



Room for Improvement: A Life in Sport

John Casey

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From the author of the novel *Spartina*, which won the National Book Award and has established itself as a modern classic, comes a collection of essays that describe with tenderhearted candor and humor a lifetime's worth of addiction. No, not an addiction to booze or drugs, but an addiction to a more natural gratification: the joy of sport, exercise, and the sheer elation of being ready and willing to say yes to a challenge. Want to run a marathon? *OK*. Climb Mount Katahdin? *Sure!* How about canoeing the entire length of the Delaware River? *Why not?*

Spanning more than fifty years of ambitious and sometimes peculiar endeavors, these essays take us along on some of Casey's greatest adventures: a twenty-six-day Outward Bound course in Maine during the dead of winter; being pinned by a two-hundred-pound judo instructor whose words, "Come on, white boy. Don't give up," encourage at least one more attempt at escape; leading a lost couple on a yacht through the rocky waterways of Narragansett Bay by a simple rowboat; and completing—on his seventieth birthday—a 70K marathon of his own devising that included rowing, bicycling, skating, Rollerblading, and finally, trotting the dog out for a mile.

Be it a preoccupation with health, vanity, or just an indomitably playful sense of adventure, John Casey's *Room for Improvement* is a joyful self-portrait of a writer who loves going to extremes, just to find out what it's like once he gets there.

From the Hardcover edition.

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