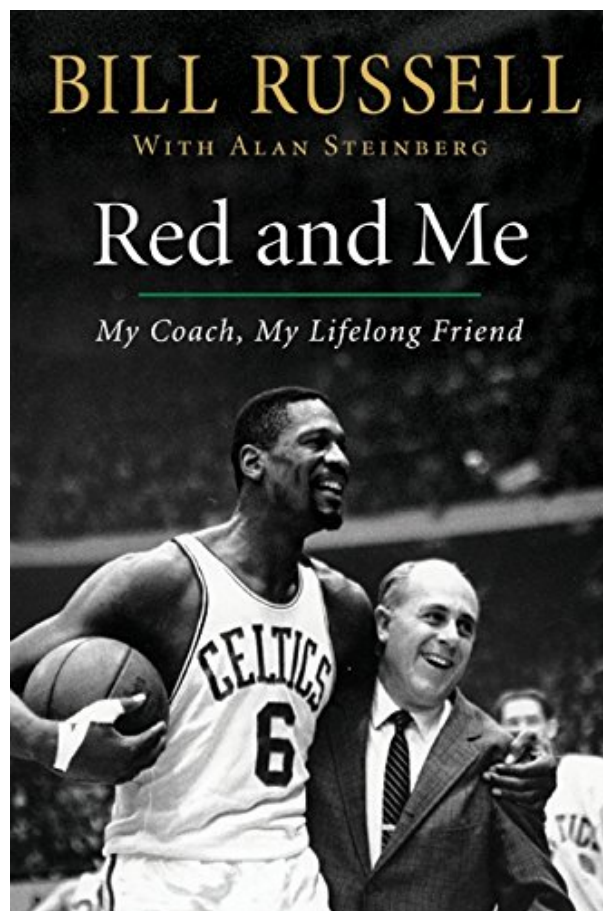


**RED AND ME: MY COACH, MY LIFELONG
FRIEND BY BILL RUSSELL, ALAN
STEINBERG**



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My Coach, My Lifelong Friend



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—Booklist

In *Red and Me*, Boston Celtics basketball legend Bill Russell pays homage to his mentor and coach, the inimitable Red Auerbach. A poignant remembrance of a life-altering relationship in the tradition of *Big Russ and Me* and *Tuesdays With Morrie*, *Red and Me* tells an unforgettable story of one unlikely and enduring friendship set against the backdrop of the greatest basketball dynasty in NBA history.

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Most helpful customer reviews

25 of 27 people found the following review helpful.

Unique Relationship

By soulonice

I came across this book, while going through a basketball website, and since Bill Russell is regarded as the greatest winner in team sports, and Red Auerbach is considered the greatest coach that's ever lived, I figured there is no better place to learn about them, than from Russell himself.

Russell shares stories of his childhood, and how it helps him in high school, college, and how it sets the foundation for his relationship with Red Auerbach. You could tell they had a sincere bond, and had a unique way of interacting with each other. They both realized what they had with each other, and were able to work toward one common goal: winning. It was one of the more encouraging examples of success, especially with what we see nowadays, with teams and some of the riff-raff that goes on, that has little-or-nothing to do with winning.

It also gives you a glimpse of a side of both of them that people were not accustomed to seeing, at least from what I've seen. We get to see Coach Red as someone who would play practical jokes, and even had some played on him as well. More than anything, Mr. Russell does a great job of exposing the man, and letting the reader know he was fiercely loyal, dedicated to success, and was someone whose mind was working 24/7, and all for the betterment of the team. More than anything else, it's the story of how two men came together, and became very good friends, while forming a bond that could never be compromised and broken.

20 of 23 people found the following review helpful.

RICK

By Rick Shaq Goldstein

I must state for the record that I am not a Boston Celtic fan... but the fact that I openly admired their "team-first" play... and even though I was saddened for decades as they always beat my Lakers in the finals... as a basketball player myself... I was true to the heart of the sport... when I openly said they were the better team. The Celtics of the late 50's and 60's were ***THE-GREATEST-DYNASTY-IN-THE-HISTORY-OF-ALL-PROFESSIONAL-SPORTS!*** Winning ***EIGHT-STRAIGHT-NBA-CHAMPIONSHIPS***... and winning ***ELEVEN-NBA-CHAMPIONSHIPS-IN-THIRTEEN-YEARS*!** This is a mark that has never been matched... and with the lunacy of free agency... probably never will. At the core of these storied championships were two men. The architect... a small fiery Jew from Brooklyn... the coach and general manager... Red Auerbach... and the winningest player in professional sports history... and Celtic center... Bill Russell. This is not to say there weren't other great players on these Celtic teams... of course there were. The Hall of Fame's walls are lined with many of their plaques... in addition to numerous other Celtic legends as well. Just to name a few: "Da Cooz"... Heinsohn... the Jones boys... Sharman... Sanders... Havlicek... Howell... Loscutoff... and many others. But the most valuable of all these... was center Bill ("Russ") Russell. Russ's unmatched record as the ultimate winner included back-to-back NCAA Championships with USF and an Olympic Gold Medal in 1956 before joining the Celtics.

Most of these accolades are known by most Celtic fans and also by true sports fans. But what hasn't been known... until this book... because Russ never let anyone into his heart before... to share his intimate feelings... is how deep the reciprocal friendship... and yes the actual love was... between Russ and Red. The reason these feelings were never laid out in the open like this... is pretty obvious to Russ... and he'll hit you over the head with the reason innumerable times in this book. He and Red... like many of the other men of his time... didn't hug each other... or say I love you.

[...]

The Celtics became the first team in any professional sport to start an all black team. Asked about it they acted like they hadn't noticed... it was simply a case of putting the best team on the floor. When Red retired from coaching... he named Russ the new Celtic coach. Russell was the first black head coach or manager in professional sports history. Red and Russ never mentioned a thing. When the media asked Red about the significance of having the first "Negro" coach Red said: **"LOOK, IT'S NO BIG DEAL. I JUST DID WHAT I THOUGHT WAS BEST FOR OUR TEAM."**

The powerful impact of this book is that feelings and wisdom is being shared by a legendary sports figure who for decades and decades had kept any emotions... other than complaining about a foul call... locked in a personal vault that many thought even Russell didn't have the combination to. But when his ***FRIEND*** Red Auerbach died on October 28, 2006... the big man decided to share some of his personal beliefs and feelings.

There are some powerful and beautiful sentiments shared with the reader such as:

"IT IS FAR MORE IMPORTANT TO UNDERSTAND THAN TO BE UNDERSTOOD."

"FRIENDSHIP DEPENDS ON WHAT YOU GIVE TO EACH OTHER, NOT WHAT YOU GET FROM EACH OTHER."

"BUT WE BOTH UNDERSTOOD THAT IF I SUCCEEDED, IT ENHANCED HIM, AND IF HE SUCCEEDED, IT ENHANCED ME. ULTIMATELY, OUR REAL SUCCESS WAS OUR ABILITY-WITHOUT EVER HAVING TO EXPRESS IT OPENLY-TO COLLABORATE IN EVERY WAY WE COULD THINK OF, TO HELP THE *TEAM* SUCCEED."

Any Bill Russell fan will be utterly surprised at the side of Russell that he allows the world to see in this book. One quote that has already affected me is:

"MY AMBITION AS YOUR FRIEND IS THAT MY FRIENDSHIP HAS A POSITIVE INFLUENCE ON YOUR QUALITY OF LIFE. IF AM ABLE TO ACCOMPLISH THAT, IT WILL ENHANCE MY QUALITY OF LIFE."

7 of 7 people found the following review helpful.

Mutual Respect

By Bill Emblom

The secret to the unique friendship between Arnold "Red" Auerbach and Bill Russell has to be the mutual respect each had for the other. Red was the first coach Russell ever had who let him be himself. Rather than impose his own will on him Auerbach was smart enough and secure in his own position to allow Russell to "do his thing" on the basketball floor. Auerbach did admit to having two sets of rules, one for Russell and one for the remaining members of the team. Russell, to his credit, didn't take advantage of the situation. Both Auerbach and Russell were upfront with each other in their relationship and each respected and didn't question the others' beliefs in matters not related to basketball. An interesting anecdote is how Russell came to be drafted by the Celtics. Yes, it has been told in other books, but the Celtics had to do some maneuvering to get the chance to draft Bill Russell. I'm sure Russell would have been successful even if he didn't have Arnold "Red" Auerbach for a coach, but fortunately this odd-couple were a perfect match for one another. This book is a quick read, but it does contain lessons that will interest future coaches on any level in addition to anyone who is interested in reading about human relationships.

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