hillenbrand's best selling book, *Seabiscuit: An American Legend*.

***Soul of the Game** (1996)

Drama 94 min. Rated: PG-13

In this made for TV docu-drama, the year is 1945 and everyone knows that soon, the Major Leagues will be integrated. Most think the **baseball** player who breaks the "color line" will be an established Negro League star, such the legendary Leroy "Satchel" Paige of the Kansas City Monarchs or Homestead Grays' catcher Josh Gibson, who was called "the black Babe Ruth." But Dodgers General Manager Branch Rickey confounds the experts and chooses the confrontational but cerebral Jackie Robinson first.

Space Jam (1976)

Comedy Animation 88 min. Rated:PG

In this kid's classic Michael Jordan agrees to help the Looney Toons play a **basketball** game against alien slavers to determine their freedom.

Wind (1992) 126 min. PG-13

The film is centered on the America's Cup series **yachting** races and uses them as a backdrop for both an action/adventure and a romantic storyline. It is inspired by real events, starting from the loss of the 1983 America's Cup through the events of the 1987 race. Will Parker, played by Matthew Modine, after loosing the America's Cup to the Australians, and decides to form his own syndicate to win it back. Great sailing action footage.