

The Story of a Chinese Pro Basketball Player: Chinese athlete shares personal experiences of cultural revolution

by Bend_Weekly_News_Sources

Kai Chen struggled against seemingly impossible odds to achieve his basketball dreams during China's Cultural Revolution. He shares his story in the new book "One in a Billion: Journey Toward Freedom -- The Story of a Pro Basketball Player in China" (now available through AuthorHouse).

Chen served as an officer in the People's Liberation Army and played pro basketball for various teams, including the August First Team (the top Chinese military team) and the Chinese National Basketball Team. Throughout his career, he often had to struggle with the political discrimination and hardships of communist China, but never gave up his values and dreams.

In the Cultural Revolution of the 1960s and '70s, Chen suffered discrimination because of his family background and Taiwanese relatives. He endured the death of his best friend, Xiao, who died due to his despair and the discrimination he suffered. "Many were crushed," writes Chen. "[I myself] had verged on collapse many times. But [I] willed [myself] against impossible obstacles to defeat the Big Family and eventually made it to the very top of the Chinese athletic establishment - the National Team."

Once he fulfilled his dream, Chen realized that he could no longer serve an entity and system that suppressed the very individuality that he relied on to succeed. He retired at the peak of his basketball career, entered college, met and married an American exchange student and left China. "I had finally tasted true freedom and happiness," he says.

As the 2008 Beijing Olympics approaches, Chen provides an insightful look into China's sports and athletics establishments and programs. "Do people know anything about the origin and inner workings of the Chinese sports establishment?" he asks. "Do people know anything about Yao Ming's predecessors - his parents' generation of athletes in China during those unforgettable and arduous years of the Cultural Revolution? ... 'One in a Billion' will be the first attempt by a professional Chinese athlete to reveal this unknown world and to inspire individuals around the world with an honest and courageous personal story."

Chen currently resides with his family in Los Angeles. "One in a Billion" is his first book. More information can be found at <http://www.freewebs.com/oneinabillion>.

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