



The Prince of Jockeys: The Life of Isaac Burns Murphy

Pellom McDaniels III

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Isaac Burns Murphy (1861–1896) was one of the most dynamic jockeys of his era. Still considered one of the finest riders of all time, Murphy was the first jockey to win the Kentucky Derby three times, and his 44 percent win record remains unmatched. Despite his success, Murphy was pushed out of Thoroughbred racing when African American jockeys were forced off the track, and he died in obscurity.

In *The Prince of Jockeys: The Life of Isaac Burns Murphy*, author Pellom McDaniels III offers the first definitive biography of this celebrated athlete, whose life spanned the Civil War, Reconstruction, and the adoption of Jim Crow legislation. Despite the obstacles he faced, Murphy became an important figure -- not just in sports, but in the social, political, and cultural consciousness of African Americans. Drawing from legal documents, census data, and newspapers, this comprehensive profile explores how Murphy epitomized the rise of the black middle class and contributed to the construction of popular notions about African American identity, community, and citizenship during his lifetime.



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