



# The A Circuit

*Georgina Bloomberg , Catherine Hapka*

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The A Circuit is the top of the top when it comes to horse shows. It's a world with its own rules and superprivileged lifestyles. Teens travel the circuit all year, showing horses that cost as much as some homes.

Tommi, Kate, and Zara are all elite competitors on the circuit, but they come from totally different backgrounds. Tommi is a billionaire heiress trying to prove she has real talent (not just deep bank accounts). Kate puts the working in working student-every win has been paid for with hours of cleaning stalls. She's used to the grueling schedule, but Fitz, the barn's resident hot guy, is about to become a major distraction. And then there's Zara. She's the wild child of a famous rockstar, but she's ready to take riding seriously. Can a party girl really change her ways?

Readers who enjoy peeking into the elite world of *Gossip Girl* or *The A-List* will feel right at home in this new series with its friendships, drama, and privilege set against the backdrop of competitive horseback riding.

## The A Circuit Details

Date : Published May 24th 2011 by Bloomsbury USA Childrens (first published May 16th 2011)

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Author : Georgina Bloomberg , Catherine Hapka

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# From Reader Review The A Circuit for online ebook

## Donna says

### EDIT:

Geez, what was I thinking, giving this little turd bucket 1.5 stars? :/

I had high expectations for this book. I haven't read any horse books for a while, and most horse books are directed towards younger people. This book failed to reach them. It was mildly entertaining, but made me want to rip my hair out after a while.

Ok, quick character summary:

### Tommi

Tommi is from a really rich family. She is pretty down to earth, and wants to take up horse riding as a career. Tommi was alright. I didn't really like her or hate her.

### Kate

Kate is a hardworking girl from a middle class family. She cannot afford to show or own her own horse, so she works at the barn for the opportunity to ride. Kate was my favorite character. She was down to earth, and she wasn't stuck up or anything, but I found her boring and flat. She never believed in herself at all.

### Zara

Oh god. Oh god. I hated Zara. I hated her so much. I just wanted her to fall into a hole and break the neck. Zara is the daughter of a rock star and an actor. She's bitchy, mean, and annoying. There are NO consequences for her in this book. She's a bitch to everyone, she smokes pot in the barn, and she gets drunk and injures a horse really badly.

What do the other characters do about it?

NOTHING.

I wanted her to be kicked out, or suffer some sort of consequence. She doesn't really grow as a character. I think the author wanted to make her one of those characters who have a really good heart, but are misunderstood by everyone.

FAIL. I don't give a crap what happens to Zara, as long as she dies in the next book.

### Fitz

Major man whore. Seriously. That's all I need to say.

The characters were either flat and boring, or really annoying. I hated the romance in this book. Kate and Fitz like each other, and even though Fitz is a major man whore, there is something "special" about Kate. Puke.

The storyline wasn't really interesting either. There wasn't really anything happening, except for Zara being a bitch, and the other people getting ready for shows.

There was also annoying name dropping of big horse brands, like this:

She adjusted her Charles Owen

She was wearing a Ralph Lauren Polo

That got seriously annoying after a while. The author was trying to highlight the wealth of the characters, but

everytime that happened, my inner voice shouted: *What the hell?! Shut up! No one cares!*

There was no plot whatsoever. It was just a string of boring events, and everyone being annoying. The plot is the most important part of a book. If there is no plot, there's nothing interesting happening, and the book is a waste of time.

This book annoyed me immensely, and I will not continue with this series.

1/5 stars.

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## **Kala says**

This review also posted on my blog at:  
Kala's Book Blog

This book is terrible.

I'm a big fan of horses (I own two) and I used to compete on the A-circuit quite a bit, though not at the level of the girls in this book. I'm glad I have that background, else I wouldn't understand half of this book. If you don't know a lot of equestrian vernacular, this book will be VERY confusing for you!

The characters in this book are all over the top and unredeemed at the end.

Kate is probably my favorite, as she is the most down to earth of the three female leads. She's the poor girl who has to work her butt off for a chance to ride some nice horses in big shows.

Fitz is the guy rider who is a player. He has a thing for Kate, but she is scared to get involved with him because of his reputation.

Tommi is just kind of there. She's super rich, has lots of expensive horses, doesn't have a great relationship with her family, and is kind of boring.

Zara is terrible. She is absolutely terrible. I could deal with the horrible attitude if she learned something by the end... but she doesn't! At the end (SPOILER ALERT) she is drunk, takes someone else's horse out, starts jumping huge fences with it, and seriously injures it to the point where it probably can never compete again. At this point, Zara has been a completely idiotic rude bitch for the entire novel and this incident is the icing on the cake.

## **HOWEVER**

She doesn't get in trouble. She suffers NO consequences for her bad behavior. Ever.

Instead, FITZ volunteers to take the fall for Zara's COMPLETELY AWFUL behavior that RUINED someone else's EXTREMELY EXPENSIVE horse. Him volunteering to get in trouble for this is supposedly a way to prove to Kate that he's serious about their relationship. This makes NO sense at all. NONE! NONE NONE NONE!

And Zara gets away with a completely heinous crime against a horse (and that horse's owner).

THE END!

What? What???

The horse trainer put up with Zara's bad behavior for the entire novel, despite her disrupting everything in his barn. Everyone basically puts up with it, and when she finally spins out of control enough to really cause some serious damage and you think she's FINALLY going to turn things around... someone else takes the fall for her and she gets away with it again. And continues acting horrible.

Absolutely terrible terrible awful awful book! Do not pay money for this garbage!

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### **Angele says**

I can't resist a good horse book and I thoroughly enjoyed this one. The story had a bit of a slow start for me because there was a lot of insider show horse info and lingo. But after I adjusted to the setting, I was caught up in the world of show horses.

The three main characters were complex and likable. Zara, the wild child, takes some getting used to, but Kate was totally believable in her perfectionism. I think I liked Tommi the best, a snobby heiress on the outside, but with a heart of gold if you care enough to look underneath the facade.

I can see how this book would be a great stepping stone for girls who love to read about horses. It's very odd that there are so many books about horses for middle grade readers, but practically none for older teens. I think it's a great niche to fill. However, it's a really big jump from the innocence of the middle grade books to a book with such themes as sex, drugs, and drinking. So parents be warned of that before giving this one as a gift.

There practically has to be a sequel, because there are a lot of stories left unfinished. Zara still has a lot of growing to do before she's completely likable and one of the romances was left a bit open ended.

This is a fun story for older teens where the stable is its own little world with lots of drama, and of course, lots of horses! I'm looking forward to the rest of the series if there is one.

ARC sent by publisher in exchange for honest review

reviewed for <http://inthehammockblog.blogspot.com>

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## Mehsi says

I have found another fun horse book to enjoy. This one for a bit older audiences than the other horse books I have been reading lately. But I really liked that, it seems a lot of horse books are for younger audiences, and it is just refreshing to find one that is for YA and older. :D

This one combines horses with fame (most of the characters (OK, all of them except Kate) are rich and/or famous). We have all the other typical things added, some romance (though way more heated than normally, but then again, this is for older audiences), drama, mean girls and of course contests and lessons (because how else will these girls and boy(s) show and get ribbons).

We have 3 POVs. First up is Kate. The one girl who isn't famous or rich, who works her butt off at the barn, and is also an amazing rider. At times she was a bit too much, I can imagine she might want to work hard, but this was just overkill. But as the story progresses you can see why she might not want to go home. Her mother has OCD and Kate often comes home when her mother is having another episode (which means a whole house overhauled and divided in 4s), her dad flees the house and is pretty grumpy, her brother is rebelling, and so her home situation is not the best. One can imagine a girl would flee from that and find a safe heaven at another place.

She is an interesting character, and I am happy with how she stuck her ground, didn't let people just push her around, even if she didn't have the fame or richness.

Kate was my second favourite girl.

Then we have Tommi. A rich girl who is amazing at riding her horse(s). She is really trying her best to go pro, or to do something so she can stay with horses even after High School (she is almost a senior). Her background isn't the easiest ones as well. Her dad cares a lot about her older sister, tries to marry her off, and also practically demands that she goes into law, even if that isn't what Tommi wants. But Tommi is a girl who doesn't give up easily, she will fight for what she wants, and I was just cheering a lot for this girl. Sure, she had some faults, but all in all she was a very interesting character.

Tommi was definitely my favourite character.

And lastly we have Zara. She wasn't my favourite character for most of the book. And that was mostly because her attitude. At times we see a different girl under things, but sadly, we also see a side that I hated. A side that likes partying, that doesn't care about consequences (the stuff she did in this book weren't only harmful to her, but also to so many others), she is selfish. And then she expects people to just understand her, or be nice to her.

She does work hard, but it comes and goes in waves. Generally I found her to be quite lazy and annoying. I do hope she will get better as this series goes on, because I am sure she can be better, but she will need to ditch a lot of things in order to do that.

The POVs move in quite an annoying way. I don't have a trouble with multiple POV if they are done right. However this one confused the heck out of me. I was just getting into Kate's POV and then it would switch to Tommi or Zara. Sure, there were dividers between the parts, but I just wish the author had clearly marked whose POV we were getting.

I also didn't like Fitz. Too much of a playboy, and he clearly can't make the right decisions. Near the end he did make a sacrifice that slightly changed how I thought of him, but still not enough to make me like him.

The horses, the contests, the lessons, and everything else horse was so much fun and also so interesting.

Again, I am normally used to books where kids are the main characters, so seeing them race in contests with other more adult riders was a delight and so much fun.

All in all I will definitely be reading more of this series since I just want to know how things continue. If they will win ribbons, how Fitz will be treated, if the girls will get closer, and several other things. And I would recommend this book to everyone looking for a more YA/adult horse book.

Review first posted at <https://twirlingbookprincess.com/>

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### **Hannah (The Irish Banana Review) says**

Allow me to begin by saying horse lovers will thoroughly enjoy this book. It's a fun, light read and Catherine Hapka and Georgina Bloomberg truly immerse the reader in the world of competitive equestrian riding with charming characters that sparkle on the pages. Unfortunately, if you are a reader who doesn't know much about horses or equestrian, I think this book will be a tough sell.

Hapka and Bloomberg throw equestrian jargon around with alarming frequency and do not always take the time to explain what things are. Some people might be confused by what "tack" is. Or where exactly a horse's withers are and what posting is. Luckily I grew up owning horses and had a good friend who excelled in jumping and showing thoroughbreds, otherwise I might have felt quite a bit lost. I also believe this is where they will lose readers. This book really reads like Gossip Girl with horses, but unless you are a horse enthusiast or fan it doesn't work. The quirky character traits that made Gossip Girl work fall flat here.

While the book was a breeze to read, by the end of it I felt hardly anything for the characters. I felt like I barely got to know them past the superficial level. I get that Kate and Tommi are best friends at the barn and occasionally hang out, but what makes them friends other than a strong love of horses? Take horses out of this book and it's simply a bunch of kids standing around. I loved the horses more than I loved the main characters by the end. Like Zara—I understand the authors trying to vilify her, but to what end? She is a weak villain and a worthless friend. She irritated me to no end, and the small steps taken to make me like her meant nothing because she was such a whiny brat for all but the last two chapters.

This book isn't a bad read. I'd recommend you snag it from the library if you want something mindless and unchallenging to read. If you love horses? Go buy it. You won't be sorry. I just believe the writers have boxed themselves in by focusing so heavily on the horses that they lost sight of the characters. I hope they rectify that issue in the next book.

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### **Sarah says**

For those who are looking for a great guilty pleasure...they can find it in the A Circuit. I read a lot of reviews where people's two main complaints were 1) the horse lingo went way over their heads and 2) The only girl who came across as relatable was Kate. I'm show on the A circuit myself so I can see how the horse lingo is confusing to some. I really enjoyed it myself because I've read so many books where horse terms are butchered and misused to no end. That doesn't happen in the A Circuit, and I think as you read the series, you'll start to catch on. This book is set in the elite world of junior equestrians, so yes the girls are shockingly rich, besides Kate. But in reality the horseshow world is filled with girls like these, and Georgina makes their

affluence clear. The A Circuit is meant to be a guilty pleasure, and so if you go in with low expectations as I did, you'll find the characters more relatable than expected. I actually liked all of them, including Zara. Overall I really enjoyed the first book and continued to read the next two. It's a good, fun series, and it's finally good to see some equestrian centered books on the market that are well written. Give this book a try, even if you're not into horses, and especially if you are. And if you are coming away from the Canterwood Crest series completely and totally fed up, as I was, this series will be a great new fit for you.

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### **Tammy says**

Boring story about rich kids and horses, neither of which I'm all that into...

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### **Mish says**

I normally love YA novels but this was unbearably DUMB

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### **Reading Vacation says**

This trio of girls who battle in the highest rung of horse competitions all have something to prove. Tommi is a billionaire's daughter who wants to be taken seriously for something other than her family's financial status. Zara has a rockstar father, and she wants to prove that she is a determined rider. Finally there's Kate, who must clean horse stalls to pay for her lessons. She wants to be accepted even though she doesn't come from a wealthy background like the others.

Their personal struggles along with the pressures of the circuit bring out the drama in these girls. It's like fireworks in the barn, the penthouse, and the show ring. Since both authors actually ride and compete, they are able to capture the tension and rivalry of the circuit.

My favorite character is Tommi. She is not all high and mighty because of her family's money. Instead, she is the first to befriend Kate and stand up for her. I think that Georgina Bloomberg, who is Mayor Bloomberg's daughter, can relate to Tommi just wanting to fit in.

The setting is so fantastic. The barn, practice rings, wood chips, saddles, competition rings, adoring fans, and (of course) horses. I love the descriptions of the horses that seem to come to life on the pages. Both Catherine Hapka and Georgina Bloomberg put their horse-related knowledge to good use as they create a realistic and intriguing setting.

I enjoyed this story of being true to yourself and standing proud. I hope you do too.

### **RATING**

5 Loved

### **COVER COMMENTS**

Look at that beautiful horse! I think the girl is Tommi, my favorite character. The wooden background makes me feel like we are in the horse barn.

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### **Meri L says**

This is the worst book I have read this year. Boring, all over the place, and complicated.

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### **Meredith Stewart says**

The A Circuit I recently read this book for SSR. I have never heard of this book or author, but I thought it looked good. This is book one of three in The Circuit series. I enjoyed reading this book. This book is about three very different girls who all share the love of horseback riding and showing. Tommi comes from a family of billionaires and geniuses. She has been riding for years and her dream is to become a professional. Zarra is the snobby celeb's daughter who ditched LA to have some fun at a new stable. And then there's Kate, a normal, down-to-earth girl who just loves to ride. It shows how three people can work together for the better. This book has drama, friendship, fights, fun, and of course-horses! This book is great for you if you love equestrian themed novels. It is very interesting, and it gives you a look into the life of an equestrian rider and all the the hard work put into it. The book is written in all three girls different perspectives by chapter. This really helps sort the book out having three main characters, and makes it less confusing. With the three girls having different backgrounds, it's nice to read their individual perspectives and how they view things in life. I think that the book was very well written, and I enjoy reading books by Georgina Bloomberg and Catherine Hapka. For this type of book in a series, it was well written and thought out. The beginning was a little hard to get into, but once you start to learn the background, it starts to make more sense. I would recommend this book to girls and teens. It's nice if you want something different, but a quicker, easier read. Overall, it was a good book. I will continuing the series and seeing what else these authors have written!

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### **Brittney says**

I wish I could give this book 3 1/2 Stars. There were definitely things that I really enjoyed about "The A Circuit"-- I really liked that this book is told from three different perspectives of three teenage girls from different backgrounds. The three different story lines added a lot to this story and kept me turning the pages. The horse and riding terminology is correct and the chaos of the horse show industry is true to form. Kate was definitely my favorite character and easiest to relate to. I also started to warm up to Tommi towards the end of the book.

However, I had a real problem with Zara and, most of the time, I wanted to slap her. Her character is very shallow...and angry. And, I didn't see her as a true horse-lover. I won't give away any spoilers, but it REALLY made me mad what Zara ends up doing to a horse towards the end. It made me cringe. And, I felt like she should have "paid" for this decision.

The other thing I was hoping for was to see more "character" out of the horses. The horses had their own unique personalities, but I don't feel like I got to know them in detail.

The ending felt unresolved, but it is a series and the story continues in book #2. I will give the second book a shot.

If you enjoy Equine-Fiction, check out my "Horse-Books" Review Blog at:  
<http://brittneyjoybooks.sqsp.com/jour...>

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## **Erica says**

3.5 stars

The A Circuit was a very fun book. Horses have always been animals I have absolutely loved, but I've never actually ridden more than 2 times since I have really severe allergies. I substitute that for just reading about horses whenever I can :) It was a slower read, but a good one none the less.

There were a lot of characters. At first, it made things a bit confusing as I was trying to keep everyone straight. Once I had that time, it made the book that much more fun to read - as there were so many stories and they were all so different. I really liked Kate. She was so sweet and was just a really good person. Tommi was a lot of fun as well. When the story involved Kate or Tommi I found those to be my favorite sections. Dani was a total riot - I absolutely loved her. She lightened the story every time she walked on to the page. I was not a fan of Zara at all - even when the story moved over to her thoughts she came off to witchy for me to like her.

I loved the plot. It was really cool how in depth it got into the world of the A Circuit. Everything was really well explained so I didn't ever get confused. The plot takes you into the characters home lives and stable lives which was nice.

I would have liked a bit more closure at the end. I felt the ending was a bit abrupt - like I was reading, and then all at once there was no more. I really love the cover - I think the hot pink writing is quite nice and the rest of the cover is just so pretty.

I haven't read anything by Catherine Hapka before now and obviously not by Georgina Bloomberg as this is her first book, but I am very excited to see more from both of these authors. I would love to see what this fabulous duo may come up with next!

The A Circuit was a really enjoyable read. It may not be a book I would rush out to read this instant, but it's definitely worthy of your time in the near future. It was slower to start out, but as the book went on the story picked up more and more. By the end, I didn't want it to end and was disappointed to turn the page and find out there was nothing more.

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## **Maria says**

As a regular rider I was able to fully appreciate the horse terminology that accompanied this book. Non-riders may not, but the story was still entertaining and a good light read. The book revolves around the lives of the three main characters, Zara, Tommi, and Kate.

Zara is the daughter of a rock star and a movie star, likes to party hard, and doesn't give a crap about what others think of her. Her character is fairly annoying because of her attitude and how spoiled she is. She does have a few moments when she reveals a more caring side and shows some potential to reform herself a bit.

Tommi is the daughter of one of the wealthiest men in NY and lives a very privileged lifestyle. However, she doesn't let it go to her head. Her character still seems down to earth and hard-working, even as her father dishes out to cost of a new horse that could easily cover someone's college tuition. She is serious about her riding and plans on riding professionally even as her father is planning her college education.

Kate is probably the most likeable of the three. She does not come from the upper-class background of the other two: her father is a policeman and her mother is a stay-at-home mom with OCD. Her brother has been associating with the wrong people and Kate uses her barn time to escape the tension at her home. As a working student, she takes care of things that paying riders would never do and it makes her story all the better. She is also the subject of a romantic sub-plot with the barn's only male rider.

As other reviewers have said, this book is a sort of Gossip Girl equestrian novel. With this aspect, non-riders will still find the book entertaining. Riders may consider this book a "guilty pleasure" of how the hunter-princess world functions at its juiciest. The considerable name-dropping of expensive riding supplies did irritate me a bit but still a very good read!

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### **Amy Mota says**

The A Circuit is the top of the top when it comes to horse shows. It's a world with its own rules and superprivileged lifestyles. Teens travel the circuit all year, showing horses that cost as much as some homes. Tommi, Kate, and Zara are all competitors on the circuit, but they come from totally different backgrounds. Tommi is a billionaire trying to prove she has real talent. Kate puts the work in working, every win has been paid for with hours of cleaning stalls. She's used to the grueling schedule, but Fitz, is about to become a major distraction. And then there's Zara, she's the wild child of a famous rockstar, but she's ready to take riding seriously. For Kate and Tommi, the world of horse showing is everything. Addictive, fun, and fully of plenty of rewards, both are willing to sacrifice nearly anything to be the best of the best. For Kate, this means working herself to the ground so she can compete and work with one of the best trainers in the country, and for Tommi, this means going against what her father and sister think is the best for her. However, everything changes when Zara comes to town. Flashy, wealthy, and snarky, Zara is the queen of mean, and because of this, she quickly ends up on the bad sides of Tommi and Kate.

I really liked this book and I enjoyed reading about Kate, Tommi, and Zara in their alternating perspectives. My favorites out of the bunch would probably have to be Kate and Tommi, because not only did I find their friendship an interesting side to the story, but I also enjoyed how they were more "real" than Zara. The addition of Fitz, the player, was also interesting, though I sometimes felt his character was all over the place, and because of it, I never knew if I should like him, love him, or hate him. All in all this book was full of horses, drama, and a dose of depth, The A Circuit is a great book and i would recommend this to people who enjoy reading about horses.

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