



## Stand-Off

By Andrew Smith

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### Stand-Off By Andrew Smith

Ryan Dean West is back to his boarding school antics in this bitingly funny sequel to *Winger*, which *Publishers Weekly* called “alternately hilarious and painful, awkward and enlightening” (*Publishers Weekly*, starred review).

It’s his last year at Pine Mountain, and Ryan Dean should be focused on his future, but instead, he’s haunted by his past. His rugby coach expects him to fill the roles once played by his lost friend, Joey, as the rugby team’s stand-off and new captain. And somehow he’s stuck rooming with twelve-year-old freshman Sam Abernathy, a cooking whiz with extreme claustrophobia and a serious crush on Annie Altman—aka Ryan Dean’s girlfriend, for now, anyway.

Equally distressing, Ryan Dean’s doodles and drawings don’t offer the relief they used to. He’s convinced N.A.T.E. (the Next Accidental Terrible Experience) is lurking around every corner—and then he runs into Joey’s younger brother Nico, who makes Ryan Dean feel paranoid that he’s avoiding him. Will Ryan Dean ever regain his sanity?

From the author of the National Book Award–nominated *100 Sideways Miles*, which *Kirkus Reviews* called “a wickedly witty and offbeat novel,” *Stand-Off* is filled with hand-drawn infographics and illustrations and delivers the same spot-on teen voice and relatable narrative that legions of readers connected with in *Winger*.

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## Stand-Off By Andrew Smith Bibliography

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## Editorial Review

From School Library Journal

Gr 9 Up—In this sequel to *Winger* (S. & S., 2013), Ryan Dean West's senior year at Pine Mountain Academy is off to a rough start. Still grieving over friend Joey's death, he's saddled with Sam, a 12-year-old freshman roommate he dismisses as a "larva in soccer pajamas." Adding to the pressure, his rugby coach wants him to take Joey's position on the field and as team captain. Resulting panic attacks and visions of a Grim Reaper-esque guy he names Nate (Next Accidental Terrible Experience) make Ryan Dean aware he needs help, but he can't bring himself to ask for it. Hot girlfriend Annie offers sex and parental-sounding advice, but two male relationships finally help Ryan Dean open his heart again. Sam is able to see the pain behind Ryan Dean's facade due to his own past trauma. Bound by their mutual grief, Joey's brother Nico and Ryan Dean begin a fragile friendship. The novel's heavy issues are tempered by Ryan Dean's wickedly funny ruminations and good-natured male crudeness. An ingeniously conceived subplot provides teens with a practical lesson on sexual consent. Readers are left with the reassurance that no one can be expected to handle their problems alone. **VERDICT** The novel succeeds not only as an emotionally satisfying sequel but as a hopeful, honest account of coping with a devastating loss.—Marybeth Kozikowski, Sachem Public Library, Holbrook, NY

### Review

"A brave, wickedly funny novel about grief and finding a way to live with it, with sweetly realistic first sexual experiences." (*Kirkus Reviews*, starred review)

"Ryan Dean's voice remains engaging, honest, and idiosyncratic (a page-long internal monologue follows his discovery of two teammates in a compromising situation). Smith capably expands on Ryan Dean's coming-of-age and path to emotional recovery, chronicled through his crude comics and growing maturity." (*Publishers Weekly*, starred review)

"Smith has created a consistently interesting character whose singular sense of humor grows on readers. Plus, he nails the rough-and-tumble sport of rugby. This sequel won't disappoint fans." (*Booklist*)

"The novel succeeds not only as an emotionally satisfying sequel but as a hopeful, honest account of coping with a devastating loss." (*School Library Journal*, starred review)

### About the Author

Andrew Smith is the author of several award-winning novels for young adults. He lives in a very remote area in the mountains of Southern California with his family, two horses, two dogs and three cats. He doesn't watch television and occupies himself by writing, bumping into things outdoors, and taking ten-mile runs on snowy trails. He maintains a blog and website about his strange writing life at [GhostMedicine.Blogspot.com](http://GhostMedicine.Blogspot.com).

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