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# Eyeshield 21, Vol. 1



## Synopsis

Sena, a wimpy kid, vows not to get picked on any more, but the sadistic captain of the football team already has his eye on him and his lightning-fast speed. Rated for older teens.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

The underdog-with-exceptional-ability-makes-good plot is typical of boys' manga, but seeing another country's view of a great American competitive sport—in this case, football—provides added entertainment. Since football isn't a popular sport in Japan, Sena Kobayakawa's school's team only has two players: Ryokan, a large, friendly boy who dreams of someday competing in the Christmas bowl game, and Hiruma, the quarterback better known for frightening the underclassmen. At 5'1", Sena has always been smaller than his classmates, so he's been used as their gofer and errand boy. As a result, he's developed outstanding running speed. He wants to be team manager, but he winds up competing under the name Eyeshield 21 to keep other teams from knowing his name and stealing him away. The three must recruit enough players to form a team of 11 in order to play their first game. The thin-line art style gives the players a certain delicate beauty, while exaggerated reactions put readers directly in touch with the characters' emotions. Game scenes are drawn in loving detail that captures football's violent grandeur. This promises to be Viz's third sports hit, joining popular series on tennis and soccer. (Mar.) Copyright © Reed Business Information, a division of Reed Elsevier Inc. All rights reserved.

Yusuke Murata was born July 3, 1978 in Miyagi, Japan. He won the 122th HopStep Award

prize(1995) by "Partner." and won the 51th Akatsuka Award 2nd prize(1998) by "Samui Hanashi."

Eyeshield 21 is the only American football manga that I know of but it ends up surpassing sports to become an amazing manga. Though being a shonen makes it somewhat predictable, the characters are vividly shown with not one character being mere filler. Change is seen in all of the main characters which is a wonderful thing in manga because it makes them memorable and more human like. The art is fantastic with each moment of action being distinct. The story is a typical nerd becomes jock though Eyeshield 21 does it in a way in which such a typical change becomes something worth watching.

Book was in great condition and easy to read.

First off and this is very important: YOU DON'T HAVE TO KNOW ANYTHING ABOUT FOOTBALL TO ENJOY THIS AMAZING SERIES!! I have read many mangas and have viewed many an anime and I can safely say that to me, this is THE BEST out of all of them. The character development and building of the characters in this series is so immense that it is very perplexing to think that the timeline within this series is no more than 1.5 years. This series has a fairly large cast and the author still manages to spend adequate time to getting the reader invested in each characters backstory. Sometimes, you will find yourself torn between rooting for 2 opposing factions but you always have to come back in the end and cheer for the main team, the Deimon Devil Bats. This series has such an awesome and emotional story that really makes you cheer in triumph as well as get watery eyed throughout. This series has an EXCELLENT blend of action, comedy and drama. Every interaction means something and has something at stake and you really get drawn into the drama and emotion of the storyline. But don't fret, this series really balances everything out with some hilarious comedy relief. You can go from feeling bummed out or frantic with desperation in one panel to bursting out laughing on the next one or when you flip the page. And the art is so amazing and unique. I admit the initial volumes didn't have really good art but as the series progresses you really see the mangakas evolution and improvement. It's such a shame that this is such a hard series to market though. Football fans probably aren't going to be terribly interested in manga and manga fans might not really look into a sport manga, especially one about American football. If you fall into any of these groups, I urge you to read a few chapters of this series because you will be doing yourself a disservice by just brushing it off. Because this isn't a run of the mill series. I feel very strongly that if everyone gave it a chance, it would have been HUGE.

In Japan, American football may not be too popular compared to the international futbol (soccer), but there are a few high schools that have football teams and the NFL does have a game played in Japan, helping to spread the game's popularity. But in 2002, writer Riichiro Inagaki and illustrator Yusuke Murata introduced American football to a broader audience through their manga *Eyeshield 21* which has been featured on the very popular Weekly Shonen Jump, has led to several videogames and also a 145-episode anime series which lasted from 2005-2008. And now for 35 volumes, *Eyeshield 21* continues to entertain masses through its manga series currently available from Viz Media as part of their Shonen Jump Advanced line. *Eyeshield 21* revolves around a young teenager named Sena Kobayakawa who has passed his entrance exams at his local high school, Deimon Private Senior High School. The school where his childhood friend Mamori Anezaki attends. Both Sena and Mamori are close because all throughout his life, Sena has been bullied and Mamori has been there to protect him. Living his life as a gopher for other friends, Sena hasn't had any true friends until he meets the devil-looking Yoichi Hiruma and the very huge Ryokan Kurita who try to get Sena to join their football team. Of course, Sena doesn't know how to play football but being the new kid at school, but still he gets bullied all the time by those who try to make him their gopher. Fortunately, the huge Kurita ends up taking care of them. Out for revenge, the bullies start to pick on Sena once again but Sena is sick and tired of getting beaten up and when they go after him, he demonstrates a skill which he has had for a long time, speed. Because Sena has lived his life running away from bullies, he has improved his skills at running, cutting and doing all he can avoid the bullies. Immediately, Hiruma wants to utilize him on the Deimon High School Devil Bats football team. Sena just wants to become a team manager but Hiruma wants Sena to be the team's running back. And because Hiruma wants to make sure that no one can steal him for their high school or let alone another sport at school, he plans on a disguise that no one but he, Sena and Kurita will know and that is putting an eyeshield on a football helmet and giving Sena a #21 jersey, and going by the nickname *Eyeshield 21*. For Hiruma and Kurita, their goal is to make it to the Christmas Bowl, where the two best high school teams compete against each other. But considering the fact that Deimon High have been terrible, with *Eyeshield 21*, can they beat their first opponent for the season? The Koigahama Cupids? And will they find enough players for this season?

JUDGMENT CALL: I have been a big fan of sports-based manga and in Japan a lot of their sports manga and anime are big hits. From the soccer-driven series *Captain Tsubasa*, the basketball series *Slam Dunk*, the baseball series

Touch, the tennis series Tennis no Oujisama (Prince of Tennis) and many of them have this underdog vs. the better team type of mentality. Yes, there is a banality when it comes to sports manga series but there is often this side of supernatural element that an athlete has. A super kick, a special tennis serving or hitting ability and with Eyeshield 21, what makes the series so exciting is that every team has its special individuals with unique talents. But when it comes to the Deimon Devil Bats (the protagonist team), these guys are like a group of misfits put together in hopes to accomplishing their goal of making it to the Christmas Bowl. But they are surely talented. Sena (Eyeshield 21) has this special ability of his running and in this latest volume, he hones that talent and makes himself even better. We also see new characters pop up and joins the team and definitely see how everyone works together, faces adversity together as a team. But for Deimon High School, these bunch of misfits have pride and also have what it takes to surprise everyone they have come up against. Similar to other sports anime in which there is an underdog getting involved with sports and displays a tremendous skill, Eyeshield 21 definitely showcases that into the storyline but with the characters, in this case the team is more like the Bad News Bears and with the The Devil Bats, the team consists of characters that are just wild and crazy. Actually, all teams have characters that are wild and crazy and I suppose that is what makes Eyeshield 21 so interesting and enjoyable. But I also like the fact that Sena is somewhat of an inspiration to those who have been bullied. Instead of using his weakness as a crutch, he turns his speed to a secret weapon for the Deimon High Devil Bats but most importantly, for a quiet guy with no friends, the camaraderie of his team is what he needs in his life and definitely gives him the confidence that he needs to play in sports but to be the best he can be on the field. The story is well-written, the character designs are well-done and I like how there are extra pages of stories and character info. included with this manga! If you are looking for a sports manga series and love football, Eyeshield 21 vol. 1 is highly recommended!

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