



Delay of Game

Tracey Richardson

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Passion and patriotism sizzle on the ice at the Winter Olympics.

It's been a dozen years since two of the world's best women hockey players, Niki Hartling and Eva Caruso, first competed against each other in the Olympic Games.

The pressure of the intense USA-Canada rivalry forced an end to their love affair, and both women moved on—Niki to coach and to marry, Eva to stretch out a playing career that her ravaged body can barely sustain anymore.

The Games are upon them once again. Eva wants one last chance to beat the Canadians and win hockey's biggest prize. Niki, now a widow and single mother, strives to coach her country to gold, even as the obstacles against her mount. The locker room seems to have ears and there are few people Niki and Eva can trust.

Rivals and former lovers on hockey's biggest stage, will Niki and Eva feel the same spark that first brought them together? And can they win on—and off—the ice with the whole world watching?

Delay of Game Details

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From Reader Review Delay of Game for online ebook

Rosi says

I love sports and books with sports and romance, those I like the most, so I really enjoyed reading this book. The story of the two main characters, one Canadian and one US, teammates in their beginning as ice hockey players, rivals in their respective national teams, breaking their relationship due to a misunderstanding, then after twelve years they meet again and they reignite their old flame, I found it very interesting. Among the circumstances surrounding professional sports, with the rivalry, competitiveness and the end justifies the mean, both Eva and Niki remains firm in their convictions and personal ethics, allowing that the final fight for the Olympic gold medal was made with the honor and respect that must always prevail in the sport. The bad gals are hateful. Rory is very cute. I found that this book is highly recommendable.

Velvet Lounger says

4.5 stars

4.5 stars

Set in the world of women's international ice hockey "Delay of Game" is an excellent combination of sports based intrigue and rekindled romance.

Niki was one of the top players on the Canadian olympic team, now retired and teaching, she has moved on, married, become a parent and been widowed. When team Canada come knocking her first response is to say no, but her country and her team need her for the upcoming olympics. Eva is still playing and still one of the best on the young American team, but her body is giving out and its a constant struggle to get on the ice.

Their relationship ended bitterly many years before and they have avoided each other ever since, but now they are bound to meet in the run up to the olympics. Old feelings spark, rivalries run deep and some will do literally anything to win. When it comes to the crunch both women have to choose who they want to be, and where their loyalties lie.

This is a great read, fast moving, full of intrigue and action, on and off the rink. The spark between Eva and Niki is excellent, one having settled, literally, the other having spent her energy being a player in every sense of the word. The constant battle between their obvious passion for each other, Niki's determination to stay loyal to her past and their commitment to their teams makes for great romantic tension and some hot sex.

Both women are interesting characters, well drawn and complex. You want both to succeed, clearly impossible for opposing teams, but off the rink you can't help but want them to work it out. The intrigue between the teams adds a great dramatic energy that lifts this above a straight forward romance. Even though it is obvious who is playing dirty Ms Richardson keeps the tension high until the very end, we may know who, but we don't know why - or if good will overcome.

Thoroughly enjoyable read, one of her best yet, and given they are all on my re-read pile that's saying a lot.

Catherine says

As a sport lover this was the book for me. I really enjoyed reading about the hockey and Olympics, probably would have loved for it to have played more of a role in the book. The drama did overshadow the hockey in the end which worked but for me personally I would have enjoyed the drama to have been on the ice instead of off of it. If that makes sense.

Loved the characters, chemistry worked well. Rory was a good addition and thought she added to the couple's dynamic.

Good fun read :)

Sandra says

What an enjoyable sports romance with great main characters and a lot of chemistry between them. They were meant to be for each other. But there is this big game ahead of them, the Olympic final in ice hockey, and they are on the opposite teams USA and Canada, one as a veteran player, the other as the head coach. Both fight really hard for that the gold medal will be hanging from their neck. Who'll win in hockey and in life?

For me, it could have been a little bit more about hockey, the training, the strategies, and the players. But on the other side, you don't have to be a sports fan to enjoy this book. There is a lot of rivalry and competitiveness, and about ethics in sport, how far are you willing to go to win this epic game?

The romance is exciting, about a second chance in love, and Richardson wrote a wonderful story about that, with a lot of chemistry between Eva and Niki, with regrets and hope.

I love a good sports romance, I'm a sportswoman myself, now more of a TV sports fan, than doing sport myself, because of some damaged joints :(But sport, in general, was always an important part in my life.

Highly recommended

4.5 stars

Tara says

With the Olympics coming up, it seemed like a good time to read this, and am I ever glad I did! First of all, I was kind of destined to love it since Niki is a professor at my old university and she trains her team in my current hometown. Secondly, this is a second chance romance done very, very well. It's sexy, sweet, and has the right amount of angst. I'd happily punch a couple of characters in the face, but alas. This was 4.5 stars for me rounded up because I had so much fun.

lov2laf says

My biggest impression of this book is that it's solidly written and I think most people would enjoy it.

The main theme is a second chance love story where Eva and Niki, who were passionate first loves for each other over twelve years ago, meet again in present day as older and wiser women. Can they make it work this time or should they even try? This is a lesfic romance so you can guess the answer.

The reunion is extra complicated since Niki is still grieving and feeling guilty about her wife, who died three years earlier. Throw in that Niki is also a single mother to a precocious ten year old so she has other priorities to consider other than herself. That and she and Eva are working on the two main rival hockey teams playing in the Olympics raises a completely different ethics question. It's all a good mix for drama.

And, it doesn't end there. In a really surprising way, this story ends up being a good mystery of sorts, too, which adds some suspense. I didn't find the book to be predictable at all and there were some good twists.

Yes, the backdrop of the story is sports but the details aren't too heavy. As a layman reader, it was interesting and written well.

And, I enjoyed the exploration of Niki and Shannon, her deceased wife's, relationship that Niki does in retrospect. It felt realistic and it's not the usual kind of thing I find in these reads.

Despite any conflicts of interest the story presents, both Eva and Niki are likable characters that both are heavily anchored by integrity. They do have a ton of chemistry together and I was relieved that the cause for their initial breakup wasn't due to an affair. They have decent communication in the story and there are a couple of sexual scenes but they aren't too in-depth. Don't expect steamy.

For gripes, a really big turn off for me is that at one point Eva uses physical intimidation towards another person and, regardless of the outcome, it tainted my perception of her for the rest of the read. I've encountered that a couple of times in other reads and I just don't get it.

Also, though the leads have a strong connection, I felt their relationship wasn't explored all that much and was kept more at a surface level...perhaps because there were other dramatic plot lines to take care of. We get a hint of their previous issues but everything is sort of glossed over to make for present day happy circumstances.

Towards the end, the finale also had a certain cheesy element. Oh, well...It's at least a happy feel good thing.

Overall, I did enjoy this read. Recommend.

Mirtha Siblesz says

Loved this story!

Richardson has given us another winner of a book! Her two protagonists were so well developed. The

backdrop of the Winter Olympics in Vancouver really creates intensity and excitement and intrigue as well as the love story between Nikki and Eva. Overall a wonderful story!

Pin says

The winner takes it all... or not...

I totally enjoyed Delay of Game, and this is so far my favorite book by the author. It is written really well and in many respects it is evident that Tracey Richardson is an experienced author who knows her stuff. The story is well structured with no plot holes, but with good pacing and dialogue. The characterization is particularly good with nicely done chemistry between the protagonists. We can feel their dilemmas, regrets, beliefs...

The plot is strong and very interesting so I was hooked from the first page and finished reading it within a day. The convincing romance is greatly spiced with sports intrigue and the uncertainty of who will come out as the winner. And not just the winner in sports, but in life values, too. The story told by Richardson is deeply satisfying in many ways and upon completion leaves the nice feeling of having read a good book. That feeling is known to every reader, and it is what we strive for when choosing a new book to read. The hockey plays a nice role in the narrative without being overbearing. You really do not need to know a lot about it to enjoy the story.

All in all, a very good read that I recommend heartily to all romance fans.

4.5 stars, rounded up

Feb 11, 2017

A review copy of this book was provided by the publisher.

Lucky Luc says

I loved this book. I met my wife playing travel hockey in California and remember waking up so darn early in the morning to watch the Nagano Olympic gold medal game live. I also remember the Vancouver games where we just couldn't get one past the Canadian's goalie, who stood on her head in the gold medal game.

The 2 mains were really well written. It is clear the author knows hockey and has an intimate knowledge of the nuance of a locker room when it comes to keeping the team on the same page and showing solidarity even if you don't always agree with the coach. I wish they would have dove more into how batshit Dani really was and wish Eva could have finished her career on her own terms, not at the hands of a dirtbag little shit, but life is not always fair and she got her HEA with Niki despite it all. I personally would never play for a coach that blew up my entire relationship again, but I also was never good enough to make it to the National team, so sometimes you have to eat your peas to get to the dessert. I also really liked Kathleen's character being the friend Eva really needed even though it could have gone the other way when they decided to try the friends with benefits thing. I like how the author did not turn the trainer into the evil incarnate, but rather the mature, rational woman who was there for Eva when she could not go to anyone else, even Niki. I will definitely revisit this one again in the future.

A.W. says

Niki Hartling is a single mother as she is recently a widow when she gets offered the coaching position for Canada's Olympic women's hockey team. Meanwhile, Eva Caruso wants to win gold that's eluded her for several Olympics. Once lovers, will the two be able to regain the feelings they had for one another and will their relationship be able to survive after the results of the Olympic games?

Overall, it was an interesting story, but I would've liked to have read more about hockey rather than the mystery behind certain things. Also, I would've liked to have known the players on team Canada as well as the others on team USA. Perhaps I would've given it a full five stars if the previously mentioned were present.

The chemistry between Eva and Niki was undeniable and it all you wanted was to root for them and their love for each other. The secondary characters were either likeable or hateful.

This was my first book by Tracey Richardson and it definitely won't be my last.

Review also posted here: <https://wp.me/p4Pp9O-J5>

Dorothy Bennett says

I really enjoy Tracey Richardson's writing. Her characters are rich emotionally and mentally, they have a past as well as a present and a future. They have attractions and yet they bring complexity, baggage if you will, that must be worked through before the novel's climax. In other words, they feel real. *DELAY OF GAME* has additional excitement because the novel is set just before the Vancouver, B.C., Olympics. The main characters, Niki and Eva, were once lovers. They played hockey on opposing teams--USA and Canada--which led to misunderstandings and the end of their relationship. But neither of them ever forgot, and now they are matched up again. Niki is a widow with a daughter and is also a coach; Eva is at the end of her playing career. They are still on opposing sides. Even speaking to each other is fraught with conflict. How do you root for them both? This is one of Richardson's best novels!

Margaret says

Detailed score: 3.5 rounded up (just)

A burning question when I picked up this book was 'will I enjoy it if I know nothing about ice hockey'? My answer is - as long as you're interested in having an elite sport as the driver of the plot in your story, then yes. The descriptions of the plays (understandably) assumes some knowledge on behalf of the reader - although the author does make a valiant effort to describe them - but none so much that I was completely taken out of the story.

Our leads were 2.5 dimensional...? Not totally flat but not quite well rounded enough for me to fully engage with them. I could tell them apart in certain bits but at others their voices merged together on the page. I

'bought' them as a couple, but not completely.

Likewise the plot. It mainly avoided my 'tell not show' pet hate but fell into it at times. The plot was gripping enough to have me stay up a bit later than I should have to finish the book - but I wasn't totally in. I liked the romance and pwoarrrr scenes but they could have been better.

Overall - a solid, if unremarkable, read.

Agirlcandream says

Richardson shoots and she scores with Delay of Game. What a great read.

Yes, I might be biased cheering for a Canadian author as she celebrates a sport we Canadians hold near and dear to our hearts. But here's the thing. This book could have featured other Olympic team sports like soccer, softball or rugby sevens and been just as good. Richardson explores the nature of sport at this elite level; veterans pushing their worn out bodies for one more chance at that elusive gold medal, the enthusiasm and eagerness of youth given the chance to showcase their talents in front of a world audience, the politics, spying and demands placed on coaches and supporting staff to produce results for their respective countries. The athletes are more than the jerseys they wear and in Delay of Game the author gives us a rekindled romance between two strong women who made choices in the past which sent these once young lovers in different directions.

Niki, as coach of the Canadian team chose to leave her playing days behind for the security of an education, career and settled life with a wife and child to support and nurture. Now a widow, Niki struggles to fight the attraction she still feels towards her first love, Eva, the best player on the American team. Eva never stopped chasing her dreams, rushing through life with throwaway encounters, guarding her heart and never forgetting the woman who now stands in the way of her one last chance at gold.

I loved how Richardson weaves a story of deceit and intrigue alongside a beautiful love affair. Niki and Eva's mutual attraction is a given and only made stronger when they are faced with deception and questionable behaviour by their fellow teammates and coaches. It was refreshing to have conflict coming from external forces and to see these women overcome their own differences and work together.

A pleasure to read from beginning to end.

4.5 stars

Victoria says

A book about hockey? All I can say is... AT LAST! And it's a well written one by Ms. Richardson, who knows the sport probably like the back of her hand.

Throw in an equal amount of romance and some unethical behavior by certain members of the main teams and you have a well rounded book that held my interest from beginning to end. This book is definitely 1 of my favorites by this author.

Lex Kent says

3 1/2 Stars. I was excited to read this book by Richardson. Growing up in the North East, Hockey is everywhere, but none is as exciting, for me, as watching the women's Olympic hockey. I enjoyed this read. But you do not have to be a hockey fan to enjoy this. If anything, I would have liked even more hockey, in this book.

The story is about Niki, a former Olympic hockey player, who is asked to coach team Canada. Everyone knows the gold medal game will come down to the USA vs Canada, as it does every Olympics. Niki, is surprised to find out the only veteran on team USA is her ex Eva. Niki and Eva, had a bad break-up. But they both never really got over each other. What happens when they see each other again, especially when it's on opposite sides of the ice?

I thought the romance part of the book was really well done. There was a ton of chemistry between the two mains. You could tell they were meant to be together, but would they ever be? I also found both mains to be very likeable.

When it came to the hockey, I actually would have liked a little more. Considering this is a story about coaching and playing at an Olympic level, I thought it was odd we didn't really know any players on Niki's team, and only one other player on Eva's team. Personally, I also found it a little hard to be cheering for Team Canada. Richardson made the USA coach out to be pretty evil, and the USA team more of the "bad team". Considering Team Canada wins almost every Olympics, it was harder to root and feel sorry for them, since they are definitely not the underdog.

Besides my personal sports opinions, it was a fun story that I got caught up in quickly. There was even a tiny bit of a mystery, that just added more excitement to the story. I think other readers will enjoy this, and as I said before, you do not have to be a hockey fan, to like this book.

An ARC was given to me by Bella, for a honest review.
