



Skin in the Game

Jackie Barbosa

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A sexy category romance from Entangled's Brazen imprint...

When the competition's this hot, someone's bound to score.

Angela Peterson was always the quiet, shy kid growing up in Harper Falls, crushing on the high school quarterback and honing her football strategy skills. Now grown up and coaching the high school team, she's shocked when that same sexy quarterback returns to Harper Falls asks her back to his hotel room. And then tries to steal her job.

Injured NFL quarterback Cade Reynolds is in Harper Falls to take over as interim head coach, and he never thought the tall, blond bombshell he propositioned would offer up any resistance. Not to a repeat of the amazingly wild night they shared and certainly not to his coaching position.

But the Harper Falls High Eagles are Angie's team, and even the hometown hero won't take that away from her, no matter how hot he is. As the two engage in a battle of wits and wills, this is one game neither is prepared to lose.

Skin in the Game Details

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Author : Jackie Barbosa

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Genre : Romance, Sports and Games, Sports, Contemporary Romance, Contemporary, Sports Romance

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From Reader Review Skin in the Game for online ebook

Penny Watson says

I don't like football, I don't love contemporary romance, but somehow this story worked for me. The heroine is a super smart-sports analysis gal, which is a very cool combination--I love smart and sporty together. The hero is a football star with an injury, who returns to his hometown to coach the high school team. This was a very engaging story. Barbosa did a great job developing a believable romance between these two characters, incorporated just the right amount of football (not too much, not too little), and gave the reader a satisfying HEA. I heartily enjoyed this one.

Grade: B+

Carisa says

A new author to me, this was an entertaining and fun story, with a wonderful hero and a heroine who frequently grated on my nerves. I really liked the writing and will read more from this author.

HERO is a Performer, a famous football player recovering from an injury which stopped his promising career. Mostly recovered now and needing something to do while deciding about his future, he agrees to temporarily substitute his former high school coach who's sick. But he never expected to be working alongside with the woman who disappeared after an unforgettable one night stand.

SCENES/CONTENT: few/hot

GENRE/TONE: contemporary/light

LENGTH: 233 pages

Lisa Jayne says

4 TOUCH DOWN STARS.

"Maybe we can slip into something a little more comfortable? Like the bed."

Bring on the sexy, bring on the sweet yes you've guessed it, it's another Brazen treat. I'm convinced any book in this series will be right up my street, just my cuppa, perfect for me etc etc. I've now got the Brazen titles lined up as my next reads and this little number unsurprisingly more than met my romance needs. Here are my thoughts ...

What's it all about?

Angela Peterson is a Successful teacher and well thought of assistant coach to the high school football team, she lives in a small town liked by all and lives her sheltered life looking after her widowed father. Things haven't always been so rosy for the blonde bombshell; as a teenager she was shy, awkward and had the typically overwhelming crush on the high school star quarter back, Cade Reynolds. Cade has had all he could

have dreamed of from high school to adult hood he has had a successful career as a talented football player which resulted in playing for the NFL, he is wealthy and gets paid for what he loves most, unfortunately this football hero gets injured on the field and during his recovery he returns home. 'skin in the game' is the story of Cade and Angela and what happens when a teenage crush turns into an adult fantasy. But with competition, secrets and fear of the unknown standing in the way, will these two should be's find their happily ever after?

What did I love?

This book is sweet and sexy at it's finest, I loved the predictability and easy nature of the story telling, the author knows the story she wants to tell and projects it confidently. You'll find no apologies here from me for loving a tried and tested romance that's been seen and heard before, it's what I love. The sexual tension is a nice add on to an already sweet as can be story and I quite liked the connection between Cade and Angie. This story has an ugly duckling, Cinderella, second chance love story feeling that screams of a candy-coated romance all of which I'm a huge sucker for. This book has an outright no holding back feel good factor that borders on cheesy territory but that's no negative for me - bring on the romance and over the top schmoozing. I also love a sport related romance, Cade was described to hot American football star perfection and Angie was the perfect home grown beauty, all in all a lovely romance with enough story telling to convince me of a firm four stars.

Why not five?

There was that book butterfly factor missing for me, although I liked the characters I didn't find myself in full blown love with them, but I can't think of anything more to describe to you why it didn't ring that five star bell so don't go thinking I didn't thoroughly enjoy this authors story, sometimes a book has that 5 star factor other times it doesn't, 'Skin in the game' although a winner it didn't blow me away.

Final thoughts ...

A sweet, sexy, fool proof romance that had me entertained and left a smile on my face, it also had that stateside feel to it that always gives me a case of the warm and fuzzies ... Why not give it a try? Go grab it readers, enjoy ... Kisses.

Jill says

Skin in the Game was given to me by Netgalley for an honest review.

This book in theory ticked all the right boxes for me. We had a second chance (sort of) romance. The nerdy girl who grows up to be the beauty of the town and the jock who ignored her becomes immediately smitten with her. Usually I love these sorts of stories, there is a humour to them and a realistic storyline. I like thinking these things happen :)

And although I enjoyed this book, it was pleasant and easy to read, I didn't love it. There needed to be a bit more zing between the characters and it needed to be built up a bit more. Everything happened very fast. Sometimes a rushed romance works and sometimes it doesn't. For me this one did lack that special something.

However, it was still a good story to wheedle away my time and keep my mind occupied.3 stars.

Yvette ~ Nose Stuck in a Book says

Ever since I first read J. Lynn's Tempting the Best Man, I have been hooked on Entangled's Brazen series. I've read all nineteen (yes, I counted) of the colorfully-covered books, although Jackie Barbosa's Skin in the Game (Play Action) is the first ARC I've received from the collection. Continuing in the tradition of the Brazen series, Barbosa has provided readers with a feisty heroine, a swoon-worthy hero, several steamy love scenes, and the promise of a Happily Ever After.

The story alternates between the perspectives of the male and female protagonists, first introducing us to Cade Reynolds, professional football player and pride of Harper Falls, Minnesota. When a shoulder injury abruptly ends his season with the Texans, Cade accepts a temporary position coaching his high school football team, ending his years-long absence from his home town.

On his first day back in town, Cade encounters a gorgeous blond with an interest in sports, not realizing that he is already acquainted with his "dream woman". Teased in high school for being the quintessential nerd with an unrequited crush on the school's popular quarterback, Angie Peterson is surprised by Cade's obvious interest in her.

Since her romantic prospects as a small-town high school math teacher have been few and far between, Angie is more than willing to pursue their mutual attraction, even if it's just for one night. Throwing a wrench on Angie's resolve to place a time limit on their affair is her job as the football team's assistant coach, making Cade her new boss – a development that is as unexpected as it is unwelcome.

Cade and Angie are one of those couples who would greatly benefit from a bit of communication. It seems they are constantly trading off on keeping each other in the dark about one thing or another. Rather than being frustrated by their harmless deceptions, I was amused by their stubborn attempts to handle certain situations in whatever way they saw fit.

As the two main characters, Angie and Cade are immensely likeable. Angie is my favorite type of heroine: intelligent, beautiful, and unapologetically nerdy, with tomboyish tendencies. Cade, in turn, is the All-American jock, whose occasional bouts of pig-headedness are forgiven by his charming nature and shockingly dirty mouth.

I devoured Skin in the Game in a matter of hours, eager to follow along with the drama that unfolds between Cade and Angie, who are nothing if not entertaining. I found Angie to be a relatable heroine and I genuinely enjoyed getting to know her character as she navigated her complicated relationship with Cade. I especially enjoyed the book's epilogue, which simultaneously closed one story and introduced two promising new characters that will appear in the next installment of the Play Action series.

Wminbc says

Sweet, football and first crushes...

Guilty Pleasures Book Reviews says

Slick's review posted on Guilty Pleasures Book Reviews

Review copy provided for an honest review.

4.5 Stars

Somehow this past year I've read a lot of books revolving around football player heroes and I'm not a big fan of football. However, I've enjoyed them all including Skin In The Game. I love the strong female lead and the hero and I have something in common, we both have problems remembering faces and names. I'm ashamed to admit that, but it takes me several times of seeing someone before I can get their name and face put together in my head. So, I completely sympathize with him especially since it's been over 15 years he's seen the heroine.

Cade Reynolds has returned to his hometown to help out his former high school football coach. Recovering from an accident that almost took his NFL career from him, the last place he wants to be is Harper Falls. Surprised at not being recognized immediately, he's stunned when the woman that immediately garnered his attention apparently does recognize him.

Angela (Angie) Peterson can't believe her eyes when she spots her former high school crush in the local coffee shop. When she confronts him she realizes he doesn't remember her from high school but then why would he, she's changed a lot from the clumsy, football loving, geek she used to be...well sort of, she's still loves football, still somewhat of a geek, but she's not the wallflower she used to be either.

These two fall into bed immediately and Angie pulls a disappearing act which ticks Cade off and thoroughly confuses him. When they both realize that they'll be essentially working together things get a little messy and they both know they have to take a step back. I enjoyed watching them try to stay away from a physical relationship all the while getting to know each other better. Angie impressed me with her ballsy attitude and refusal to back down just because she's a woman. I love that while she was falling for Cade she refused to change her life to suit his. I felt for Cade on several occasions because he had some tough choices to make and none were easy. The fact that he realized he wanted more out of life than football and that he was willing to give up his dream to get it makes him a very appealing hero.

This was such an easy book to love because both the main characters were completely likeable. On top of that there was a great storyline with just enough drama to make it interesting but not so much that you get bogged down in it. Skin In The Game is an excellent steamy romance and anyone who enjoys a strong heroine and a guy smart enough to realize he's got a good thing and is willing to sacrifice to keep it will no doubt enjoy this story.

Lana ✶Dirty Girl Romance✶ says

I have never read any other books by Jackie Barbosa, but I am a sucker for a good Sports Romance. When I saw that the hero of the book is a sexy football player, you better believe I was all over that. (*What? Don't judge me! We all have our weakness.*)

The story itself was cute. It was well written, and had a good flow. I really enjoyed the characters, but it was still missing a little something for me to make it a more memorable read.

The story itself would have been typical, had it not been for an interesting twist to your usual heroine that you might find in a book like this.

Angela "Angie" Petersen was the shy, awkward, ugly duckling growing up. She and Cade went to the same high school and were friends. Of course Cade was the popular school quarterback that all the girls wanted, Angela included. Angela is now, of course, a knock-out. (pretty 'been there, read that' so far, right?) When Cade comes back to Harper Falls after an injury he suffered during one of his games takes him out of pro-ball for a while, he does so as a favor for his old high school football coach so he can take over as the interim head coach of the football team.

Of course when Cade sees the now bombshell Angela, sparks fly.

Now here is the twist that I really enjoyed. Angela, is actually one of the assistant coaches of the football team. I loved that she knew the game so well, even better than some of the male coaches. There was a lot of sports jargon and terms, so fans of the sport would definitely enjoy that. I'll admit to admiring the...uhem...tight ends...in the game, more so than the actual technicalities of the game itself (what, I'm honest OK!), so I was a little bit lost on some of the terminology. But I did enjoy reading and learning more about it.

So when Angela finds out that Cade is threatening her position as a coach, a competition forms between them, laden in sexual tension, of course.

I liked that this was not a case of insta-love, though I did think that the whole "I love you" (view spoiler) business came a little too fast. But that might have been just my own preference at work here.

I can't say that I **loved** the book, but I did enjoy it. I suppose in the end it was just missing that something extra, a certain oomph to make this a 5 star book for me. It was cute, with a happy HEA and quite steamy. It seemed to have a set-up in the end for a certain 2 characters that were introduced in this story, so I believe the author has plans to make this into a series.

So I'll go with 3.5 stars.

Arc provided by Engangled Brazen via Netgalley for an honest review

♥Rachel♥ says

Unrequited love is one of my favorite types of romances, and this is what we have between Angie and Cade.

Cade Reynolds is a famous NFL star quarterback, sidelined since his shoulder injury. When his old high school football coach calls in a favor, he can't say no. This man was his mentor and a father figure all in one.

When he shows up back in his hometown, Harper Falls, he can't believe it when he lays on one of the most beautiful women he's ever seen. She's more than just a beauty though, this woman has brains. Something he learns by eavesdropping. She's the high school's resident math teacher. And as if that wasn't enough she's a sports fan, who quickly recognized him. Coming home seems to be paying off!

Angie Peterson can't believe her eyes when she looks over at Cade Reynolds. He was the star quarterback, and popular homecoming king in high school, and Angie's unrequited crush. Sure they had some meaningful conversations about football & he was duly impressed when she came up with some brilliant strategies for the game, but he never really noticed a geek like her back then. Her talent for strategy and working out plays only went so far. And yet here he is in her hometown coffee shop eyeing her like she's a dying man's last meal, with hunger and lust in his eyes!

When one thing leads to another they share a night of passion, one that Angie feels sure won't be repeated. What she doesn't count on is Cade being the hotshot stand-in head coach for her team. She's worked hard as assistant coach, but now that doesn't seem to make a difference when Cade steps in and takes a spot that should've rightfully been hers. Angie doesn't care if he is a celebrity NFL player, she's not about to go down without a fight! Let the sparks fly people, and the fun begin!

I loved that with all this drama things never got frustratingly out of hand between Angie and Cade. Cade remained a sweetheart and a gentleman throughout the story and Angie was, thankfully, pretty levelheaded as well. These two had some smoking hot chemistry and fire in the beginning that had to be reignited, because of their situation, but they could hardly keep their hands off each other even so!

As his mouth captured hers, she stiffened with surprise of indignation, maybe both. It didn't matter. He deepened his onslaught, not sure if he was trying to punish her or subdue her and not really caring which it was.....When she melted against him with a groan of surrender and met the stroke of his tongue with her own, he wanted to pump his fist at the sky and shout with triumph.

Skin in the Game had a sweet romance with enough spice to get your heart racing, and an ending that put a big fat smile on my face. This is my first read by Jackie Barbosa, but it won't be my last!

It seems that we get a second story in this world with Angie's best friend, Rachel, and Cade's best friend, Warren. Rachel is a physical therapist and Warren is a NFL quarterback with a serious injury who seems to have lost hope in a recovery. I can't wait to read that story!

A copy of this was provided by Entangled Publishing in exchange for an honest review. Thank you!

Sunny says

A very strong 3.5 stars

This review is posted at <http://loveaffairwithanereader.blogspot.com>...

As a sports romance, this one is done well. The game of football is integrated into the story - not just on the sidelines. I also enjoyed the twist of having the game played out from the female perspective. She is the playmaker of the football team and he is there as a figurehead. Her intelligence and knowledge of the game

informs the strategy. Nicely played.

Hotness factor? There is definitely chemistry between the Cade and Angie. What starts out early as a one night stand never really dissipates. In fact, the attraction grows and gets hotter. Yes! The tension in the story doesn't derive from the traditional will they/won't they conflict, instead it deals with lingering insecurities, the price of fame, and small town judgment.

My criticism of the story lies more with the editing. The narrative meanders a bit and could have been more tightly structured. Instead of having one apex, it felt like there were several, kind of like episodic television. Still, the story reaches a satisfying end - it reminds me of the feeling I get watching a Julia Roberts movie. Left me smiling.

One other small little thing - Cade is a USC Trojan. As a UCLA Bruin, it is a good thing he is so cute. But come on, Jake Hansson wanting to be a Trojan too? It was almost too much.

IN A NUTSHELL

This book is a fun read with a sports theme. Worth the time and effort. Watch out for the end of the Epilogue - I am intrigued for what is clearly the next book.

Thank you to Netgalley and Entangle Publishing, LLC for the ARC in exchange for an honest review.

Mo says

This was a nice quick read. Love sports books. Small town girl, returned hero, who has made it big in Football. Sort of Friends to Lovers but not really. Nerdy girl turned beautiful.

Nice hot sex scenes too. These Brazen books usually are a fast read and this one was no different.

Autumn Review says

I saw the cover, read the synopsis, and I was sold. Sexy athlete books just do it for me. What I liked about this one though was that there was a good story there too. While this wasn't a couple that was reunited, they did 'know' each other in high school. It was fun to watch them interact with each other.

I'll start with Cade. He was super hot. He knows what he wants and isn't afraid of a challenge. Cade was injured, so he has some time off. He goes home to help his old high school coach. He's supposed to supervise one of the Assistant Coaches, not completely take over. So, on his first day home, he sees a woman in the coffee shop. There is something vaguely familiar about her, but he can't pinpoint what it is. They make a date and have one explosive night together.

Angie always liked Cade, but she was a bit geeky. She's not that girl anymore. Now, she's confident and determined to succeed. She wants to take over as Head Football Coach for the high school team. She's definitely qualified for the job. She's smart and has a talent for making plays. But Cade shakes her up a bit. She's quickly falling for him even though she feels like he's trying to take her job. Once she figured out that he's not after her job, he's after her, she allows herself to fall in love.

Cade and Angie were really hot together. The sex scenes were hot, but maybe a little more mild than other Brazen books that I've read. That certainly won't deter me from continuing with the series though. My favorite scene between them was their first sex scene together. There was an unguarded feeling to it, a bit wild. It was pretty darn hot!

Overall, I really enjoyed Skin in the Game. This is the first book of Barbosa's that I've read and I really enjoyed her style. I look forward to continuing on with this series. If you're a fan of Sports Romance, check this one out!

Favorite quote:

~"They say there's a thin line between love and hate, so I'll take it." He leaned in a little closer, his heat and spicy masculine scent invading her senses. "Here's some more honesty for you. I want you so much, I ache with it. I've jacked off every night for the last week remembering how it felt to be inside you. I'm hard right now, just standing here with you."-Loc 1171

Claudia says

This was a really well done sports romance. Sometimes there're sports romances where you wonder where the part about the sport is but not in this one. The author found a good balance between the romance and sports parts.

Angie, the heroine, is a reputable and modest high school teacher and an assistant football coach for the high school team. She likes to take care of things and so she still lives with her dad to look after him.

The hero, Cade, is an injured NFL quarterback who was asked to take over as interim head coach. That's the position Angie wants. Well, you can see the conflict, right? They both know each other from back in high school even though Cade doesn't recognize Angie at first because she has changed quite a bit. I really liked the way the story went. There wasn't any real fighting over this position, no immature handling or stupid decisions. They rather got to know each other and fell in love.

I wish the author would have gone more into detail at times. For example, it was mentioned in one sentence that Cade was addicted to pain killers and beat that habit quickly. I wanted to know more about this time. But nevertheless, I really enjoyed this book and I'm looking forward to the next in the series.

(A review copy was provided by the publisher through NetGalley.)

Saly says

Really enjoyable book. Hero is a former NFL star who got injured a while back, doing a favour for his high

school coach. Sees heroine, instant attraction, he doesn't recognize her from high school as the geeky girl. The heroine is tall, gorgeous, football fanatic, high school maths teacher and assistant coach of the team and she had a thing for the hero since she was a teenager.

This helps her accept his proposition and spend one night with him but she leaves in the morning quietly much to the hero's anger. Now, the heroine doesn't see herself as a knock-out but the hero does. She is angry when she learns that he is there for her job albeit temporarily.

The romance was quick and this book entertained me. The hero came across as a great guy and the heroine wasn't that bad despite her self doubts.

Susanne says

It was the kiss she'd waited for all her life – an exquisite blend of give and take, of hard and soft, of sweet and dirty. Everything she'd ever dreamed a kiss would be, and yet nothing she'd ever imagined in her wildest fantasies.

Cade and Angie went to high school together. He was homecoming king and she was a shy nerd. **Now, Cade is a pro quarterback and Angie is a knock-out math teacher and football coach.** When Cade is injured, he returns home to coach his old team as head coach. Angie had a crush on Cade all through high school, and she still has. And now he is her boss.

"Because you're my boss. You can't come to my house first thing on Saturday morning and hit on me when I'm still in my pajamas."

"Well, you could always take them off", he suggested, waggling his eyebrows.

"Oh my God, you're impossible."

"On the contrary, when it comes to you, I'm willing to be very possible."

It was pure fun and hotness. It was good and I really enjoyed it but it lacked that certain something to bring it up to a four or five stars read. I had super high expectations because I'm a big fan of Jackie Barbosa, but it felt a bit rushed. All in all, I read it over a couple of hours. There were no big misunderstandings, and no unnecessary fights. Yes, they fell in love a bit too quickly but after all they'd known each other as kids. And the ending was one of the best ever! It left me with a big goofy grin on my face. And there was an epilogue!

Thanks to Engangled Brazen and Netgalley for providing me with an ARC.