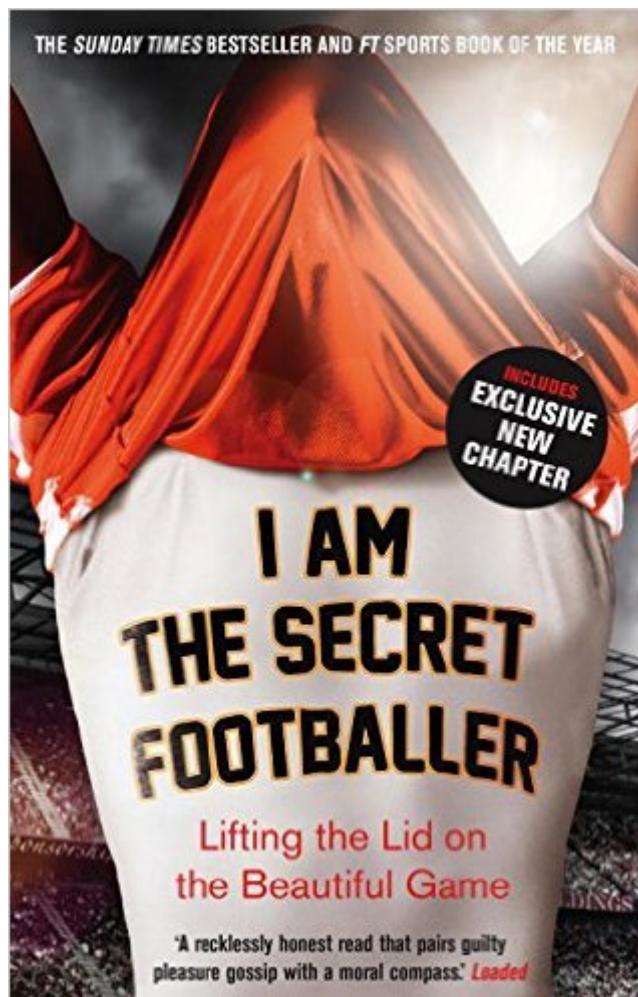


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I Am The Secret Footballer



Synopsis

This updated edition of the bestselling and wildly popular I Am the Secret Footballer features a new introduction and an additional chapter. The anonymous writer of the *Guardian's "Secret Footballer"* column gives *Premiere League* fans an insider's look into the unseen world of professional football. Who is The Secret Footballer? Only a few people know the true identity of the man inside the game. Whoever he is-and whatever team he plays for-TSF is always honest, fearless and opinionated. Here he takes readers past the locker-room door and reveals the inner-workings of a professional club, the exhilarating highs and crushing lows and what it's really like to do the job most of us can only dream of doing. The Secret Footballer chronicles the exploits of his Premiership colleagues with a gimlet eye and frank humor. Managers, agents and players are not spared from his observations-their mindsets, their relationships with those outside the sport, their behavior good and bad. In his inimitable style, TSF recounts entertaining and eyebrow-raising vignettes, naming names and dropping colorful details along the way

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

When the Secret Footballer was writing for the *Guardian*, he was my favourite weekend read - always topical, often personal, going behind the back page headlines to tell the story behind the story. My expectations of the book were high, perhaps unfairly so, but I felt disappointed at the end of it. The longer format & lack of topicality blunts the edge & the book is tamer than expected. A few high jinks here & there - & a chapter by his anonymous agent justifying his existence - did not take

me far behind the facade. Ok for an airplane read - & quickly forgotten.

Unfortunately, like many others, I enjoy the "inside" stories of sport and especially football (soccer). However, by remaining "The Secret Footballer" there was little of interest for me to relate to. Just broad statements and criticisms but no names, no clubs, no truth, and nothing interesting! If you're going to do an "expose", make it a real expose - not just hints, clues and general B/S. If you haven't got the guts to name names - why bother! Easy money? In fact I felt I was being generous by giving this book 2 Stars.

The Secret Footballer (allegedly the sympathetic and insightful Dave Kitson whom I had actually never heard about before - but then again, I don't follow English football to such detail), reveals life off, and a little bit on, the pitch for a professional footballer in one of the planet's best and certainly the planet's most marketed league. The further I read, the more bored I got. For there is nothing controversial about anything that The Secret Footballer reveals. And 'reveals' is far too strong a word ...anyone who can get the least surprised about anything s/he learns from this book is either extremely naïve or knows nothing of football. Therefore: I really don't see what the big deal is. Of course professional football runs like The Secret Footballer describes it. It is not even very creatively or entertainingly written. Not that it has to be, but that could at least have kept me intrigued till the end. The most entertaining (or sad?) moment does come towards the end though: His story about a student girl he met in South Korea makes for a good little story or joke. But that's more or less it. The rest is a collection of unsurprising everyday tales from behind the scenes. Which may be secret but are honestly not very interesting, even to a football fan.

In well written and easy-to-read manner, the secret footballer gives us a glimpse into the craziness of being a Premier League player - a world that is probably further away from everyday life than many of us imagine. From crazy parties and trips to Dubai, to tactics regarding money and contracts, and as an underlying theme all the way: how a young man struggles to cope with all the craziness and remain sane. However, there's not much football talk here, so don't expect to learn much about the game on the pitch - it's primarily about life outside.

I worried that 'The Secret Footballer' would amount to a disappointing gossip book as he revealed all in giving the inside scoop of the world of professional football. I also worried I would be disappointed because it wouldn't be gossipy enough. What? No names at all (because the author is

still playing and wouldn't like his head kicked in). However, the further I got into the book, and the more the various aspects of the sport (fans, managers, agents, etc) were covered in their individual chapters, the more satisfying and well-rounded the read became. Although, to use a term once coined by Noel Gallagher, I have always considered myself a bit of a 'ceefax' about footie, I am just one person in one of the 'aspects': fans. So, what do I really know? Thanks to 'anonymous,' I feel as though I have been given a 360-degree tour, and for that I am appreciative. As for who 'anonymous' is, well... what can I say? My current best guess is Danny Murphy, ex-premiership with Liverpool and Fulham, now in the Championship with Blackburn.

Interesting, poignant, well-written and honest (within the realms of anonymity), this is a great book for any fan of celebrity lifestyles (and the pitfalls they contain), not just for fans of the not-always-beautiful game. This book tackles (see what I did there?) important subjects ranging from depression to poor role models, and attempts to explain the reasons why so many footballers find themselves on the wrong end of the spotlight. The (anonymous) author describes the good times with a balance of humour and derision, and lays bare the bad times with a brutal honesty that feels both sincere and tragic. There's some naivety there too, but it is endearing rather than irritating. I really enjoyed this book, both in written form and on audiobook (Damian Lynch is an amazing narrator), and would recommend it to anyone who is interested in absorbingly-written books on sport, or warts-and-all exposés of the rich and famous.

For anyone interested in UK football, this book is essential reading. After finishing it, I am still not sure whether it is written by a player, though certainly the writer knows the game from the inside.

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