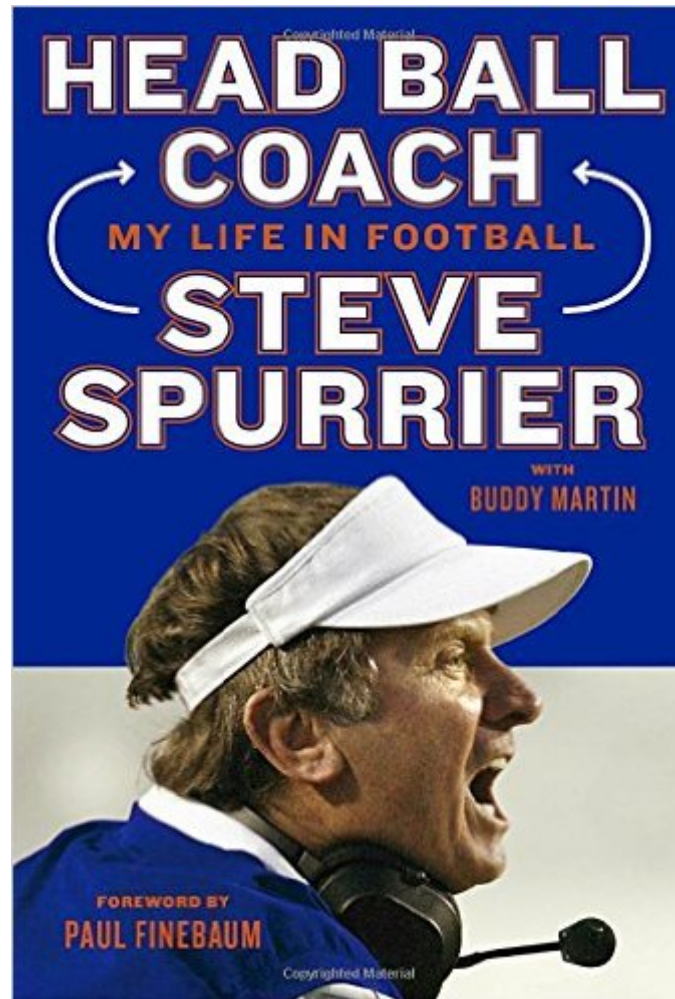


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Head Ball Coach: My Life In Football, Doing It Differently--and Winning



Synopsis

College football's most colorful, endearing, and successful pioneer, Steve Spurrier, shares his story of a life in football -- from growing up in Tennessee to winning the Heisman Trophy to playing and coaching in the pros to leading the Florida Gators to six SEC Championships and a National Championship to elevating the South Carolina program to new heights -- and coaching like nobody else. He's been called brash, cocky, arrogant, pompous, egotistical, and hilarious, but, mostly, he's known as the Head Ball Coach, a self-ordained term introduced to the lexicon of football by none other than the man, himself, Steve Spurrier. He is the only coach who can claim to be the winningest coach at two different SEC schools, and the only person who has won both the Heisman Trophy as a player and a national championship as a coach. Or who has won a Heisman and coached a Heisman winner. From the beginning, Spurrier didn't want to sound like other coaches, dress like other coaches, and, especially, coach like other coaches. As a controversial football pioneer, he ushered in a different style of leadership and play. Spurrier's press conferences were glorious -- he refused to lapse into coachspeak and was always entertaining, although he took his football very seriously. He was known for his fierce competitiveness, roaming up and down the sidelines, often throwing his signature visor to the ground in disgust. Now resigned from coaching at age 70 -- he doesn't like to say "retired" yet -- Spurrier has calmed down, but don't mistake that for a lack of fire. He can be just as feisty as the day he set foot on the East Tennessee dirt in Johnson City's Kiwanis Park, where he grew up to become one of the state's all-time greatest athletes, and went on to play for Florida where he launched one of sports history's all-time great careers. In his memoir, Spurrier talks for the first time about the circumstances under which he unexpectedly became a coach and why he resigned at South Carolina. He explains his unique style, the difference between winners and losers, his relationship with the media, why he follows the wisdom of ancient philosophers and warriors, his affinity everything taught by John Wooden, and the reasons behind his relaxed regimen for living well. Spurrier, as always, speaks candidly, bringing together his thoughts about his words, actions, and achievements, while telling countless wonderful anecdotes.

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Customer Reviews

Any review of this unnecessary book would be incomplete without mentioning the book that made it unnecessary: Ran Henry's wonderfully-crafted and definitive biography Spurrier, published in 2014 after 17 years of meticulous research spanning interviews, church records, and newspapers. Never mind that Mr. Henry presented Spurrier as a heroic figure. Apparently, a few pages that the Ball Coach found disagreeable prompted him to engage Buddy Martin to help him "set the record straight." The best way to read Spurrier's autobiography is to read it along with Henry's biography, then decide for yourself whether Spurrier was successful—that is, whether he was able to convince you that his book was necessary after all. Here's an example of what you should be on the alert for. Spurrier's father was a Presbyterian Church pastor. A year after Spurrier was born in Miami, his father was replaced as pastor of the First Presbyterian Church of Miami Beach. Henry's account of the family's departure appears on pages 18 through 20, and is based on church records and several interviews with the pastor who followed Rev. Spurrier but did not precede him. As you will read on p. 44, Spurrier's account differs. It is not clear what he could have based his version on. Perhaps family lore? No doubt there are exceptions, but there's a reason for this maxim: Read the autobiography for color, but read the biography for fact—and in the case of Ran Henry's literary biography, for inspired writing to boot. For a taste, I'll quote Henry's very first paragraph. It's August, 31 years after Spurrier's Heisman, and his team is on the practice field, entering the season as the reigning national champions. Nobody remotely resembles Danny Wuerffel, the only Heisman coached by a Heisman.

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