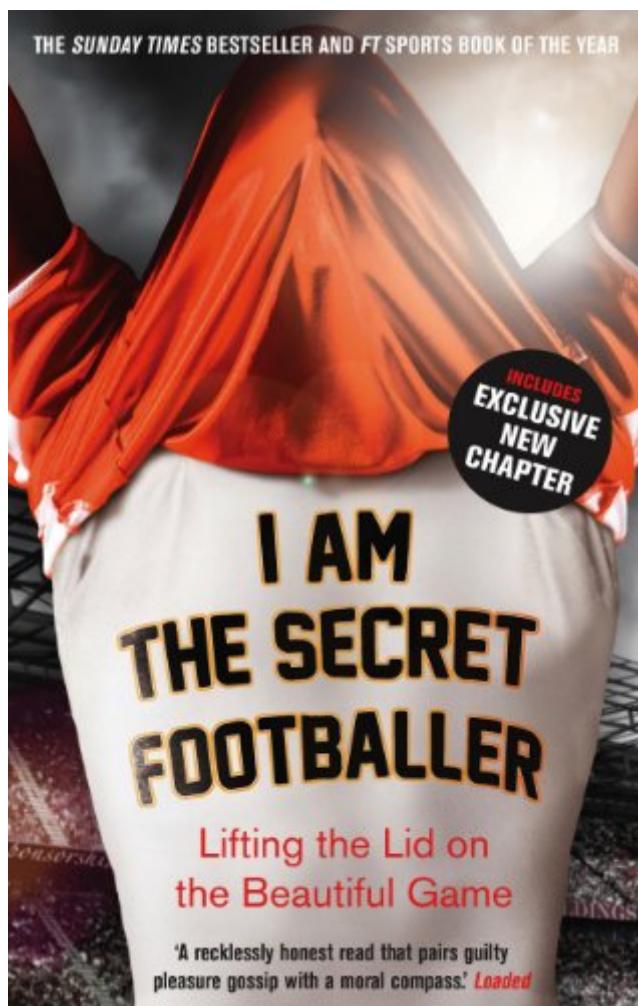


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# I Am The Secret Footballer: Lifting The Lid On The Beautiful Game



## **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 Premier League fans an insider's look into the unseen world of professional football. It is often said that 95% of what happens in football takes place behind closed doors. Many of these stories I shouldn't be telling you. But I will. 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. TSF chronicles the exploits of his Premiership colleagues with a gimlet eye and frank humour. Managers, agents and players are not spared from his observations-their mindsets, their relationships with those outside the sport, their behaviour good and bad. In his inimitable style, TSF recounts entertaining and eyebrow-raising vignettes, naming names and dropping colourful 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.

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 footie. 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.

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.

As the title suggests, it's worth a read, nothing more nothing less. To be honest I was expecting more juicy gossip than was detailed in the book, the book doesn't really tell you anything that a top player's autobiography wouldn't. Being an anonymous author you would definitely expect some naming and shaming of individuals which didn't really crop up. The chapter about the agent is not

worth reading, it's just an opportunity for somebody to defend a publicly dogged profession. Nevertheless if you follow the EPL it's an enjoyable read even if it just turns into a guessing game surrounding the man behind the book.

The Secret Footballer is a candid description of football at the highest level behind the closed doors of English Premier League clubs. A writer strikes a good balance between describing the excesses at the top level and the inherent pressures of modern day footballers. What influence does a manager have on the result? What happens on the training pitch and in the dressing room? How does an agent broker a multi-million pound deal between a player and club? The secret footballer answers all these questions and more. A good read for football fans and cynics alike.

This is an interesting book for anyone who is into football or follows the premiership. There is lot of speculation on who the secret footballer is, but when I was trying to calculate the footnotes and hints to see who he was, I enjoyed reading some of the 'behind the scenes' for footballers. It's not like the book is breaking ground on information that we have never heard before but the delivery of a first person explaining the highs and lows is very entertaining. I would (and have) recommended this to football fans.

I expected this book to be something of a defence of the ridiculous lifestyle of footballers. It was really far from it. There were areas in which preconceived ideas were challenged, especially with agents who I had previously thought to be one step below pond-life (they are now maybe a step or two above pond-life to me). It is easy to see how players lose their sense of reality, and from the book I get the impression that the game has changed massively in the last 15 years or so. It was well-written, thought provoking, witty and entertaining. I fully recommend it.

It gives you an insight how football 'really' works and how footballers think about the game, themselves, trainers, managers and more importantly fans... Very interesting to say the least. But as with other modern Football biographies I always loathe the point that they seem to think that they are more important than the fans or the clubs... A must read for every football interested person though...

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