

Lost Olympics



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ASIN	B00A816708
Goodreads Rating:	4.00
Published:	November 14th 2012 by Ian Hugh McAllister
Genre:	Uncategorized
Pages:	298

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What is the real price of fame and success? Sometimes it is more than meets the eye.

On more than one occasion Hilda James managed to hide in the pool changing rooms and avoid detection. The year was 1915 and the skinny 11 year old had only been sent to join the swimming class to avoid Religious Education because her parents didn't approve of the ons. Hilda didn't want to learn to swim. Eventually she was found out and taken to join her class in the water. By 1920 she was at the Olympic Games in Antwerp triumphantly winning a Silver Medal for Great Britain in the relay final. These days, family support, sponsorship and ultimate stardom are as good as guaranteed for the talented. A hundred years ago things were very different. As she became a superstar, would Hilda and her coach manage to outwit her increasingly difficult Parents to reach the 1924 Games in Paris, where she was tipped to win three gold medals?