

## Inverting The Pyramid The History Of Football Tactics

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Inverting the Pyramid

"An outstanding work ... the [soccer] book of the decade." –Sunday Business Post Inverting the Pyramid is a pioneering soccer book that chronicles the evolution of soccer tactics and the lives of the itinerant coaching geniuses who have spread their distinctive styles across the globe. Through Jonathan Wilson's brilliant historical detective work we learn how the South Americans shrugged off the British colonial order to add their own finesse to the game; how the Europeans harnessed individual technique and built it into a team structure; how the game once featured five forwards up front, while now a lone striker is not uncommon. Inverting the Pyramid provides a definitive understanding of the tactical genius of modern-day Barcelona, for the first time showing how their style of play developed from Dutch "Total Football," which itself was an evolution of the Scottish passing game invented by Queens Park in the 1870s and taken on by Tottenham Hotspur in the 1930s. Inverting the Pyramid has been called the "Big Daddy" (Zonal Marking) of soccer tactics books; it is essential for any coach, fan, player, or fantasy manager of the beautiful game

TENTH ANNIVERSARY EDITION - NOW FULLY UPDATED In Inverting the Pyramid, Jonathan Wilson pulls apart the finer details of the world's game, tracing the global history of tactics, from modern pioneers right back to the beginning when chaos reigned. Along the way, he looks at the lives of great players and thinkers who shaped the sport and probes why the English, in particular, have 'proved themselves unwilling to grapple with the abstract'. This tenth-anniversary edition of a footballing modern classic has been fully updated to include the development of gegenpressing as pioneered by German coaches such as Ralf Rangnick and Jürgen Klopp, and its subsequent influence on the world game. It also analyses the tactical evolution of Pep Guardiola, the increasing alternatives to possession-based football and the changing role of the goalkeeper, as well as investigating the trend of full-backs developing into midfielders and the consequent return of three at the back.

Whether it's Terry Venables keeping his wife up late at night with diagrams on scraps of paper spread over the eiderdown, or the classic TV sitcom of moving the salt & pepper around the table top in the transport cafe, football tactics are now part of the fabric of everyday life. Steve McLaren's recent switch to an untried 3-5-2 against Croatia will probably go down as the moment he lost his slim credibility gained from dropping David Beckham; Jose Mourinho, meanwhile, is often brought to task for trying to smuggle the long ball game back into English football (his defence being his need to 'break the lines' of banks of defenders and midfielders). Jonathan Wilson is an erudite and detailed writer, but never loses a sense of the grand narrative sweep, and here he pulls apart the modern game, traces the world history of tactics back from modern pioneers such as Rinus Michels and Valeriy Lobanovskiy, the Swiss origins of Catenaccio and Herbert Chapman, right back to beginning where chaos reigned. Along the way he looks at the lives of great players and thinkers who shaped the game, and probes why the English, in particular, have 'proved themselves unwilling to grapple with the abstract'. This is a modern classic of football writing to rank with David Winner's 'Brilliant Orange' and Simon Kuper's 'Football Against the Enemy'.

'Aloof, solitary, impassive, the crack goalie is followed in the streets by entranced small boys. He vies with the matador and the flying aces, an object of thrilled adulation. He is the lone eagle, the man of mystery, the last defender' Vladimir Nabokov Albert Camus, Sir Arthur Conan Doyle, Yevgeny Yevtushenko, Pope John Paul II, Julian Barnes and not forgetting Nabokov himself ... it's safe to say the position of goalkeeper has over the years attracted a different sort of character than your average footballer. In this first-ever cultural history of the 'loner' between the posts, Jonathan Wilson traces the sometimes dangerous intellectual and literary preoccupations of the keeper, and looks at how the position has secured a certain existential cool. He travels to the Bassa region of Cameroon, which has produced two of Africa's greatest keepers, and also to Romania to talk to Helmuth Duckadam, who saved four penalties for Steaua Bucharest in the 1986 European Cup final. His absorbing tactical and technical insights into football history even take us back to the days when matches were contested without a man between the sticks. THE OUTSIDER is the definitive account of that most mysterious of footballing personalities - the goalkeeper.

Jonathan Wilson and Scott Murray provide a forensic analysis of ten key Liverpool games that have shaped the club's fortunes over the last century: from the long-lost triumphs of Tom Watson (a 19th-century Bill Shankly) to 1970s European triumphs over the likes of Borussia Mönchengladbach and the mind-blowing 2005 comeback against AC Milan. Aston Villa v. Liverpool April 1899 Wolves v. Liverpool May 1947 Liverpool v. Leeds FA Cup final, May 1965 Liverpool v. Crvena Zvezda November 1973 Liverpool v. Borussia Mönchengladbach European Cup final, May 1977 Liverpool v. Roma European Cup final, May 1984 Liverpool v. Nottingham Forest April 1988 Everton v. Liverpool February 1991 Roma v. Liverpool February 2001 AC Milan v. Liverpool Champions League final, May 2005

From Cruyff's "Total Football" to the epic rivalry between Guardiola and Mourinho, a gripping chronicle of the rise and fall of Barcelona's dominance in world soccer. Barcelona's style of play--pressing and possessing--is the single biggest influence on modern soccer. In The Barcelona Inheritance, Jonathan Wilson reveals how and why this came to pass, offering a deep analysis of the evolution of soccer tactics and style. In the late 1990s, Johan Cruyff's Dream Team was disintegrating and the revolutionary manager had departed, but his style gave birth to a new generation of thinkers, including Pep Guardiola and José Mourinho. Today, their teams are first and second in the Premier League, marking the latest installment in a rivalry that can be traced back twenty-five years. The Barcelona Inheritance is a book about the tactics, the personalities, the friendships, and, in one case, an apocalyptic falling-out that continue to shape the game today.

From the war-ravaged streets of Sarajevo, where turning up for training involved dodging snipers' bullets, to the crumbling splendour of Budapest's Boszisk Stadium, where the likes of Puskás and Kocsis masterminded the fall of England, the landscape of Eastern Europe has changed immeasurably since the fall of communism. Jonathan Wilson has travelled extensively behind the old Iron Curtain, viewing life beyond the fall of the Berlin Wall through the lens of football. Where once the state-controlled teams of the Eastern bloc passed their way with crisp efficiency - a sort of communist version of total football - to considerable success on the European and international stages, today the beautiful game in the East has been opened up to the free market, and throughout the region a sense of chaos pervades. The threat of totalitarian interference no longer remains; but in its place mafia control is generally accompanied with a crippling lack of funds. In BEHIND THE CURTAIN Jonathan Wilson goes in search of the spirit of Hungary's 'Golden Squad' of the early fifties, charts the disintegration of the footballing superpower that was the former Yugoslavia, follows a sorry tale of corruption, mismanagement and Armenian cognac through the Caucasuses, reopens the case of Russia's greatest footballer, Eduard Streltsov, and talks to Jan Tomaszewski about an autumn night at Wembley in 1973...

Two veteran sports writers and editors take readers inside the history of the most-watched sports league on earth -- England's Premier League.

Having invented the game, everything that has followed for England and its national football team has been something of an anticlimax. There was, of course, the golden summer of 1966, and the great period of English dominance on the world stage, which fell roughly between 1886 and 1900, when England won 35 of their 40 internationals ... But before long foreign teams, with their insistence on progressive 'tactics', began to pose a few questions. And much of what followed for England constituted a series of false dawns. In THE ANATOMY OF ENGLAND Jonathan Wilson seeks to place the bright spots in context. Time and again, progressive coaches have been spurned by England - technique being all very well, but what really matters is pluck and 'organised muscularity', or, to quote Jimmy Hogan's chairman at Aston Villa in 1936: 'I've no time for these theories about football. Just get the ball in the bloody net.' Wilson takes ten key England fixtures and explores how what actually happened on the pitch shaped the future of the English game. Bursting with insight and critical detail, yet imbued with a wry affection, this is a history of England like none before.

Award-winning football writer Jonathan Wilson selects ten landmark matches from Manchester United's history, from the first time they lifted the FA Cup, beating Bristol City in 1909, to the Cup victory of 2016 that proved to be Louis van Gaal's last game in charge. In doing so, he identifies the pivotal moments in the club's rise to being one of the foremost teams of the twentieth century. With his trademark tactical acumen, Wilson goes back to the matches themselves and subjects them to forensic examination, re-evaluating and reassessing, and going beyond the white noise of banal player quotes and instant judgements to discover why what happened happened. It is in this way, as far as possible, a football history of a great club. And because this is Manchester United, there is additional resonance. From the completion of Old Trafford in 1910, United have had a significant financial advantage. Yet their past has not been one of sustained success. As such, their history is also, to an extent, a history of English football, with all of its possibilities and frustrations.

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