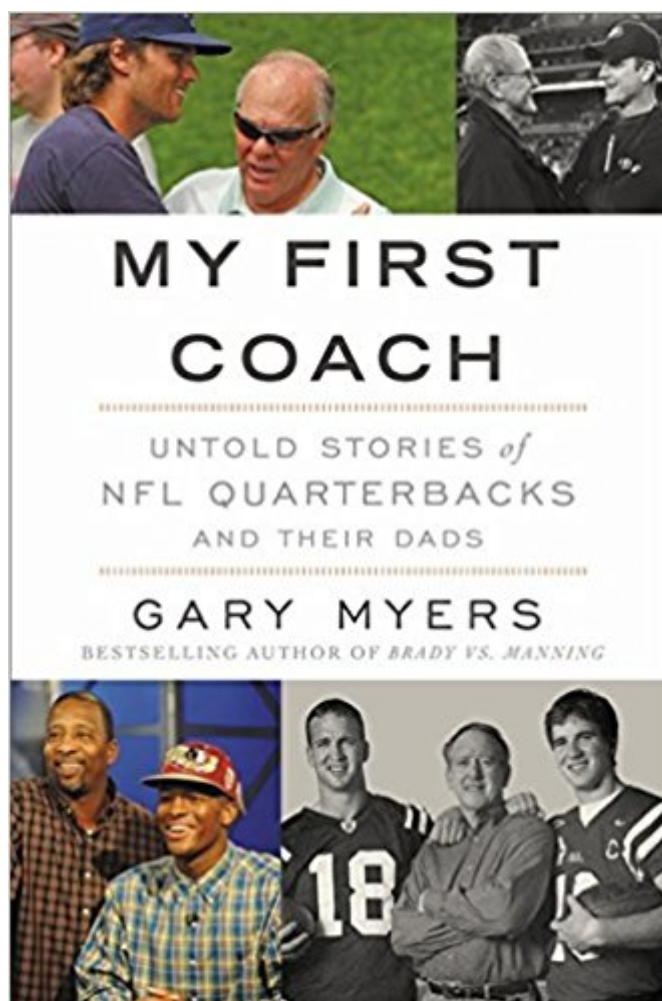


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# My First Coach: Inspiring Stories Of NFL Quarterbacks And Their Dads



## Synopsis

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.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

Gary Myers is the NFL columnist for the New York Daily News. He has authored three books: *The Catch*, a look at the iconic 1981 NFC Championship Game between the Cowboys and 49ers; *Coaching Confidential*, which details the pressures of being an NFL head coach; and the New York Times bestseller *Brady vs. Manning*, an inside look at the greatest rivalry in NFL history. Myers has been covering the NFL since 1978. He was a member of the cast of HBO's *Inside The NFL* and the YES Network's *This Week in Football*. Currently the host of WFAN's "Chalk Talk," he is a voter for the Pro Football Hall of Fame and a former adjunct professor at Syracuse University. His own experiences coaching and watching his three kids play sports was the inspiration for >.

What could be more uplifting than stories of Fathers and sons playing catch whether it's with a football or baseball or both? The author puts together chapters on Jim Harbaugh, Eli Manning, Jameis Winston, John Elway, Derek Carr, Ryan Fitzpatrick, Phil Simms, Joe Flacco, and Joe Montana and the introduction also covers both Tom Brady and Brett Favre in lesser detail to get the ball rolling so to speak. If you're a true football fan who does a lot of reading and or watching on the subject a number of the stories are old news but the author does his best to inject the athletic American dream as often as he can. The subject quarterbacks interestingly enough cover every type of individual as wide ranging as a Harvard graduate who almost aced his SAT score to a quarterback who grew up in Kentucky with an alcoholic Father and was one of eight children living in a two bedroom house the former is Ryan Fitzpatrick and the latter is Phil Simms. To me the Simms story is by far the most interesting and endearing in the book. The author shows how different each Father's involvement in the development of their son's athletic achievements were. Some were hands off some were extremely involved and one famous quarterback (I will leave him unnamed here) was a living-breathing-excuse-making machine for his son(s) lack of success. The family actually moved to a different part of the state when one son's high school dreams didn't play out so he could go to another high school multiple college-junior college-college with the famous Father stating excuses and complaints about coaches,

etc. every step of the way. A literal polar opposite of the other stories included. On the brighter side, it was very uplifting to read about other Fathers who put education and succeeding in the game of life above the gridiron but were still always there every step of the way for their son. It's surprising that this book wasn't released earlier in the year to coincide with Father's Day as it would be a perfect gift for that hallowed occasion.

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.

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