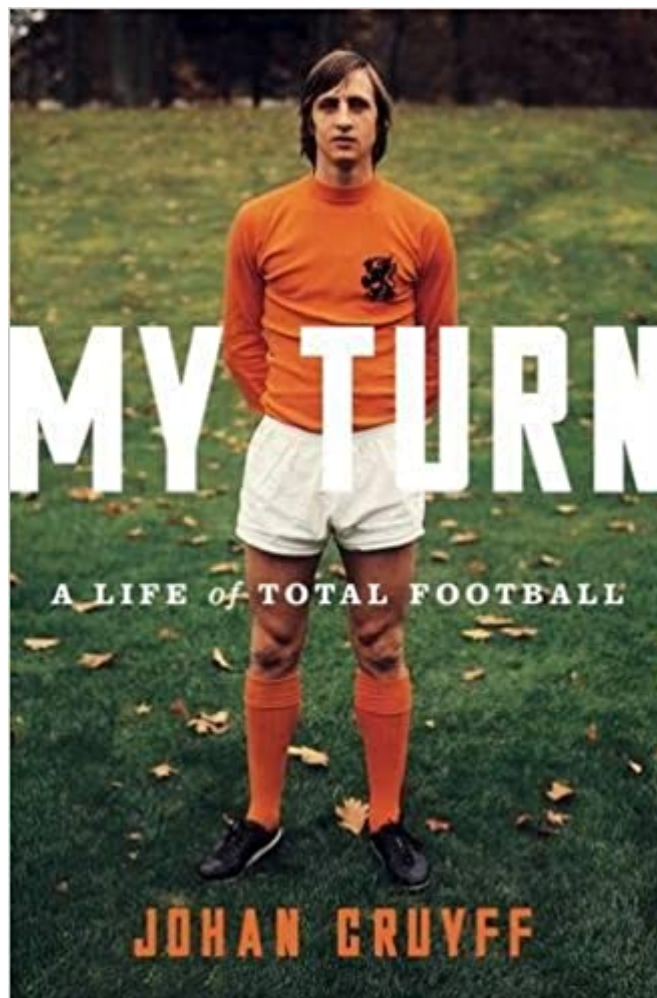


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My Turn: A Life Of Total Football



Synopsis

Johan Cruyff embodied a footballing philosophy that now dominates coaching and playing styles in all the leading club sides around the world. You can dispute whether Cruyff was the greatest player ever – he was certainly one of the top three – but he is undoubtedly the player who single-handedly most changed the nature of the game. My Turn tells the story of Cruyff's remarkable career, built on the techniques he learned playing in the streets of postwar Amsterdam while hoping to be noticed by the city's most famous club, Ajax. He would eventually inspire that team to eight league championships and three European cups. He won his first of three Ballons d'Or in 1971 at age 24. In 1973, Cruyff was sold to Barcelona for a then-world-record transfer fee. He led the Catalans to victory in La Liga for the first time since 1960, and went on to leave a lasting mark on Spanish soccer. In the 1974 World Cup, Cruyff propelled the Dutch team to the final for the first time. Cruyff's lasting influence, however, is not in the medals he won, but in the style of play he epitomized and then applied to the Barcelona and Ajax teams he coached. His vision of 'Total Football' transformed the way soccer was played, and its dazzling fluidity became the basis of the most admired sides around the world. He was the sport's uncompromising genius on and off the field of play.

Book Information

Hardcover: 336 pages

Publisher: Nation Books (November 29, 2016)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 1568585713

ISBN-13: 978-1568585710

Product Dimensions: 6.5 x 1.1 x 9.5 inches

Shipping Weight: 1.2 pounds (View shipping rates and policies)

Average Customer Review: 4.6 out of 5 stars 6 customer reviews

Best Sellers Rank: #84,213 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #15 in Books > Biographies & Memoirs > Sports & Outdoors > Soccer #50 in Books > Sports & Outdoors > Soccer

Customer Reviews

Johan Cruyff painted the chapel, and Barcelona coaches since merely restore or improve it – Pep Guardiola on Cruyff's work at the Nou Camp. He is like the Godfather of Dutch football – Frank Rijkaard. Pythagoras in boots. Few have been able to exert, both physically and mentally, such mesmeric control on a match from one penalty area to another –

• David Winner, author of Brilliant Orange; He was at the heart of a revolution with his football. Ajax changed football and he was the leader of it all. If he wanted he could be the best player in any position on the pitch • Eric Cantona; The proudest moment of my career. I thought I'd win the ball for sure, but he tricked me. I was not humiliated. I had no chance. Cruyff was a genius • Jan Olsson, the Sweden defender who was tricked by the Cruyff Turn at the 1974 World Cup; As a player he turned football into an art form. Johan came along and revolutionised everything. The modern-day Barca started with him, he is the expression of our identity, he brought us a style of football we love • the former Barcelona president Joan Laporta; He has had the biggest influence on football out of anyone in the world, first as a player and then as a coach • Guardiola again.

Johan Cruyff won the Ballon d'Or three times and led the Dutch national team to the final of the 1974 World Cup. Cruyff started his career at Ajax where he won eight national titles and three European Cups. In 1973 he moved to Barcelona for a world record transfer fee, winning La Liga in his first season. He was a proponent of the philosophy known as "Total Football." In 1999, Cruyff was voted European Player of the Century. After his retirement in 1984, he became the manager of Ajax and later FC Barcelona. He managed the Cruyff Foundation, the Cruyff Institute, Cruyff Classics, and the Cruyff Library, and wrote a weekly column for De Telegraaf. Cruyff passed away in March 2016, in Barcelona.

If you're a football fan, this is a must read. The debate in football is who is the greatest player & the conversation always centers around Pele & Maradona. I'd argue it's actually Cruyff. Not only was he an accomplished/great player (for club & country) on the same tier as Pele & Maradona but he also was an equally great manager. A true innovator with Ajax & Barcelona. This autobiography gives a lot of insight into Cruyff & his history in football. RIP to a true legend.

Great book for the soccer fan! I knew very little about Johan Cruyff. I enjoyed it because it was written by him. I understand now why others love him. Learn a little soccer history.

what can i say? anything johon touches is gold

Total Football burst into the popular consciousness with the Dutch national team at the 1974 World Cup led by Johan Cruyff. In Cruyff's posthumously published autobiography My Turn, the

former player and manager talks about the course and evolution of his entire life in football as well as after his time actively involved in the sport. Cruyff is upfront from the outset that he won't recount every big match, for him the important thing was the development of technique and the evolution of getting better by learning from successes and failures. However, Cruyff's explanation of his development as a player as well as the style he both played and coached are a fascinating read in which the results of certain matches come in to play. Cruyff's stories about growing up at Ajax from a ball boy then through the developmental system give a insight about how talent is developed over in Europe, especially once he explains what he took away from how talent was developed in the United States when he played in the NASL. Yet, the most interesting stories were Cruyff's time at Barcelona and the politics of Catalonia and Spain were a literal culture shock to him and his family. The latter part of the book covers Cruyff's most controversial time in football, his managerial tenures at Ajax and Barcelona as well as the shakeups to both clubs that he was an advisor for to bring them both to prominence. Cruyff is upfront about his thought about his loathing of boardroom managing the pitch in place of the pitch dictating the boardroom. For Cruyff this direction from on high, especially at Ajax is one of the reasons that the style of Total Football that he advocates is no longer seen in Dutch football as both technique and fundamentals instilled at an early age are never truly developed because of the increasing change of trainers and development personal because of agendas of non-football individuals who have an agenda of their own. This critique of money interfering goes hand in hand with Cruyff's explanation of his preferred style of football as well as a rather informative explanation of the tactics of football is easy to understand even for those uninformed about the game. Although My Turn seems to have been cut short by Cruyff's death in March 2016, it is still a wonderful read for anyone interest in football or sports biographies.

For Cruyff fans, it is a chance to have a long ramble of a read with the great man--a bit of stream of consciousness, a bit repetitive at times. No doubt his feistiness and "with me or against me" spirit comes through. This probably isn't the book to give you a sense of 'total football' as it is a bit short on soccer nuts and bolts. (My favorite was his explanation of one of the benefits of playing the ball back: The receiving player has the advantage of viewing the whole field ahead of him, like the baseball catcher Cruyff was in his youth!)

Having gotten the book through a Goodreads Giveaway, I was pleasantly pleased that the book could be shared with my older students. Johann wrote about his life and the struggles and pinnacles

without foul language or glamorizing sports as the be all and end all. It was well written, and easy to understand even for those who are not overly familiar with the game. He was not only a player, coach and mentor but gave you insight into the man himself and the values he upheld.

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