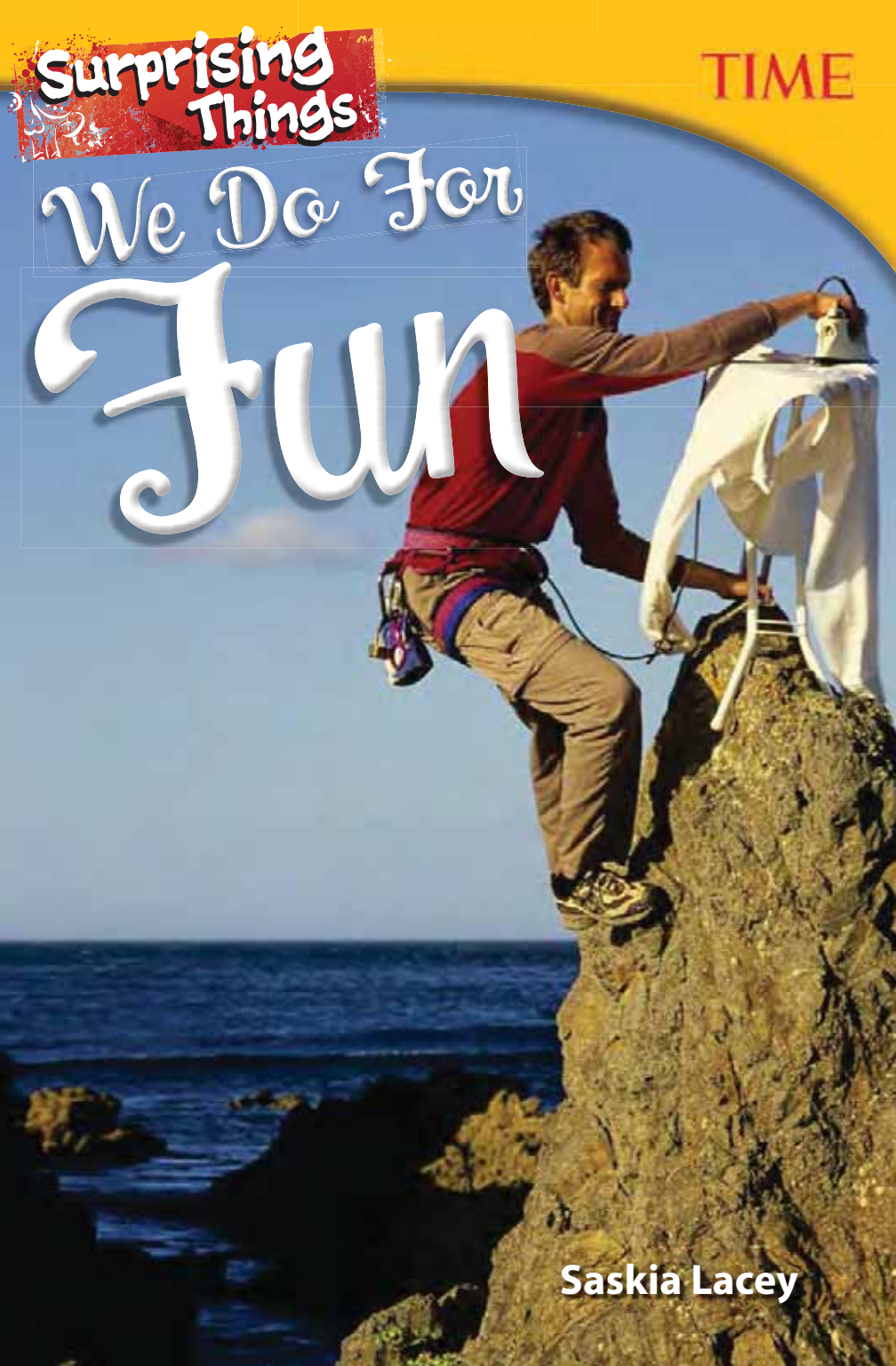
Surprising Things

TIME

# We Do For Fun



Saskia Lacey



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# Welcome to Planet Weird

There's simply no excuse for boredom in today's world. Modern life is chock-full of the brilliantly bizarre and the too-strange-to-be-true. If you find yourself complaining that there's nothing to do on weekends, you're not looking hard enough! So take notes, choose a hobby, and make it a surprising one.

The various activities in this book may be strange, out of the ordinary, or just plain interesting. In this book, you'll learn about the most peculiar **pastimes** on the planet. Ever heard of the Mud Olympics (mud soccer, anyone?) or outhouse racing (yes, you read that right)? Some of these activities might sound a little *too* weird, but keep an open mind. You might discover your life's true calling as an underwater hockey player or bog snorkeler. Well, maybe not, but anything's possible—even the truly surprising and bizarre!

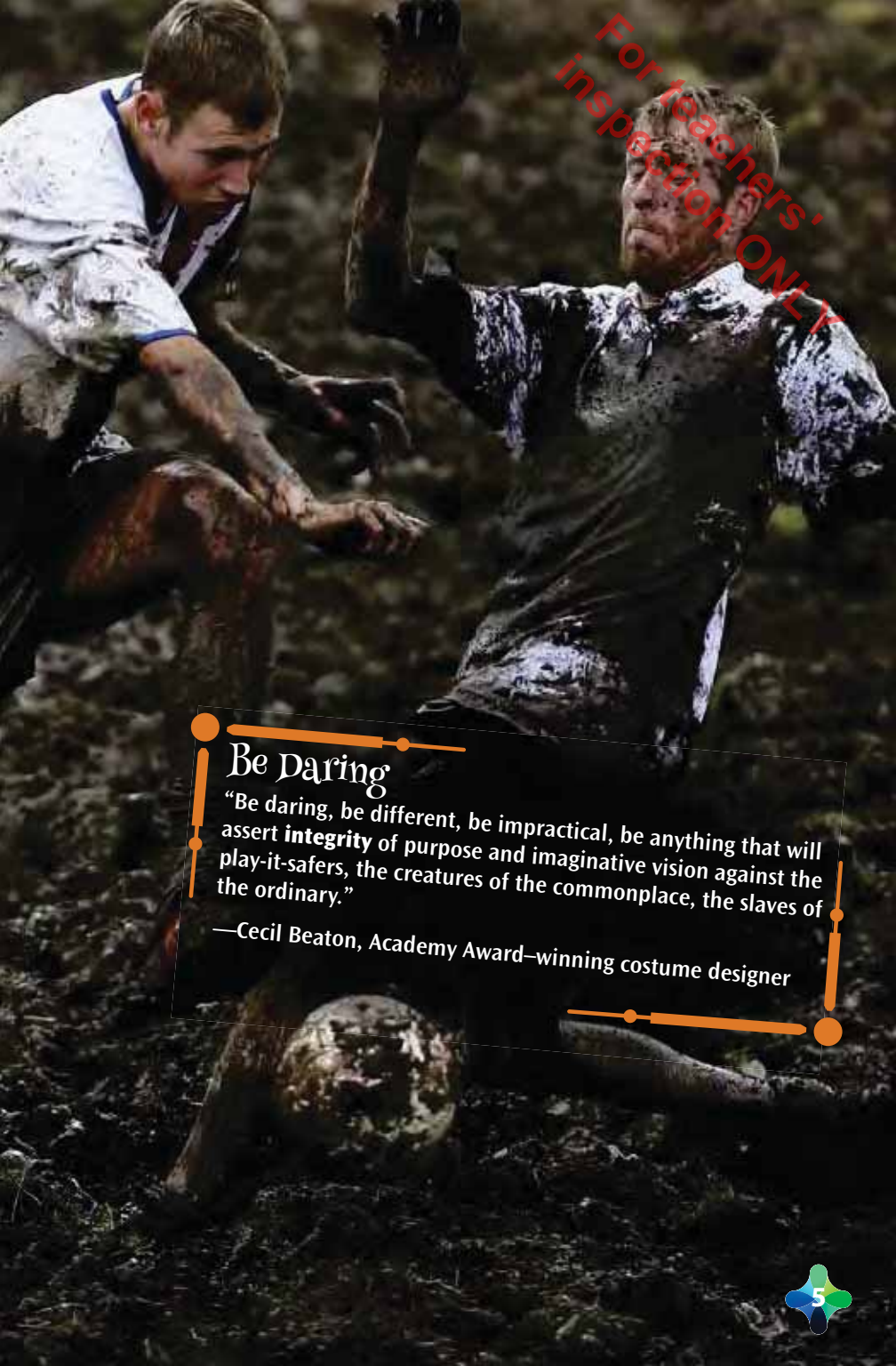
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## Once Strange, Now Popular!

Some of our most beloved hobbies were once considered super strange. Though it's been around since at least the seventeenth century, surfing only became part of popular culture in the 1950s.



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## Be Daring

"Be daring, be different, be impractical, be anything that will assert **integrity** of purpose and imaginative vision against the play-it-safers, the creatures of the commonplace, the slaves of the ordinary."

—Cecil Beaton, Academy Award–winning costume designer

# Absurd Athletics

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Whether you prefer your sports on land or water, somewhere in the world is just the mash-up activity for you! For the intense physical and intellectual competitor, chessboxing is a tailor-made sport. Those interested in pure, free-spirited fun might find pumpkin kayaking to be the perfect pastime.

## Chessboxing

The origin of chessboxing is questionable. Some people say a graphic novel, *Cold Equator*, inspired the sport. Others think the idea of chessboxing originated in the 1979 kung fu movie, *Mystery of Chessboxing*. Either way, the game is now popular all over the world, from Los Angeles to Berlin.

In this grueling sport, athletes must use both brains and brawn during alternating rounds of chess and boxing. Rounds usually last between two and four minutes. Competitors can win either by checkmate or knockout.



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## Unicycle Football

Since taking a dive on concrete is far more dangerous than on a grassy field, tackling in unicycle football is not as aggressive. In this game, players wear flags, and a "tackle" means removing them from another player or gently knocking the opponent off his or her unicycle.



## Octopush

Octopush is underwater hockey. Players wear snorkels and fins, and use a glove with a small stick to push around the puck.

## Giant Pumpkin Kayaking

This mash-up is pure, silly fun. Participants board gigantic, hollowed-out pumpkins and race across Tualatin Lake in Oregon.

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## Bossaball

Bossaball combines gymnastics, volleyball, soccer, and an inflatable court. Sound fun? Developed by Filip Eyckmans between 2003 and 2005, the sport is now played all over the world. Bossaball tournaments take place in France, Saudi Arabia, Ecuador, Romania, Turkey, the Netherlands, and the Czech Republic.

Music plays a big role in bossaball, making every game feel like a performance. Samba referees oversee the games and entertain the audiences, acting as MCs, DJs, or drummers.

Inspired by a style of music called *bossa nova*, bossaball incorporates style and attitude. Each game is energized by music and rhythm. Players use the Brazilian martial art, **capoeira**, to infuse their gameplay with **rhythmic** acrobatics.



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## STOP! THINK...

- What kind of skills or abilities does a person need to succeed at bossaball?
- Why do you think there is a point range for scoring?
- How do you think Eyckmans decided on the scoring rubric?



## Bossaball by the Numbers

- **25 points**—Teams score 1 point when the ball lands on the gray part of the inflatable court, 3 points when it lands on the trampoline, and 5 points for not using their hands. You need 25 points to win!
- **8–10 players total**—Each team is made up of 4 to 5 players.
- **3–5 sets**—The team that wins the best of 5 is the winner!
- **2 goalkeepers**—Each team has a goalkeeper who tries to keep the other team from scoring on the trampoline.
- **2 trampolines**—There is a trampoline on each side of the net. Players use it for acrobatic attacks.
- **1 inflatable court with a net**—The bossaball court ranges in size and includes a net similar to a volleyball net.

# Reader's Guide

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1. Why does the title of this book include the word *surprising*?
2. What aspect of this book is most surprising?
3. The book covers many odd mash-up sports. If you could create a new sport, what would it include?
4. Think of the different ways people "trade lives." What is the appeal?

