

# Sports Gestures

Each player in a sports discipline has to teach his or her body how to perform a particular movement. You can't just pick up a bat, swing it and expect to hit a ball. The same applies to a golf club or a tennis racket. There is a sports choreography involved; you have to get your body to memorize a certain position so you can repeat it. You need *body memory*.

Many sports champions turn to dance, especially ballet, to learn how to build strength and at the same time develop *body memory*. The football player who kicks the ball, has learned to do a "grand battement," (a big kick). Olympic champion skaters study ballet and jumping *off the ice*; I know this first hand, as I was often in class with them.

Think of how we describe Michael Jordan, *poetry in motion, fluid, he makes it all seem so easy, like a dancer*. The same was said about the great baseball player, Joe DiMaggio, *His movements seemed effortless. He was gracious and graceful*. And who could forget "the greatest," Muhammed Ali, who could, "float like a butterfly and sting like a bee." But their grace alone wasn't all there was to their success, they were able to REPEAT that success, year after year. I *expected* Michael Jordan to make the point. I was more interested in watching how he did it; his *body memory* was something to behold.

That *body memory* is the essence of sports gesture. I'll bet you know what these sports gestures are in spite of the fact that you can't see a uniform or any sports equipment. You can write the name of the sport under the figure.

