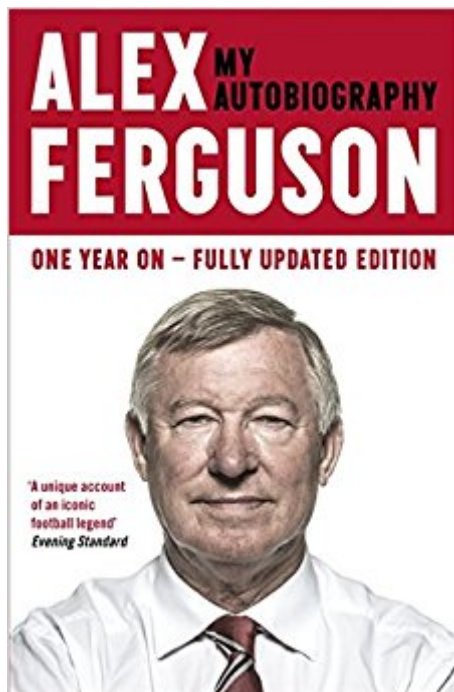


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Alex Ferguson: My Biography



Synopsis

Sir Alex Ferguson's compelling story is always honest and revealing he reflects on his managerial career that embraced unprecedented European success for Aberdeen and 26 triumphant seasons with Manchester United. Sir Alex Ferguson's best-selling autobiography has now been updated to offer reflections on events at Manchester United since his retirement as well as his teachings at the Harvard Business School, a night at the Oscars and a boat tour round the Hebrides, where he passed unrecognised. The extra material adds fresh insights and detail on his final years as United's manager. Both the psychology of management and the detail of football strategy at the top level can be complex matters but no-one has explained them in a more interesting and accessible way for the general reader than Sir Alex does here. MY AUTOBIOGRAPHY is revealing, endlessly entertaining and above all inspirational.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

My Goodness, this is fascinating. Evening Standard His book is really a piece of oral history, and his life is a conduit to a time when a working-class man of talent could, not by the magical alchemy of elite education or the stardust of celebrity, but by a lifetime of hard work and hard thinking, rise to the very top and, flaws aside, remain true to the best of the world he came from. The Guardian

Raised in the tough Govan district of Glasgow, where his father was a shipyard worker, Alex Ferguson started his own working life as an apprentice toolmaker. He went on to play for Queen's Park and five other professional football clubs including the idols of his boyhood, Rangers. Needless

to say he was known as a hard and awkward opponent on the field as well as off it. Intelligent and quick-witted, Alex Ferguson followed his father's lead as a deeply committed socialist.

I probably did a serious mistake by reading this book first instead of the "Old Testament"--there are two autobiographies of Sir Alex: "Managing My Life" and "My Autobiography". This book is clearly a sequel to complete the first book, and you may find yourself a tad disoriented without reading the first. Do not expect to find the story of the 1998/1999 famous European Treble. It is in the "Old Testament". This is the "New Testament", in the instance of stories from after the Treble. The book is divided into topics, and they are not told chronologically. There are special chapters about things from Rio Ferdinand, Liverpool, to the 2007/2008 UEFA Champions League Final in Moscow. It is a very interesting reading, even more if you are a Manchester United fan, used to see him in 26 years of his tenure. Many of the anecdotes are interesting, and will certainly complete any knowledge you have about the Red Devils and the work of this outstanding manager. You will love the stories that he tells throughout the book, and more importantly, I think you will certainly learn a lot from him in leadership, managing people, and more. The book can also be confusing at times, though. The way it is written, sometimes the content of a chapter may well be distracted than the title it intends to tell. It is as if he is chatting with you, and while he is telling a story of something, suddenly he finds some sort of connection to something else, and the story gets distracted. Not the biggest pain, but can be confusing. I find the "Managing My Life" to be tidier in writing. At the end, I get the feeling of wanting more from Sir Alex. Wanting to know more and more stories. Not that there are a little things that he does cover. P.S.: This is the "updated" version of his autobiography, with additional chapters telling about post-retirement life and the thing with David Moyes.

Lets be honest, I am a Manchester United fan, so while I may mock the Scots as a general pastime, I would never dare that with Sir Alex. It is a genuinely good read, I do hope to pick up his other book. That is about as unbiased as I can muster. Still, good lessons and insight into another era of what leadership and sports meant, and from a cultural value and system that isn't dogged by the same short term commercialism of the major US sports. Which is ironic since, much of the experience comes from being in charge of one of if not the largest and most recognized teams in the world (world champion actually means something other than playing a few teams in Canada).

Having spent my life as a collegiate men's soccer coach (now retired) I dove into the book looking for ideas that worked for him throughout his legendary career. There were no real surprises as

basically a professional manager needs two things: money and money to buy or develop players. It was interesting to learn of the inner workings of the professional manager in terms of the buying and selling of players as well as how players were developed by Man U. His chapters on his dealings with star players (Beckham; Ronaldo; Gibbs, etc.) lent insight as to his expertise in making their individual skills harmonize with the team's goals. Ferguson also shared how important it was for the manager to work closely with the administrative side of a club. It is obvious that he was as skilled at "office politics" as he was in choosing lineups for the various league, European and international competitions Man U competed in. Perhaps one tiresome aspect of the book is Ferguson's need to "name drop" as it seemed he knew of every football coach, owner, media person or referee in England and on the continent and felt a need to mention them in the book. Also the book seemed a bit disorganized as an anecdote appeared and then reappeared later on. But if you love soccer, it is a "must read," warts or not. Football at the level Ferguson engaged in is an extremely competitive proposition and after his sharing of his life in it, it is easily apparent as to why he was one of the most successful managers in the history of the sport.

Will there ever be a better Manager? Not just in football, but just as a whole, this guy is an amazing leader. The lessons he advocated here can be brought in to any aspect of life. But this book really tells the story of how a club was truly shaped by one man and how he imprinted his own identity on the club, which will last for a life time. We get an insight into the life of Sir Alex, how he was brought up and how he became the great man that he is today. His formula for success, the way to handle sensitive issues and make tough calls when needed. Solid book which was well balanced.

I enjoyed this book, getting from cover-to-cover in less than a week which is pretty quick for me. The Manchester United story, for me, is a great story and I enjoyed reading Alex Ferguson's view on the things we've been told by the media during these last few decades. I was able to overlook the lack of revelation and surprise in this book though I suspect anyone looking for anything more than a filtered trip down memory lane will be disappointed. You do learn a little more about Alex but the guard never drops this shouldn't surprise anyone.

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