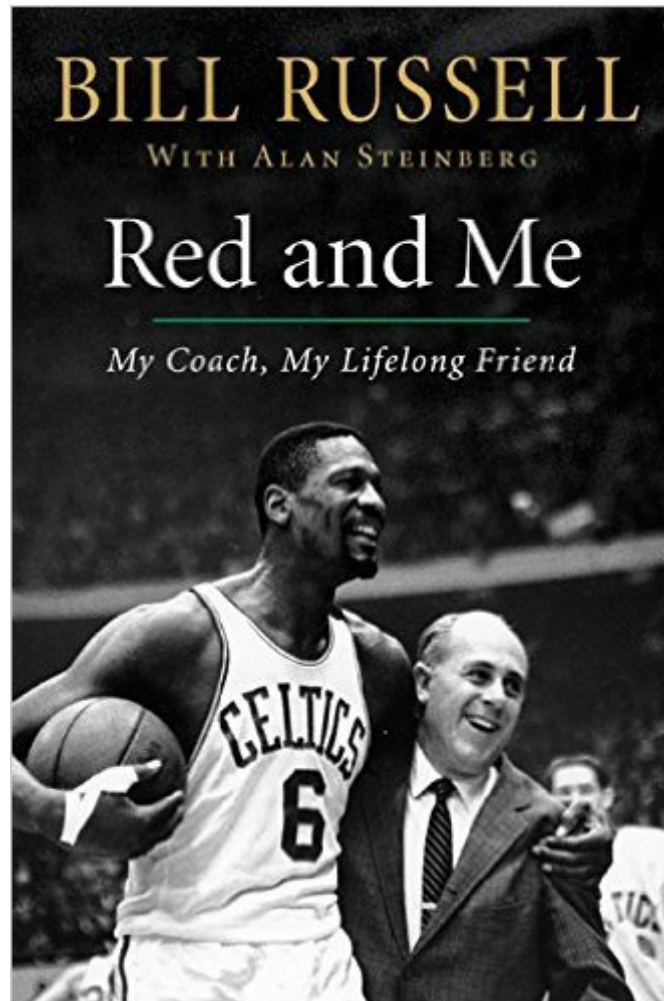


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Red And Me: My Coach, My Lifelong Friend



Synopsis

Bill Russell was the greatest team basketball player ever. [He] has produced a moving tribute to his friend and, in a larger sense, to friendship. "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.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

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.

I originally had mixed emotions about this book and would have rated it lower if I had written the review prior to the excellent ending. In summation, this is a very short, fast read where Bill Russell describes his unique relationship and total understanding between two friends who can be so close while communicating so little. But this book needs a better set-up than a book of friendship and Russell supplies that here. He describes his history as a black man and traces his influence to his widowed father who raised him with the ultimate in high standards of integrity. But remember this is also a black player entering sports shortly after Jackie Robinson. Russell had had poor relationships with previous coaches and had been subjected to 1950s racism such as being unable to dine or sleep with the white members of the team in the south. Not mentioned in great detail are the stories of racism when Bill Russell bought a home in Boston and the racism he faced. There is quite a humorous story of trash can noise which police said was racoon caused. Then Russell requested a gun permit. End of noise. But to complete the back story for this book you must know that in addition to be an exceptional athlete, Russell was an incredibly intelligent and private man who even refused autographs to his teammates for their family. With this background Russell describes how he expected another poor relationship with his coach only to find in Red Auerbach a Jewish man who also had suffered racism and was solely focused on winning and treating his players well. Once he knew what was important to Russell, he treated him as an accomplice, always asking his opinion and never disrespecting him.

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