



My First Coach: Untold Stories of NFL Quarterbacks and Their Dads

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From the *New York Times* bestselling author of *Brady vs. Manning* and dean of football writers - a book that explores the many interesting facets to NFL quarterbacks and their relationships with their fathers.

Tom Brady's father is an estate planner. Jim Harbaugh's father had a long career as a college coach. Archie Manning played fourteen years in the NFL and never made the playoffs, but his sons Peyton and Eli won a combined four Super Bowls. Joe Montana is considered by many to be the greatest quarterback of all time, but his two sons bounced around college football with limited success. Jameis Winston's father supported his family working overnight highway construction in Alabama. Derek Carr's father moved the family to Houston after Derek's older brother, David, was drafted by the Texans.

MY FIRST COACH goes behind the scenes to explore the unique relationship between these and other quarterbacks and their fathers, as well as investigate various approaches to parenting through their stories. Can young athletes overcome helicopter parents? How did the kids with NFL aspirations deal with their fathers who'd already made it? What kind of pressure did they have to overcome? What kind of pressure did the father who succeeded put on his son to be an athlete? Would the expectations be lower and the results greater if the father was an attorney or doctor? Was it better for the fathers to be overbearing, or borderline disinterested?

MY FIRST COACH tells the compelling, real-life stories of some of the country's most famous quarterbacks and how they took advantage of or overcame their relationships with their fathers.

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Lance says

There are many stories of fathers playing catch with their sons with either a baseball and mitts or tossing a football back and forth. Many of those catches with a football are mixed with fantasies by the son (and sometimes the father) of that youngster becoming an NFL quarterback. This excellent book by Gary Myers tells the stories of some of those youngsters whose dreams of becoming a professional quarterback and the experiences they had with their fathers.

The quarterbacks selected for this book are not all Super Bowl winners or even stars in the game. There are plenty of the former (Phil Simms, John Elway and Eli Manning just to name a few) but there are also quarterbacks who are early in their professional careers (Jameis Winston, Derek Carr) or journeymen (Ryan Fitzpatrick and Jim Harbaugh). No matter the level of success or experience obtained, the stories of their relationships with their fathers made for fascinating reading. Myers is considered to be one of the best football writers in the country and the manner in which he captures the stories shows why.

While the majority of the tales shared do reveal many of the traits expected, such as the many sacrifices and moves made by the fathers to help their sons achieve gridiron success, there are some that took a different path. Simms recalls that his relationship with his father was not a close one during his youth. Winston tells how his father stressed academics over football, and Harbaugh's story goes well into his coaching days as well as his playing days. All of the chapters reveal heartfelt reflections by both the fathers and the sons about their relationships.

There is one more twist to the type of story told and that is the one on the chapter about Joe Montana. This is because that chapter talks about Montana as the father to his two sons who both played high school and college football but did not play professionally. The pressure they felt as the son of a legend was extraordinary, enough to the point that they put their mother's maiden names on the backs of their jerseys so they did not have to try to live up to their famous father's performance. This chapter was my favorite one in the book.

Football fans of all levels, from casual to die-hard, will enjoy reading these personal stories about the most visible players in professional football. Myers has once again scored a touchdown with a book about quarterbacks and it is one that comes highly recommended.

<http://sportsbookguy.blogspot.com/201...>

Luis Cuesta says

I received this book as a Goodreads giveaway. It can be interesting for those that want to go deeper in the environment where famous quarterbacks were born and raised. Through the profiles of some of well known fathers, including Eli Manning and Joe Montana, Gary Myers observes that some of them make great

sacrifices to be on hand for their boys as they grow into the sport, while others stay at some distance in order not to be stage fathers.

No matter the level of success or experience obtained by some of the QBs, the stories of their relationships with their fathers made for fascinating reading and Myers' writing captures these tales in an engaging manner.

Geoffrey says

Not quite sure why the ratings were so high for this book. I am guessing it is because there are a ton of meatheads out there that read very little and are proud of themselves for getting through this book. This book is not terrible, just not terribly interesting. I was a professional athlete and have kids involved in youth sports, so this was relevant to me. However, I did not walk away from this knowing much more - both about these players and their fathers, as well as how I should approach my own children in terms of athletics and our relationship.

Huguette Larochelle says

Stories of Dad dedication to their sons, passion for sport .

Lauren Draper-wood says

A brilliant read for all football fans. Such a unique insight into the players and how their mindset developed. How different parenting approaches can still lead to Hall of Fame caliber footballers is fantastic. It almost feels fly on the wall in that the voice of the parents and players leaps off the page.

It's not all happiness though, with Phil Simms and Jameis Winston not being dealt an easy hand in life. And then the pressure of the greatest ever QB's son's to live forever in his shadow.

Insightful and touching. Very well written and would be a welcome gift under the Christmas tree for any sports fans this year.

Carianne Carleo-Evangelist says

I've read and enjoyed Gary Myers before so when his new book, *My First Coach*, showed up on NetGalley I was eager. I knew that there would be some overlap with *Brady vs. Manning* in both of those chapters, but I was pleased to see that this book covered the 2016 season so would be more up to date than that book. There wasn't much new to me as a Giants fan in the Manning chapter, but I liked how Myers touched on Brady's mother's health battle as well as his relationship with his father.

Like *Coaching Confidential*, the scope of this book is fairly wide ranging from contemporary QBs to the 1970s coaching career of Jack Harbaugh and 1980s playing careers of Archie Manning, Montana, Elway and Simms. You realize how unique Manning genes are, something Myers touched on when comparing Peyton and Eli to Nate and Nick Montana, when you realize that no other player profiled besides the Harbaughs

need the clarification of a first name to know who you're speaking of. While Matt Simms had to share a metropolitan area, Nate Montana's choice to follow in his father's footsteps at Notre Dame field was an interesting one.

I really enjoyed how Myers chose to organize the families he profiled as it painted a picture how football has changed since (Jack) Harbaugh was coaching and (Archie) Manning and Montana were playing. In comparing the (lack of) success of Montana's sons to Archie's sons' success, it provided a natural coda to the book. I also liked the inclusion of the Harbaugh chapter for its ability to showcase a coaching family vs. an athlete family. While there were parallels of non-athlete father and NFL QB sons in Brady & Fitzpatrick, it was the latter I enjoyed most as I know very little about Ryan Fitzpatrick aside from his brief Jets career.

In general it was the chapters on Ryan Fitzpatrick and John Elway that I enjoyed the most because it was new to me material. Who knew that someone could opt to go to Harvard after not being able to go to Arizona State? I'm too young to remember Elway's college career and don't think I ever knew his father was a college coach. The vignette about his father convincing him to come home because otherwise he wouldn't be allowed in the house after his defense beat up on Elway was entertaining. I also like how the chosen families allowed the stories to touch on other players whose careers intersected, especially Dan Marino and Brett Favre with Elway.

On the coaching side, I felt the profile of Jack Harbaugh helped contextualize some of Jim's mannerisms. I especially also liked how he coaxed Jack out of retirement to be his RB coach to prepare for a bowl game after Willie Taggart left for Western Kentucky after it was Jim who helped recruit Taggart to play for Jack at Western Kentucky.

All in all, really good book for NFL fans. Engaging, quick read that I probably could have finished in one sitting with more time on that train ride.

Kyle Robertson says

This book shines an equal light on the impact that the fathers had both on and off the field. The author takes you inside the childhood homes of the families, and then follows their careers into college and the professional level. There are stories of success, failure, and disappointment. Each profile also compares the player to other players of their time, drawing parallels between personal lives and/or careers.

The book starts off with the rich history of the Harbaugh family. Brothers John and Jim credit their success to lessons they learned from their father Jack, who had a coaching career that spanned nearly five decades. Life lessons and values were ingrained in them at a young age. Their family relocated often as Jack made his way up the ranks in his career. The highlight of this family's career is probably the Super Bowl that saw the head coaching brothers on opposing sidelines.

The second feature is focused on the Manning family - Archie and his sons Cooper, Peyton, and Eli. A large portion of this is devoted to the youngest, Eli. As is usually the case, the youngest has to suffer through whatever the older siblings are involved in. Archie felt like he never spent as much quality time with Eli, and this was one of the reasons he decided to retire from football himself. Archie's father took his own life when Archie was still in college. Archie vowed to spend as much time as he could with his boys and support them in all they do. Through it all, Archie never pushed his boys to play football or tried to influence their decisions on which college to attend. I found the discussions regarding the different personalities very

interesting, such as how each brother approached decisions or the things they value.

Jameis Winston was introduced to football by his dad at an early age. His dad coached little league football and Jameis accompanied him to practice and put on the pads well before he was old enough to play. His dad, Antonor, soon became his coach, but that also meant that Antonor held Jameis to a higher standard. On his way to becoming a star athlete in football and baseball, Jameis had to deal with racial tensions in his school and hometown. His dad sought to teach him life lessons through sports, instilling values in him such as loving everyone and supporting your teammates. Antonor stood by his son and supported him through his troubles at Florida State, and he continues to be his biggest fan and critic.

Jack Elway had a big influence on his son's football career. The family moved around a lot when John was a kid, but in high school John developed into a big-time college prospect at the same time Jack Elway's coaching career began to take off. John chose to play college football at Stanford instead of playing for his dad at San Jose State. His dad didn't really try to influence him, and he supported John every step of the way. This chapter talks about the successes and failures of Elway's career, focusing on the fact that his dad was his support system and sounding board through it all.

Derek and Rodger Carr have a very close relationship, along with Derek's brothers David and Darren. Derek is a gifted quarterback, and relocating to Texas for his high school career when David got drafted by the expansion Texans helped him get noticed. His grandfather was a pastor for over forty years. When the Carr family learned that Derek's grandfather was diagnosed with brain cancer, they made the difficult decision to return home to California to be closer to the family. This profile doesn't really mention it, but Derek Carr has a strong faith in God. He speaks boldly about his faith in press conferences and on social media. Last week he signed a record 5 year, \$125 contract with the Raiders. In a press conference after the signing Carr said, "The first thing I'll do is pay my tithe as I have since college. The exciting thing for me money-wise, honestly, is that this money is going to help a lot of people. I'm very thankful to have it, that it's in our hands, because it's going to help people not only in this country but in a lot of countries around the world."

Enrolling at Harvard was a tough decision for Ryan Fitzpatrick. He and his father, Mike, both figured that choosing Harvard was conceding that Ryan would never play in the NFL. However, Ryan also had faith that if he was good enough the right people would find him. He went on to be the first quarterback from Harvard to ever start in the NFL. Ryan's father was there to support him every step of the way, but he was careful to always allow Ryan to make his own decisions. Ryan talks a lot about how committed and supportive his dad is, and the sacrifices he makes for Ryan and his brothers.

Phil Simms has a very successful NFL career. His two sons also went on to be NFL quarterbacks. Phil Simms grew up dirt poor. He and his seven brothers and sisters had a loving mother and an alcoholic father, both of which were factory workers. Phil's dad was always there, but for all intents and purposes he was an absent father. An interesting fact here is that Phil ended up playing for Bill Parcells, a man who was not much different from Phil's father in regards to praise or support. Phil was always active in his son's lives, but he was careful not to pressure them. They were constantly under enough pressure as it was to perform as well as their father once did.

Joe Flacco and his father Steve have a very close relationship. Although it's the last thing Joe usually wants to do, his father Steve loves to talk football. He wants to be involved in every aspect of his son's life and career. Joe values his dad's opinion and included him in every decision along the way.

Joe Montana's two sons always felt the pressure to live up to their father's reputation. They even put their mother's maiden name on their jerseys in an attempt to carve out their own identities. Like most profiled in

this book, Joe Montana never pushed his sons to play football. He also never pressured them to play to his standards or continue their careers when they decided not to. Once his sons made a decision, Joe wholeheartedly supported them and helped however he could.

I thoroughly enjoyed this book. There is a touching personal story from the author at the end that really sums the book up well. The individual stories are informative and encouraging. I highly recommend this book to football fans everywhere. This would make a great gift for Father's Day, birthday, or Christmas. I received this as a free ARC from Grand Central Publishing on NetGalley in exchange for an honest review.

Doris Kissack says

Very interesting perspective from a males point of view. Encouraging to know the bonds of fatherhood. One of the most important relationships a male should have. A relationship of praise and teaching of life's challenging steps to adulthood and to be a positive member of society.

Paul Mahon says

Fun stories to gain more insight into NFL Families.
