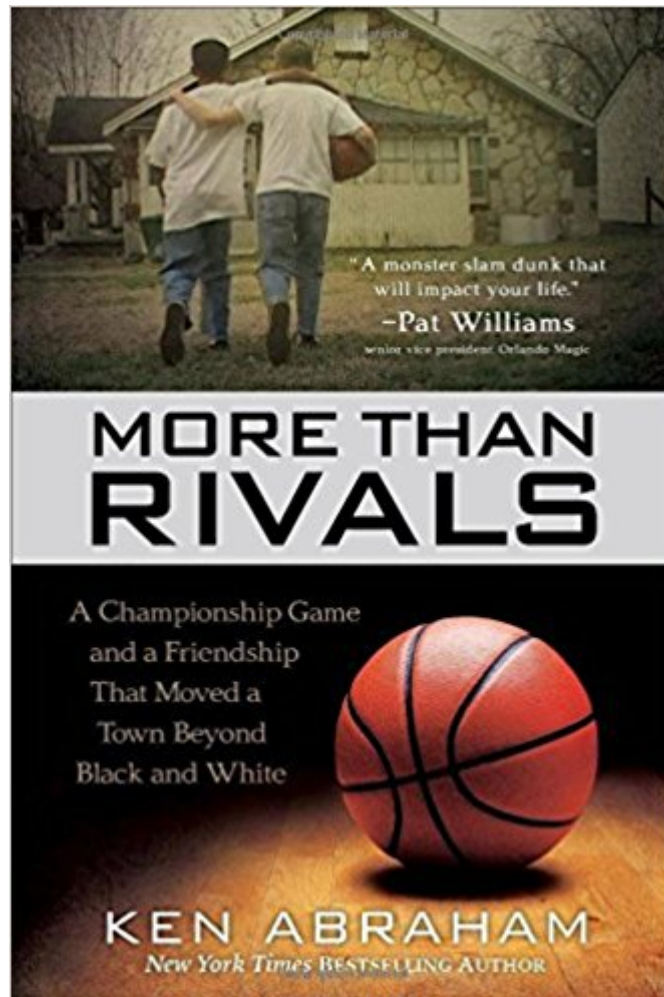


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# More Than Rivals: A Championship Game And A Friendship That Moved A Town Beyond Black And White



## Synopsis

An Inspiring True Story Set in the Midst of the Civil Rights Era  
By 1970, racial tension was at a breaking point in the southern town of Gallatin, Tennessee. Desegregation had emotions running high. The town was a powder keg ready to erupt. But it was also on the verge of something incredible. Eddie Sherlin and Bill Ligon were boys growing up on opposite sides of the tracks who shared a passion for basketball. They knew the barriers that divided them--some physical landmarks and some hidden in the heart--but those barriers melted away when the boys were on the court. After years of playing wherever they could find a hoop, Eddie and Bill entered the rigors of their respective high school teams. And at the end of the 1970 season, all-white Gallatin High and all-black Union High faced each other in a once-in-a-lifetime championship game. What happened that night would challenge Eddie and Bill--and transform their town. This New York Times bestseller is a fast-paced true story of courage, determination, character, and forgiveness.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

Excellent book, quick and easy read. Living in the town the book is set in makes it even better. Picturing everything that went on was amazing. I wish I had been at that game. Race relations are still complicated in our town, even more so with the national climate. However, many of us see past the color of our skin. Many of us do life together. Many of us feel the weight of what this event did for our history. May we make the future even better for our children and grandchildren.

This book is a reminder of the positives which can be accomplished as people work together for a

common cause. One positive gesture can make a huge difference to unite people. Just as negativity and ignorance can breed prejudice and tear people apart. It is amazing to read about how backward and ridiculous our social mores were in the past. As our country strives for social and racial equality, we could all learn an important life lesson from this writing. Jesus LOVES the Little children....all the little children of the world.....whether they are yellow, black, or white....They are precious in his sight.

"Remember the Titans" meets "Friday Night Lights," Ken Abraham does a masterful job quickly pulling the reader into the racially tense world of Gallatin, Tennessee in the 1960's. From the onset you learn about two young kids, Eddie Sherlin and Bill Ligon, who shared a love for the game of basketball in a time and place where their friendship was considered off limits solely due difference in the color of their skin. Despite the surrounding hatred that these two kids could have easily succumbed to; somehow they rose above the narrow-minded thinking and understood what was right and what had no place in their lives. How could this be? How did these leaders on the court come to understand how very much alike they truly were? One gets the impression this revelation comes from the purity of the game of basketball, and the lessons learned on the court translated to life itself. This was a truly great read and I couldn't put "More than Rivals" down until I got to the final page. Loved it! As a footnote; I knew Bill Ligon in the early 1970's when he was a counselor at All Pro Camp, owned and operated by NBA great, Dave Bing and national championship coach, Howie Landa. Tremendously talented player for Vanderbilt at that time and one of the nicest, warmest individual that you could meet. He was a great teacher of the game. It is hard to believe that Bill had to endure such prejudice only a few short years before I knew him, and yet remained so upbeat and positive without allowing a grudge or smoldering hatred hold him back.

The book was about 2 boys, one white and one black, who ended up becoming basketball stars in their respective schools and about their life growing up in the racially charged 60s. The book culminated in a basketball tournament game, competing for the championship, between Eddie Sherlin's school, with predominately white students and Bill Ligon's school, with black students. I really enjoyed the book. I enjoyed reading about the boys' antics and also about the friendship between Eddie and Bill. Even though the book was about 2 basketball players, the book was not bogged down by a ton of basketball or sports jargon, unlike some books I've read about sports figures. The book also did a good job driving home how racially charged the 60s were in the state of Tennessee, where the boys grew up, and even further south. Many of the events in that time frame took place before I was born, so it was good to get a refresher on what it was like during

that time period. The ending was also awesome. Can't get into the outcome of the book because I don't want to share spoilers, but let's just say that the reader will like the ending:). The only thing that I didn't really like about the book was that there were some events written that didn't seem to fit with the overall story line of the boys, basketball, or the racial tensions of that time. I didn't see how the stories of the girlfriends of Eddie and Bill fit into the story line, as well as the scene of Eddie's mom and dad fighting over the fact that the dad chose a woman other than Eddie's mom to sing a solo at church. I thought that the book might have gone somewhere with those events, but it did not. Overall, I really liked the book and would recommend it. Rating: 4 out of 5 stars I received this book for free from the Revell Book Tour program in exchange for a review.

"More Than Rivals" by Ken Abraham is a book about 2 young men in the 60's and 70's one white (Eddie Sherlin) and one African American (Bill Ligon) coming together as friends at a basketball championship in Tennessee in 1970. What was so important about this tournament well it was between two schools that were still mostly segregated with very big amounts of racism still lingering around in their portion of Tennessee. This was a very interesting book and is one that I think should be read by a lot of people. We tend to forget that some areas racism was not that long ago and in some areas it is still happening to this day (I have seen it even in my little area of the world). We also forget that some of the racist adults from then are still alive and the children they raised to be racist are still alive. Why do I say that well think about the 2 young men in this book are only in there 60's now and some of their classmates were raised to be racist. Back to the book, I really enjoyed that Eddie Sherlin kept reminding that there is no difference in race in God's eyes. As Christians we should be known as not racist people but sadly that is not always true. Reading about their childhoods and lives that intersected at different times was very interesting. I normally am not a big fan of reading about sports even but the climax of this book the basketball tournament was very interesting and well written. Now I will say that I am not sure about all the in depth conversations being remembered perfectly from a least 46 and more years ago. But other than it still was a very good and powerful book to read and I highly recommend it. I was given this book from Revell a division of Baker Publishing Group for my honest review and was not required to give a positive review.

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