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PEACHTREE  
**DISCUSSION GUIDE**

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## Full Court Fever

Written by Fred Bowen

PB: 978-1-56145-508-9  
Also available in e-book

Ages 7–12 | Realistic Fiction  
Fred Bowen Sports Stories Series  
AR • AC • Lexile • F&P • GRL Q; Gr 4



### ABOUT THE SERIES

Fred Bowen's fast-paced middle-grade stories offer readers themes of competition, cooperation, facing change, gender roles, overcoming challenges, and new experiences. In addition, they feature play-by-play action, snappy dialogue, and engaging plots. Bowen's books are not the usual sports-fiction fare; each book loops in a little sports history and includes back matter with fascinating glimpses into that history and the heroes who made it happen.

### ABOUT THE BOOK

The Falcons have lost the first two games of the season. They have the skill to win, but they have one big disadvantage—they're short! One of the kids discovers a 1965 *Sports Illustrated* article about the UCLA Bruins. The Bruins won two NCAA championships without any big guys. They outfoxed taller teams with something they called "the full-court zone press." Could that be the secret weapon to turn the Falcons around?

### THEMES

Teamwork | Practice | Flexibility | Friendship  
Determination | Research | Basketball history  
Family | Loyalty | Brothers

### WRITING PROMPTS & DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

aligned with Common Core Reading Standards

### DIRECTIONS

Use details from the text to support ALL of your responses.

### CHAPTERS 1–3

What does the basketball game between the seventh and eighth graders in chapter 1 tell the reader about Michael and his team's problem? Describe the relationship between Michael and his brother Daniel. What is meant by the basketball term "box out?" How does boxing out relate to the theme of the story?

### CHAPTERS 4–6

How does the score sheet in chapter 4 emphasize the Falcons' problem? Who is the team's top scorer? Top rebounder? What do the terms "center" and "forward" mean in basketball? What does the word "press" mean in basketball? How do the Falcons hope the UCLA full-court press will help their team?

### CHAPTERS 7–9

What does the author do to help the reader understand the UCLA full-court press? Compare and contrast the way Michael, Kelvin, and Conor each feel about the press? Who is the most enthusiastic? How can you tell? Describe how Coach Cummings reacts to the press. Why do you think Coach Cummings lets the team play the press? List the reasons.



## CHAPTERS 10–12

Compare how the Falcons play during the game in chapter 10 to how the Falcons played during the game in chapter 4. Chapters 10 and 11 end with the phrase “too big, too good, too old.” What does this phrase mean in each chapter? How does it fit with the overall story so far? What is the rule concerning who can play in the seventh and eighth grade game? Why is this rule important to the Falcons?

## CHAPTERS 13–15

How does the fact that Michael and his teammates know about the 1965 game between UCLA and Michigan help them in the game against the eighth grade? How did Dikembe’s name get into the scorebook? How do you know? What happened earlier in the book that helped Dikembe’s name appear in the scorebook? Compare and contrast how the boys feel about their team in chapter 15 and how the boys felt about their team in chapter 1.

## OVERALL QUESTION

In just a few words, write down what this whole story is about (the overall theme or big idea). Explain your response.

## “THE REAL STORY” FOLLOW-UP QUESTION

How does the information in “The Real Story” relate to the theme or the plot of the book?

## REVIEWS

“Bowen is quickly joining the ranks of today’s most popular sports-fiction authors...he skillfully interweaves fact and fiction and uses historical sports plays and concepts as a backdrop for the story.”

—*School Library Journal*

“Bowen is a natural when it comes to writing sports stories and informing his readers about the past. These books are perfect for kids ages 8 to 12.”

—*Newsday*

“[Bowen’s] pace is excellent and he has a knack for efficient evocation...”

—*Washington Post*

## ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Fred Bowen is the author of Peachtree’s popular Fred Bowen Sports Story series. A lifelong sports fanatic, he has coached youth league baseball, softball, soccer, and basketball. His kids’ sports column “The Score” appears each week in the KidsPost section of the *Washington Post*. Bowen lives in Maryland.

[www.fredbowen.com](http://www.fredbowen.com)

### Available in the Fred Bowen Sports Story series

#### BASEBALL:

*Dugout Rivals*  
*The Golden Glove*  
*The Kid Coach*  
*Lucky Enough*  
*Perfect Game*  
*Playoff Dreams*  
*Throwing Heat*  
*T.J.’s Secret Pitch*  
*Winners Take All*

#### BASKETBALL:

*The Final Cut*  
*Full Court Fever*  
*Hardcourt Comeback*  
*Off the Rim*  
*On the Line*  
*Outside Shot*  
*Real Hoops*

#### SOCCER:

*Go for the Goal!*  
*Out of Bounds*  
*Soccer Team Upset*

#### FOOTBALL:

*Double Reverse*  
*Quarterback Season*  
*Speed Demon*  
*Touchdown Trouble*



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Discussion Guide prepared by Peggy Jackson

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