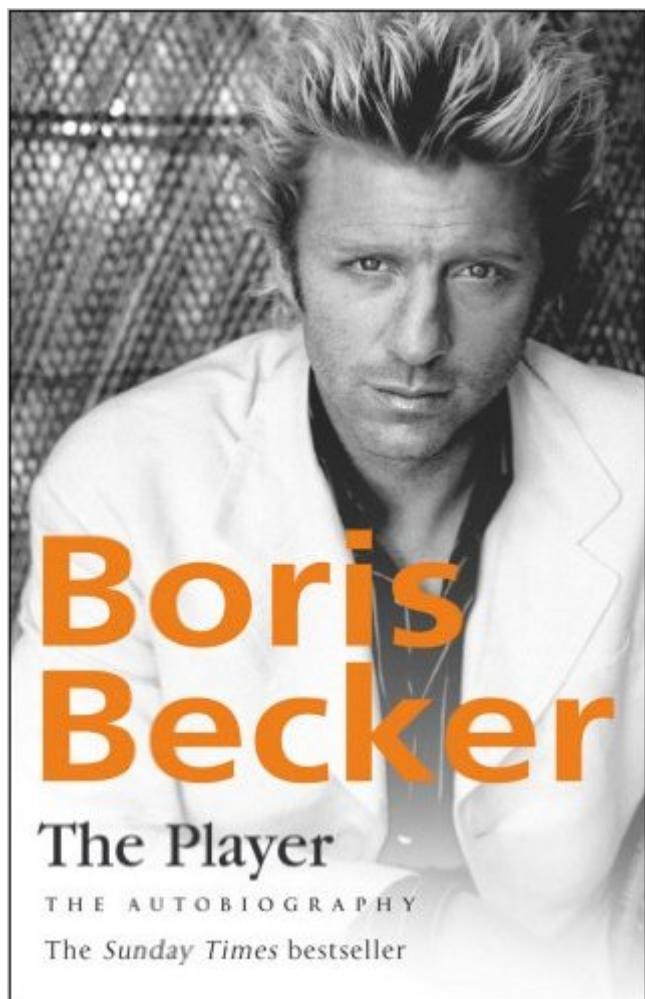


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The Player: The Autobiography



Synopsis

Boris Becker shot to fame in 1985 when, at 17, he became the youngest player ever to win the men's final at Wimbledon. He went on to win two more Wimbledon titles, and a total of 49 singles and 15 doubles crowns, making him one of the greatest players of the 20th century. But his personal life always attracted as much attention as his professional triumphs. Now, in this remarkably candid autobiography, Boris Becker tells the real story behind the headlines. He talks about his marriage, his daughter, and his painful divorce. He talks about how he felt at the end of his tennis career and his battles with pills and alcohol. He also shares his memories of the good times, the championship wins, and the make-or-break matches.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

This is an excellent autobiography about one of my favorite tennis stars of the Open era. His book compares favorably to Mac's "You Can't Be Serious." Although both personalities are equally intriguing, Becker opens up more. Mac remains more focused on the tennis. Becker engages in depth into all his demons, the tax evasion scandal, the wrenching divorce, and the sleeping pill addiction. With Becker you feel the heights and lows of fame. It is an extremely charged bipolar life. You also feel that Becker found it physically and emotionally exhausting. His body was crippled with tendon injuries resulting in several surgeries. His lingering tax evasion case lasting years took a heavy toll on his tennis career. His marriage to Barbara was a casualty of fame. Many relationships he experienced have gone through Faustian dramas. This is true with his coaches and his women. He always seems to share a very strong bond and trust at the onset. Invariably, they don't meet

expectations (his or theirs). Then, things fall apart. But, somehow they often recover and end up as mature friends. This was the case with both Ion Tiriac and Barbara (his former wife). Becker is full of contradictions. For instance, when he is in court to fight over the terms of a bitter divorce he states that he lived all his life in Germany. This was in an effort to transfer the divorce case from the U.S. where his wife filed the divorce paper to Germany where he would benefit from more lenient financial disclosure. But, when the German government goes after him for back taxes. All of a sudden, he has supposedly not set foot in Germany for decades. What gives? The description of life on the tour and the limelight seems really existential at best.

I would've preferred to give three and a half stars but nvm, well worth a read if you're a fan, I always wanted to hear his own point of view. It doesn't appear to be too ghost written and though the tennis is featured, it's not just about tennis, and that's inevitable. We all know Becker's physical tennis style - it was often the things happening off the court that threatened his place in the game and could well have distracted him. It's obvious that Boris has had many highs and lows, very early fame and success that he struggled to deal with, as he was suddenly thrust into the public eye. He overcame that to sustain a long and illustrious tennis career at a time the game was undergoing some key transitions which he describes well - the context of someone who witnessed and was at the middle of the change of a tennis era. If there is anyone who bridged those two eras, it was Becker. Despite his serve dominant game, he was always entertaining to watch. And he makes a good point - at a time when most sports are being dogged and threatened by drug scandals and cheating, tennis remains a relatively untainted, predominantly skill based game, equal parts mental, emotional and physical. The main cloud over it at present is the increased commercialism and exploitation of the sport. Fair enough - professional top players deserve remuneration but at what point does it become more about the money than the game? Boris is a contradiction - swinging between tightly controlled discipline, and extreme passion/drama; self assuredness and then self doubt/loathing. It is those shades that made him an interesting player and individual. His feelings towards his homeland veer from pride, affection and sentiment; to some disappointment, frustration and bitterness.

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