



Hat Trick

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Simon Roberts' plan for his senior year is simple -- help his high school hockey team win the state championship and earn a college scholarship so he can get away from his dysfunctional family, especially his belligerent father and obnoxious older brother.

When the Central High Falcons open their season with an away game, Simon is forced to deal with the problem he's struggled with for months -- his crush on teammate Alex Miller. After the game that night, Alex makes an unexpected announcement -- he's gay, and in love with Simon.

Simon's elated but scared to openly acknowledge that he's gay, especially with so much at stake in their senior year. Now that they're out to each other they have to decide what to do next. Should they date? Should they keep things between them secret? What about the team? Can Simon and Alex hide that they're more than friends from the guys they spend so much time with?

Then a simple kiss is witnessed and their secret is out. The team fractures, and Simon's family explodes as news about the gay hockey players quickly spreads. The guys must figure out how to move forward with everyone watching. Being the center of attention was in no way part of Simon's plan for the year.

Can Simon juggle school, commitments to the team, his new relationship, and an unexpected tragedy all before the end of the hockey season?

Hat Trick Details

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From Reader Review Hat Trick for online ebook

Nova says

2.5 stars.

I just couldn't get into the story. Maybe it was the writing or the story itself - probably a mix of both. And even though there was some action, drama and some really shocking moments, it was still not enough to truly enjoy this book.

Debra says

I really haven't read much YA in the last year, but I found myself really enjoying this book.

Simon and Alex are wonderful together. Alex has been out to his family for a while and is confident in himself and his sexuality while Simon is just coming to terms with his, having had some feelings for Alex, but considering himself straight. I adored the honesty between the boys as the two hockey teammates start secretly dating. When their relationship is exposed, they find both support and disgust from friends, teammates and family, and eventually there is a landslide of events that turns horrifyingly tragic (and then yet another that was a bit over the top).

Overall the story is about Simon finding his way and facing an uncertain future. While there is happiness for the two at the end, there is still a lot to overcome and some unfinished business and I'm looking forward to the next installment.

Michael Thompson says

If you love sports read this book!

For anyone who grew up playing sports or just loves sports you must read this book. This book should be on the reading list for all high school students. I can't wait for HT2 !

Nichole (DirrtyH) says

I went back and forth between one and two stars. I ultimately chose 2 because the beginning was good. The writing was solid. The chemistry between Simon and Alex came off the page and everything to do with the hockey stuff, which is one of my favorite themes, worked perfectly. I was very much enjoying the story, up until the point where Simon and Alex got outed and everyone knew about them.

It was at this point that everything went completely off the rails, like it had been written by an entirely different person. It went from hitting all the right notes, to completely and utterly ridiculous and only got worse as the book wore on. I skimmed the last 25% just to be able to say I read the whole thing but my lord,

it was awful.

Just in case you still want to read this, which you should not, I will put the rest behind spoiler tags.

(view spoiler)

It all went from good solid hockey book about high school boys, which is my kryptonite, to really really bad soap opera/lifetime movie and I just can't even.

Jason says

To say this is sort of a mess is like saying wearing green with red together should only be sort of avoided on the other 364 days of the year; it's a freaking obvious.

First persons are tough, and I am tough on first persons. They need to really support some fucking stellar primary and secondary characters, or they just wither and die.

This one, in essence, is a wither and die-er.

It takes place during senior year. Simon, our classic closeted Y/A character fancies Alex. Simon, who assumes this is all unrequited love, evades expressing his affection until one night the two are at an away game. It is all 'boy scouts camping trip' scenario stuff.

Alex and Simon fall hard for one another, but, like many of these sports themed gay Y/A books, it must remain quiet. And things are relatively calm at first. They keep things all covert and secret agent, until they confide in Jackson, who is one of their best friends. But this is cool, because of course Jackson is all set on being THAT ally.

While these two youngins fall in love, Simon has to deal with a tumultuous family unit. Simon lives in a neglectful and abusive family unit. This is a freaking understatement. His brother reminds me of Buzz Mccallister.

I KID YOU NOT! He is one of the worse, most contrived characters. His dad is portrayed as this flat, emotional, reckless husband and father, and we are hit over and over the head with this so many times it's unbearable. We get it; he's a dick. The element of the 1950s submissive housewife just beats this even

further into the land of tortured and overwrought novels.

And even though Simon and Alex are careful, their secret gets out. The Buzz Mccallister look-a-like brother is at the center of this mess. The repercussions are big, huge, maasiveeeee, some would say all soap opera like. Others would say, "this was published?"

Eventually the team finds out, and we see the expected results. The news slowly makes it's way to the rest of the school, and rather than being totally closeted and scared they embrace the coming out; well, almost. Alex's family is supportive for the most part, and so are a few other families. There is the rising risk of harming their potential college futures, and as time proceeds this chance increases to an almost certainty. There is homophobia, especially from teammates, yet it doesn't really hit anything realistic. Relationships are changed, but in an unrealistic extreme sort of way.

What proceeds is absolutely ridiculous. Simon's abusive brother is implicated in an assault and murder and his father engaged in something straight out of S. J. Watson's cookbook. J.H. Trumble's beautiful Don't Let me Go is clearly a source of inspiration, with scenes almost replicated from its pages. We have a dance where men dance with men as some show of comradery and support (think Out of Pocket YMCA) and there is partner abuse. The way it's written is almost sickeningly familiar. We also see the same sort of 'wrap up' interview style ending that faulted Out of Pocket. It is all sorts of irregularity and carbonic paper.

The theme of hockey is handled well, and for those who read the blurb and think this will be heavily submerged with sports references, fear not, it is handled lightly and in a way that contributes to the overall story.

Characters do share individual voices, but that isn't especially difficult when the majority of the writing is saying rather than showing and when info dropping is adopted as a second skin. The novel is shrapnel for typos, and the lack of dialog tags is dizzying. The weak writing coupled with a poor attempt at character development makes this almost 'Another Gay Movie', laughable. Something Like Summer was successful with this because it embraced its campiness, Hat Trick, however, read less as intentional attempt at laughing at itself and more of a lack of focus, which I ended up laughing at.

Bitchie says

I found the writing a bit....simplistic? Not overly descriptive, so it took me a while to warm up to the story, but I did like Alex and Simon, and felt they made a great couple. I had really started getting into things, the guys growing closer, sharing stolen moments while trying to keep things on the DL. Simon's family was kind of horrible, which we see all too often. His brother Zach was one of the worst people ever, but it's not unheard of for an older, golden boy brother, to lord it over, and bully the younger brother.

I was still in there when an assault happened, leading to (view spoiler). It was dramatic, but sadly, again, not unheard of. But then the story took a detour into really over the top crazy town, with (view spoiler) That just took the story way too far into outlandish territory, and I wish it had been left out.

Meags says

4 Stars

This story was a hat trick of things I love reading about! It is YA in genre, has an awesome hockey backdrop and is about two dudes falling head over heels in love. Yep, winner, winner, chicken dinner!

The story follows close friends and hockey team mates, Simon and Alex, who are heading into their senior year of high school determined to win that hockey championship they've worked so hard for. To complicate things, they're also secretly harbouring some serious heart boners for one another.

The boys get together pretty much instantly (like, chapter one, *instantly*) and the steam level is non-existent – I feel like I need to put that out there for my GR friends who a) don't enjoy insta-relationships and/or b) demand the smex from their reads. Having said that, neither one of these things truly bothered me personally. The fact that Simon and Alex already had an established friendship before the book started paved the way to my easy acceptance of their fast paced romance, and although I do love me some sexy times, I didn't need them to feel the connection between these two boys.

The story is told solely through Simon's perspective and is just as much about the hockey team and the friendships within, his personal coming out experiences, and his (demented) family dynamics, as it is about his romantic relationship with Alex. I enjoyed most of these elements, especially his relationships with his teammates and coach, but lord help me, Simon's psychotic father and vile bully brother were completely outrageous in behaviour and temperament, causing some serious rage on my part and even resulting in at least one far-fetched situation that left me flabbergasted. I felt so sorry for Simon and his mother for having to deal with those two ignorant zealots, but it sure resulted in some entertaining plot madness, some of which turned me into a sobbing mess at 12am on a school night.

Ultimately, I'm so glad I finally tried one of Jeff Adams' stories, having become quite a hard-core fan of the weekly podcast he hosts with his husband Will. (Seriously, it's one of my weekly highlights and has brought to my attention some truly fantastic M/M reads, so if you haven't heard of these guys they can be found here at Jeff & Will's Big Gay Fiction Podcast – listen (or watch) to your heart's content!)

Heather K (dentist in my spare time) says

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Don Bradshaw says

This type of story has been done before but never with the kind of intensity that Mr. Adams put into this one. Hockey fans will enjoy all of the game action and romantics will enjoy the sweet romance. Alex and Simon made a perfect couple and were heroes because of their star status on the ice. To say that these two guys were put through the mill is an understatement. Simon faced homophobia at home, kidnapping and being

tossed out of his home. Alex had it somewhat easier as his parents were fine and supportive with him being gay. They still were the brunt of jokes and physical attacks and a murder. I like the way that sex was kept between the sheets and that their relationship was not dependent on it. I found the story well put together with just the right amount of angst. I liked the way that other gay couples felt brave enough to come out once they saw Alex and Simon out and happy. This was just a hopeful, feel good story for anyone.

Tess says

4.25 stars

This was a solid 5 stars until about 74% when NO, NO, NO! How could the author have let that happen? It's something that qualifies the HEA for me just that little bit. And then at about 85% what happens was, in my opinion, too over-the-top. But then I read the epilogue and realized there's no way I can drop this book to 4 stars. Alex and Simon are incredibly good hockey players, but that's not all they are. They're also just all-around awesome guys. They're smart, they're caring and they use their story to make a huge impact.

Gigi says

High school age romance, not my thing.

Jeff Erno says

4.5 Stars

Hat Trick by Jeff Adams is the story of Simon Roberts, an eighteen year old high school hockey player from Pennsylvania. Simon realizes he has same-sex attractions but has never acted upon them. Then one night he and his teammate Alex become intimate and a relationship blossoms.

The story is far less about the actual romance of Simon and Alex and more about the challenges that Simon faces with his family and the struggle the couple has with their teammates and school when they decide to come out. Simon's mother is supportive but his father and older brother are not.

Some of the scenes that describe the hockey games were confusing to me mainly because of the sports jargon. (I've never so much as watched a hockey game of any kind and didn't know exactly what was happening.)However, I think this probably would be a bonus to a hockey fan. At least it sounded pretty authentic to me.

There was a major conflict between Simon and his father which unfolded tragically. To some, the outcome might seem a bit overkill, but I thought the story was well-paced and rather exciting. The relationships Simon had with his mother and his teammates (particularly Jackson and Leo) were quite revealing, showing us exactly who Simon is and what motivates him.

The one character I felt was not as fleshed out as well as I'd have liked was Alex. There were few intimate scenes, and their relationship at times seemed incidental to the story. I guess overall I'd say it was a fantastic gay-themed story but not so much a gay romance.

I think this book will be a great addition to any YA LGBTQ library.

Purple Skittle says

After finishing "Save of the Game" by Avon Gale I was looking for another m/m hockey romance since they are among my favorites. As usual I went on Amazon and had the surprise of finding not one but three novels and three short stories with the same characters. I bought all the six books and started reading the first one instantly.

I know this is a page about Hat Trick #1 but since all the books are related my review concerns book 1 to book 6 and of course I didn't spoil anything for people who would like to read these books.

From the very beginning of Hat Trick #1 I knew it would be a great novel. Actually, this is an understatement. There is NOT one page, from the first one to the last, I didn't read with enjoyment. Right after the first chapter one thing was important to me : taking my time reading it so it wouldn't end too soon.

In Hat Trick #1 we see the revelation of Alex & Simon's crush on each other (the scenes that lead to them becoming a couple are amazingly written). Alex & Simon are both passionate about hockey, they have the same age and they had one year to appreciate each other's company before turning their friendship into more. That's another thing I like in m/m romance of all kinds, friendships that turn into love.

Anyway, there's so much more than that in this novel. Never a book made me cry my eyes out like that, I won't tell why since it would be a spoiler and I'm not saying the book is all sadness either, far from it (some passages are really sad though), but the author knows how to pull the emotional string for sure without ever going for the easy option.

One other thing that is obvious in the book is how awesome are Simon & Alex both as a couple and as individuals. There are, of course, other characters really appreciable, like members of their family, some of their teammates... And some characters that I didn't like at all (for obvious reasons). And that's one of the other strenght of this novel that you immediately connect with the characters. All of them. Wether in a good or a bad way. All the characters (and there are many) are important in the story, they are charismatics (which may be an odd thing to say about fictional characters) but what I mean is once you read about them, you don't forget them.

Let's follow with the strenghts of Hat Trick (for now I'm only talking about book #1). You never get bored with it because so many things happen. Every new development is well thought out and well written. When I started reading the book I knew there were sequels (and since I'm not patient it's a good thing I had the opportunity to read the six books one after the other) and when I finished Hat Trick #1 it was obvious one book wasn't enough.

Jeff Adams made another amazing thing with this series. He wrote short stories for every one of Hat Trick's novel. These short stories are the perfect bridges between every novels.

"Hat Trick Playing The Rebound" was equally as amazing as the first one. We follow Alex & Simon's lives in college in a new state and a new hockey team and discover new characters.

As for HT #1 the book is full of diverse stories, characters and still the same amazing relationship between Alex & Simon and once again you never get bored. There are some emotional moments, some really cute ones, some sad ones, too and still the same outstanding ability to captivate the reader. I loved the character of Jakob who shows how important it is to be true to who you are at any age and how brave young LGBTQ

people are, facing homophobia, judgments, even bullying at school. I loved every young character of this novel just as much as the older ones actually.

Regarding Simon & Alex, there are some trully beautiful romantic scenes, the kinds that shows you what true love is about and that really made me want to find this kind of love someday. Who wouldn't ?

"Playing The Rebound" is followed by my favorite short story of the series, "Hat Trick Overtime Summer Camp" that I read in a flash. Another round of interesting characters, situations, and a very romantic birthday made it amazing once again.

I knew I was close to the end when I started "Hat Trick Penalty Shot" so I made it last as long as I could which was very difficult considering how I love these books and wanted to read them in one sitting. Alex & Simon are still in college but near graduation and they become hockey coaches as well as players. While reading the book I was tense because I didn't want anything bad to happen to what quickly became my favorite couple in a m/m romance ever and yet I could see something was coming. It's like I felt all the tough moments resonate deep inside myself (which may be odd to some people but is true). As well as in all the other books there are emotional moments, tense ones, funny one, too. And a TREMENDOUS finale.

The short story following "Penalty Shot", "Hat Trick Overtime Reunion" is the perfect way to complete the circle, showing us Alex & Simon's lives twenty years later and allowing us to see characters from the first book again. All of that still surrounded by love and friendship.

All these books are about friendship, trust, forgiveness, tolerance, support and most of all the genuine love of two people for each other. We sense the huge amount of love the author must have for his husband as well as their deep bond that surely lead to the creation of the story of Alex & Simon, the most beautiful love story ever made in a book (and as far as I'm concerned the best love story ever created at all). And I was thinking how it would be really amazing to see these stories in a TV series (even though it would be a time limited one) and I'm sure I wouldn't be the only one to be thrilled if that happened.

As an avid reader of m/m romance I would like to thank Jeff Adams for writing these books. For having the idea of Alex & Simon/Hat Trick and making it a gem. For giving me happiness while reading it and for being a trully generous person as I can sense it just by reading his works. Your books made me even more sad about this nonsense that is homophobia because when you read these stories I can't figure how you cannot realize how beautiful love is regardless it's between two men, two women or a man and a woman. And there's no need to be gay yourself to appreciate it.

I warmly recommend these books to every lover of m/m romance, you won't be disappointed at all and they're worth every penny they cost.

Jerry says

This was a great read. 4.5 stars at least. If you love hockey I'm sure you will love this book. If you don't love hockey you will love this book (yes there is details of the game, but you don't have to really know or even understand). If you love young guys falling in love, you will love this book. Simon and Alex have a lot to handle in their final year of high school. There are good things and terrible things and they manage somehow to make it and come out on top. Sex is off page. Great secondary characters. Heavy plot at times. Moments when you are so happy for what's said or done, tears are the immediate response. Loved this and am moving

on to the sequels!

I really wish there were more stars or a plus or something to differentiate a higher degree of likes. This was worth more than four stars but when I think what I truly call five stars, it's not quite there. I'd love to have a 5 star list and then an over the top, can't believe its so good list.

Chris, the Dalek King says

Hockey: yea!

YA: booo

So, yeah...I love hockey books. I love hockey, period. But I am generally not all that fond of young adult stories. But I've been on a bit of a hockey kick lately, what with the hockey season finally starting, and I've owned this book for like forever, so I thought I would give it a try. And while the hockey was good...yeah, it had too much of the melodrama that plagues YA books for me to really enjoy it. Simon was a bit to blasé about all the abuse he was taking from his dad and brother, and because of that it felt way to cliché. And while the death of (view spoiler) was a bit heartbreaking, it was vastly overshadowed by Simon's tantrums and teenagerness. I think it was supposed to come off as grief, but it just grated on my nerves, to be honest.

Still...it had hockey, so it wasn't all bad.
