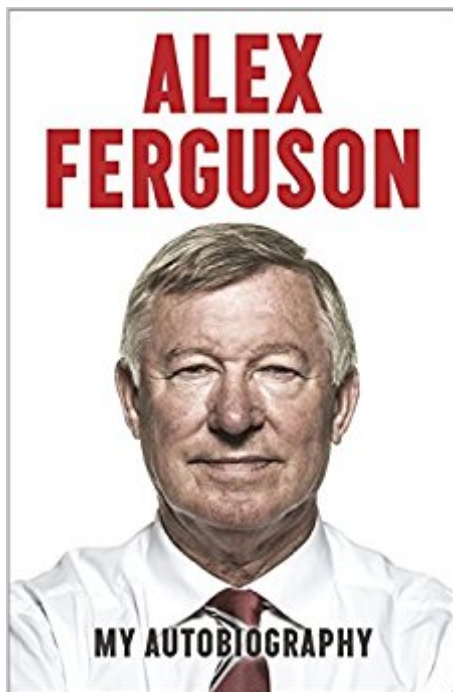


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Alex Ferguson: My Autobiography



Synopsis

Sir Alex announced his retirement as manager of Manchester United after 27 years in the role. He has gone out in a blaze of glory, with United winning the Premier League for the 13th time, and he is widely considered to be the greatest manager in the history of British football. Over the last quarter of a century there have been seismic changes at Manchester United. The only constant element has been the quality of the manager's league-winning squad and United's run of success, which included winning the Champions League for a second time in 2008. Sir Alex created a purposeful, but welcoming, and much envied culture at the club which has lasted the test of time. Sir Alex saw Manchester United change from a conventional football club to what is now a major business enterprise, and he never failed to move with the times. It was directly due to his vision, energy and ability that he was able to build teams both on and off the pitch. He was a man-manager of phenomenal skill, and increasingly he had to deal with global stars. His relationship with Cristiano Ronaldo, for instance, was excellent and David Beckham has described Sir Alex as a father figure. Over the past four years, Sir Alex has been reflecting on and jotting down the highlights of his extraordinary career and in his new book he will reveal his amazing story as it unfolded, from his very early days in the tough shipyard areas of Govan.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

Colourful, chewy and a fine example of how to mince your enemies but not your words. — Daily Express
If it were possible to copy Ferguson's management techniques, everyone would have done so long ago — Financial Times Weekend
His commitment to one

club stands in stark contrast to Redknapp's peripatetic career, and it is a relationship that has won him adulation on the red side of Manchester and grudging respect elsewhere . . . Fergie's absorbing book reveals a man strong on principle and not short of self-belief.Ã¢â¬â¢Tablet

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 was 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 lifetime. 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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