



The Jordan Rules

Sam Smith, Doug Grud (Editor)

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A SUPER TEAM...A SUPERSTAR...A SUPER EGO

The most gifted athlete ever to play the game, Michael Jordan rose to heights no basketball player had ever reached before. What drove Michael Jordan? The pursuit of team success...or of his own personal glory? The pursuit of excellence...or of his next multimillion-dollar endorsement? The flight of the man they call Air Jordan had been rocked by controversy. In *The Jordan Rules*, which chronicles the Chicago Bulls' first championship season, Sam Smith takes the #1 Bull by the horns to reveal the team behind the man...and the man behind the Madison Avenue smile. Here is the inside game, both on and off the court, including:

Jordan's power struggles with management, from verbal attacks on the general manager to tantrums against his coach

Behind-the-scenes feuds, as Jordan punches a teammate in practice and refuses to pass the ball in the crucial minutes of big games

The players who competed with His Airness for Air Time -- Scottie Pippen, Horace Grant, Bill Cartwright -- telling their sides of the story

A penetrating look at coach Phil Jackson, the former flower child who blossomed into one of the NBA's top motivators and who finally found a way to coax "Michael and the Jordanaires" to their first title

A provocative eyewitness account, *The Jordan Rules* delivers all the nonstop excitement, tension, and thrills of a championship season -- and an intense, fascinating portrait of the incomparable Michael Jordan.

The Jordan Rules Details

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Download and Read Free Online The Jordan Rules Sam Smith , Doug Grud (Editor)

From Reader Review The Jordan Rules for online ebook

Connor To says

My name is Connor To, and I have the privilege to interview the best basketball player ever, Michael Jordan. A biography about his life, called The Jordan Rules, by Sam Smith, breaks down his whole basketball career. A humble legend, born in Brooklyn, New York. He is one of the hardest workers ever to play the sport, always motivated and determined to be the best, and hated to lose, most of all. His legacy changed basketball forever, and will be known as one of the greatest basketball players and athletes of all time. Here are some of the questions I asked him.

Q1: What were some of the main factors that lead to your great success?

Answer 1: Certainly my coaches, Doug Collins, and the best coach ever in basketball, Phil Jackson, had systems that I fell in love with and worked well in. My teammates too, John Paxson and Horace Grant early in my career, and Scottie Pippen, Dennis Rodman, Toni Kukoc, were some of my best. Without them, I would've never had the success I experienced. Chicago was such a welcoming city, and the fans are some of the greatest fans in all of sports. My parents also taught me how to be a man. I learned my work ethic from my dad, and he was a main factor in my life.

Q2: Throughout your career, what was one of the most memorable moments, or your greatest accomplishment?

Answer 2: One of my favorite memories was my first NBA championship. We had lost a tough 7 game eastern conference finals series against the Pistons in 1990, and I was not physically or mentally prepared to play that Pistons team. They were my toughest competition early in my career, and in 90', they beat me up. Finally beating them in 1991, sweeping them, in fact, was a great feeling. I had trained so hard all summer, pushing my body to the limits. I had become bigger, stronger, and was ready to play that team again. We went on to play the Lakers in the finals, I had come too far to lose to a washed up team full of veterans. I played some of my best basketball that year, and that championship gave me the motivation to go after more and more.

Q3: What was the biggest setback during your career?

Answer 3: My second season in the league, I broke my foot in the third game of the season. I begged my coaches and trainers to let me play, but they insisted I let it properly heal, which looking at it now, was a great decision. I sat out for 64 games that year. I was truly devastated. I thought "Why me?" My career had just begun, I was so eager to win, and this injury put me in a place that was concerned about the future. I had no idea how this would affect me playing, or even for the rest of my life. My shoe sales went down, and I had to sit at home watching my team struggle. We were able to sneak into the playoffs, and I tried to play back at my true potential, but that year we didn't make the finals. Luckily, my foot was back to 100% by the start of next season.

Q4: What do you regret about your playing career?

Answer 4: You probably already know the answer. After the 1992-1993 season, I retired from basketball. I thought it was the end, I didn't have a motivation to play anymore. This decision was mainly fueled from my

father's death, as it controlled my emotions and actions. I took on baseball, and thought it would be a fun sport to pursue. Now that I realize, I missed 3 years of my prime. No team would've stopped us, I could've won at least another ring, maybe more. Instead, I couldn't control my emotions, and made the worst decision of my life. If I could go back, I would never make that choice again, and used my father as motivation to win for him.

Q5: Even when you were by far the best player in the league, why did you still work so hard? What was your motivation?

Answer 5: My parents taught me the work ethic that I have. Whenever they did anything, they never half-a##ed it. I wanted to be like my dad, and how he worked. So I always practiced like I played. I was addicted to winning, and being the best. I couldn't stand losing, and practice was the only way I could get better. I worked till I couldn't walk, and never stopped even when I was on top. I never saw practice as a time to rest, I saw it as a time to work and become an even better player. I liked to work. While others were sleeping, I was in the gym. I knew that I was working harder than everyone, and the results payed off. My parents would've never let me half-a## anything in life, and I would never have my work ethic without them.

Q6: What is your life like after basketball?

Answer 6: When I came into the league, I knew absolutely nothing about business, it was not an interest of mine. I had only focused on basketball. I came into the NBA with no intentions of attaching a marketing value to my basketball career. My agents pushed me into all types of brand deals, with Gatorade, Coca Cola, Hanes, and of course, Nike and Jordan Brand. I never would've seen myself where I am now at the start of my career. I also got interested in acting, in either movies or commercials, and now chairman of the Charlotte Hornets. They reached out to me after I began a coaching campaign, and I am excited and grateful to be apart of the Hornets. Because of my playing ability, it opened the windows to millions of possible brand deals, and lead me to become a billionaire.

Q7: Who were your greatest rivals?

Answer 7: Early on, it was Milwaukee. They were a divisional team, and one of the teams we played the most. We could never beat them. Even through the playoffs, they would still beat us. Eventually, we reached a level where we were a better team. And of course, the Pistons with Isaiah Thomas. They were a great physical team who beat me up early in my career. Isaiah was such a great player in his prime, and guys like Bill Laimbeer would kill me in the paint. That was the biggest step. It took us many years to overcome them, as we lost two years in a row in the playoffs to them. I pushed myself harder than I ever have, and was in the best shape of my life. Once we overcame them, there was no one who even matched to us, or would have that type of rivalry with.

Q8: How would you describe yourself as a basketball player on and off the court?

Answer 8: I always try to stay modest, because of who my parents taught me to be. I never held myself above anyone off the court. However, on the court, I do feel like I am the best to ever play the game. From the time I won my first championship until the last, I felt that no team could stand a chance to me. I dominated everyone that stood in my way, and after many missed playoff opportunities early on, I worked to the point where I felt like I was the best to ever play. The championships are merely reflections of my career. I know that people think of me as the best ever, and a hard worker. I hate to lose, and would train to the point where I couldn't lose. People also off the court view me as a competitor in everything I do, whether from

golfing to business. I always strive to succeed in everything. Some people view this trait as good or bad, but I am a very real person who doesn't hold myself above anyone.

Q9: How did the death of your father affect you as a person?

Answer 9: I had been in pure bliss as the prime of my career was ensuing. We had just won three championships in a row, and were looking for more. After my father was kidnapped and killed, it broke me. I did have a gambling problem, which was especially evident in golf. I was confident that I was a good golfer, but ended up losing hundreds of thousands of dollars golfing. No connections were ever made between the people that killed my father and any mob, but I had been in some bad places with very bad people. That was why my initial reaction was that it was my fault. I was completely broken, my father meant everything to me. He was my role model, and who I looked up to and learned everything I know from. I did not want to play basketball anymore, I didn't want to do anything anymore. I retired in the middle of my prime. I wasted the best years of my life playing baseball. It was the biggest regret of my life. Instead of playing for him, I quit the game. I eventually returned to basketball, but his murder left me heartbroken.

Q10: You have been the model of one of the most popular shoe and clothing brands across the world. How did the relationship with Nike begin, and what is your role in Jordan today?

Answer 10: I never wore Nike shoes, whether it be for basketball or lifestyle. I had offers from Adidas, Converse, and some others that all sounded the same. When Nike came to me, they were unique, as they offered me a signature shoe, and let me have an input in the shoe. I have never heard of a signature shoe, and gave me a new insight on the sneaker world. I told the designers about my personality and things that I like and things I feel people may like. We put all those thoughts into a brand, into the Jordan brand and into the shoe. As the company became more and more popular, I wanted to have Jordan as a separate brand from Nike. We began to have Jordan expand from just the world of basketball, into other sports and lifetime shoes as well. Today, I am an independent endorser of Jordan brand. I approve all of the decisions for Jordan brand, and Jordan has grown to a company worth over a billion dollars. I am very proud of how far Jordan has come, and can't wait to see where Jordan evolves to in the future.

Patrick says

Here is a book full of fun anecdotes and several engaging theses (Phil Jackson is a genius! Jerry Krause is a douchebag! Stacey King is the fat guy who sucks!) and mires all of this in shitty writing. I don't understand how a chronological, journalistic history about 15 people you basically know personally can somehow have a muddy chronology and manage to confuse, but Sam Smith managed to do it. Three stars basically by virtue of the fact that this is the minimum score I could give a book about the 1991 Chicago Bulls.

03mckayc says

TITLE: THE JORDAN RULES

YEAR: 1992

AUTHOR: SAM SMITH

#OF PAGES: 378

INTENDED AUDIENCE: SPORTS FANS

MAIN ISSUE: STRUGGLES OF HAVING AN ALLSTAR

SETTING: MICHAEL JORDAN AND THE BULLS IN CHICAGOS FIRST YEARS OF STARDOM

MAIN CHARACTERS: MICHAEL JORDAN, PHIL JACKSON, AND JERRY KRAUSE

STORY SUMMARY: THE CHICAGO BULLS AQUIRED MICHAEL JORDAN AS THEIR FIRST DRAFT PICK IN THE 1984 DRAFT. HE WAS THE THIRD PICK IN THE DRAFT UNDER HAKEEM OLAJUWAN AND SAM BOWIE. MICHAEL JORDAN WAS SOON TO BE KNOWN AS THE BEST BASKETBALL PLAYER IN THE WORLD. WITH THE EGO GAINED BY JORDAN, IT CAUSED LOTS OF DISRUPTION TO THE TEAM, COACHES, AND THE STAFF MEMBERS. IN PRO BASKETBALL, THE OWNER OF THE TEAM IS OFTEN FORGOTTEN ABOUT. ALTHOUGH CURRENTLY, THE OWNER OF AN ASSOCIATION CAN CHANGE THE ENTIRE TEAM IN JUST A FEW SHORT PHONE CALLS. THE OWNER OF THE BULLS WAS JERRY KRAUSE. WHO WAS KNOWN TO CHANGE, NOT ONLY THE TEAM, BUT ALSO THE GAME.

Jose Tagle says

Ims for TBH!!!! so bored at school - ____ -

Will Johnson says

Reprinted from my website Secure Immaturity:

A good sports book is one that, even if the ending is known, still builds suspense and doubt in the reader. In that regard, The Jordan Rules, by then-first time author Sam Smith is a failure. The book follows the exploits of the 1990-1991 Chicago Bulls. . .probably the least impressive of the six champion Bulls teams. The title comes from a phrase the Detroit Pistons used during their reign as an Eastern Conference power: the Jordan Rules were rules they used to shut the man down (hence their success in 1990 against the scrappy but inferior Bulls). The book's thesis appears to be an all-access look at an NBA team who wins a title and how, even with victory on the doorstep, human nature plays its course in the locker room. The ending is never in doubt if you know sports history but the lack of suspense is disappointing.

The book also exists to disrupt the immaculate image of Michael Jordan. I don't think the book was made to destroy Jordan on purpose though the main thought going through my head was 'um, did Jordan bang Sam

Smith's wife or something'? The 1991 Bulls were a pretty disruptive, selfish group and while many of the odd eccentricities of some players comes out, all of them, save Jordan, seem to get realistic, honest approaches that end up evening out. Pippen might be kind of a baby and questionable in his work ethic (at least in 1991) but his rags-to-riches story and family life earn him major points, for example. Here is how The Jordan Rules read to me:

"Horace Grant, a man who found God during his early playing days, finds discomfort in the locker room, especially amongst such selfishness. Grant's gracious nature and need to excel at all costs makes him the perfect team player. . .but Jordan doesn't let that happen. He's playing golf and shooting 40 shots a game."

"Scott Williams was a UNC alumni like Jordan. He was having a rough time of things as late and his lack of playing time further exacerbated his awful personal problems. His father had killed his mother before killing himself and Williams, despite a decent paycheck and a good living, was finding that happiness was hard. . especially in the locker room since Jordan shot 708 shots a game, punched Will Perdue and plays golf."

"Bill Cartwright is an aging philosopher. Despite his goofy elbows that knock out giants like Hakeem Olajuwon and Patrick Ewing, the man thinks about everything and can do no wrong. He is the antithesis of Jordan who never ever passes the ball, fucked John Paxson's wife and sister and endlessly plays golf. . and even cheats at it.

"BJ Armstrong is a young kid who really wants to succeed. His toothy grin, boyish looks and immature but expected behavior make him an on again, off again player for the Bulls but one that is truly needed. Michael Jordan punches old ladies in the mouth."

The book, for the first 280 pages or so, endlessly drones on like this. The common theme is that Michael Jordan doesn't pass the ball and everyone in the locker room hates everyone even though, deep down, they are all good people. Except Jordan. . .who is a selfish mad man. The story is set up brilliantly by its defeat to the Pistons in Game 7 of the Eastern Conference Finals in 1990 and goes all the way to the 1991 NBA Finals where the Bulls won handily against the Lakers. The story about redemption against the Pistons plays well (they beat the Pistons 4-0 in 1991 in the ECF). . but the story is so backward in its characterizations that you often wonder how the Bulls won 61 games and went 15-3 in the playoffs, ending the Pistons dynasty and the Showtime Lakers in the process. I'm sure Smith wanted to get this point across (that winning can come even with a lot of soul-crushing adversity) but he does it the wrong way: by telling a good story in a bad way and accidentally coming to the point by explaining facts from only one perspective.

This is most apparent in the NBA Finals chapter where, it seems, Michael Jordan stops being the anti-christ and starts passing the ball to John Paxson. See. . .dear reader. . if he passed earlier they would have gone 82-0 and never lost in the playoffs. . .get it! The problem is is that Smith is creating a fake story arc to show the decline and rise of Michael Jordan as a team player. The point, it seems, is to show that team work wins over all and Michael just didn't realize it until the five game series against the Lakers. I don't buy this for one minute. No team can win 61 games and 15 playoff games being as self destructive as the book indicates with its early set up. I imagine there were problems but I feel the problems were exacerbated for the book and the good things like, oh, I dunno, WINNING are put in the background.

This brings me back to my point about suspense: though most people know Jordan's Bulls won in 1991 (the first of three straight and six in eight years), the story tries to build tension first with the ECF loss to the Pistons in 1990 to early season troubles (starting out 3-3) and the inability to beat the Pistons during the regular season. This is all great stuff: it makes the ECF rematch have emotional resonance (as does its

stunning finale when Isiah Thomas beat LeBron James to the punch 18 years early and walked off the court like a baby after getting swept) and makes you lick your chops to see how the Bulls will win. The problem: Smith keeps saying things like 'later that year, when the Bulls would win the title' or 'six months later when Jordan would win NBA Finals MVP'. This is fine if you are in the final chapter but Smith references these things in the middle of the season. Instantly you go from telling a gripping story to realizing its all going to end the right way (with the 'heroes' winning). A lot of times we know how stories end (like sports movies, for example) but its the journey, not the destination, that makes it fun. Smith always undermines the journey by sabotaging the story.

I don't doubt the author's credentials. The book does have a lot of wondrous things to say about an NBA locker room, storytelling choices aside, but the characterization of Jordan is highly suspect and tarnishes the trust in the narrator. I realize now that Michael Jordan isn't the poster child for human beings but despite my worship of his Airness I do separate the art from the artist. I think Jordan was a great team player who needed to feel confident in his players to proceed at a team level. Though this appears selfish, it actually makes sense. Why pass to guys who you know aren't going to make it? Jordan had to build his trust with his team in 1991 and eventually did, winning a championship. Smith seems to not understand basketball is played on both ends of the court. He sows discontent into his story about the Bulls offense and how everyone hates it but he often references the Bulls stifling defense which was the best in the league: you have to play together to have a strong defense too. Something is missing here.

The book isn't bad though. The late-90s Bulls always overshadow those early Bulls teams and it was nice to go back in time to see a team that is almost forgotten by history compared to five other Bulls teams that performed better. The real insider stuff is with Phil Jackson, who is a joy to read about, and Jerry Krause, the hated Bulls GM who gets a worse wrap than Jordan in the book. Something tells me though that the hatred towards him is deserved. He's annoying in text form.

I'd like to do some studying on Smith and see where he was coming from with this book. There is an awkward afterword added to the latest edition of the book that hails Jordan as a person Smith wasn't 'unattracted' to. But he also talks about how much he loves and respects good friend Horace Grant. . .a common foe of Jordan's during the 1991 and 1992 season. I sense there is a bias and the writer's prose and anti-human take on Jordan seems to indicate this. There will be some fantastic stuff to read about in *The Jordan Rules* so I recommend it for those looking for an insider's glance on a winning locker room. But if you want a take on Jordan just check your sources. . .as I will.

Deogratias Rweyemamu says

I was excited to finally read this book after much criticism that followed its release. Finally, here was a third person account of what went on behind the life of mystical Michael Jordan and the Chicago Bulls.

I think Sam Smith is one of the only handful of people who could have given such an insightful view of Jordan and the Bulls heading into their first championship. His access to the team and players during the late 80s and 90s was pivotal to writing the book.

I truly enjoyed how Smith painted a more realistic picture of Michael Jordan as a person. One would be hard pressed to find more honest account of events than from interviews of fellow players, coaches and league executives.

It's easy for us NBA fans to watch regular season and playoff games and create our own narratives as to what takes place in the lives of these players as they fight for championships. This book has been a much needed eye opener which has given me an added perspective on team dynamics.

Surprisingly, the more I read the book, I found myself more intrigued with stories about the Chicago Bull's coach, Phil Jackson. I have developed a bigger appreciation for his coaching and mentoring skills.

I would recommend this book to all the fellow NBA fans who seek a deep understanding of this wonderful game.

Vent Casey says

Smith does a good job of giving insight into the frame of mind that the 1990-91 Chicago Bulls were in, going into and through the season. I like how every player and coach is given their own profile apart from Jordan, and how they are revealed as humans whose job is to play and coach basketball, not as the 2-dimensional people that they are portrayed as by sports media. Also, how they managed egos, agendas, and moods to win the title. Was a quick, yet informatively entertaining read for me.

Mak says

Dette er ei bok for basketinteresserte, først og fremst. Det beste med den er alle anekdotane, menneskene og forholdene desse imellom den beskriver i Jordans første mesterskapsesong, og sjølv om det har gått over 25 år er mange av historiane vel så interessante å lese i dag. No er den først og fremst eit unikt innblikk i 90-tallets definerte basketlag, og sesongen dei endelig nådde toppen, for mange av tinga som først vart avslørt her (MJs nådeløse konkurranseinstinkt og brutale lederstil, måten han satte lagkameratane i skyggen både av og på banen) er ting kven som helst som følger NBA litt tett har fått med seg i dag. Til tider vert den detaljerte gjennomgangen av kampar og augeblikk eg kun har eit forhold til via klipp på nett litt trå. Alt i alt anbefales denne til dei som vurderer å lese den i dag, og særlig dei som er fascinert av Jordan vil sannsynligvis like det den har å by på.

Ernest says

This book details the internal workings of the Chicago Bulls during the 1990/91 season as they won their first NBA Championship. What emerges is a fascinating look at the personalities, both on and off the court, of the Chicago Bulls players and management. Michael Jordan comes across as not just competitive but super-competitive, seemingly sometimes at the expense of personal relationships. Scottie Pippen comes across as being overly affected by the Bull's pursuit of Toni Kokoc. Horace Grant comes across as too much of a good teammate and too unselfish for his statistics to reflect what he could actually do on the court.

How much of this is true? While the accounts are undoubtedly based on what the author has seen, heard, got information from sources and concluded, I have no reason to doubt the truth of it. If nothing else, it is to portray a bunch of individuals, driven, flawed, and human as they are, together in trying to exist together

amidst pursuing personal and team success.

Keenan Johnston says

I had no idea that the Bulls first championship season was so dysfunctional. Jordan was selfish and hadn't realized yet that he couldn't win championships without the help of his teammates. This was the first season they implemented "the triangle" in an effort to force the ball out of MJ's hands, but he kind of refused to use the offensive system and I got the sense they never really mastered it that year. The entire team was frustrated with MJ and his special treatment. Pippen and Paxson were nervous about their contracts all year. Krause, of course, was the unifying hated man who was obsessed with getting Kukoc to come over the US. Stacey King basically quit the team.

07EthanW Wibben says

What struck me the most in the book was the attitude that Jordan had toward basketball. In the book Jordan talks about how he could not wait for his contract to end so that he could retire and play golf. I would think that the arguably best basketball player would never want to quit and would want to play for as long as possible and win as much as possible. I would defiantly read more books by Sam Smith. He did a great job getting a lot of information and quotes from the players and made a great nonfictional story. This book makes a reader feel different emotions. When it talks about how poor Scottie Pippen's family is it makes the reader feel bad for the all star. The book talks about how Scottie bought a house for his mom and would spend most of the off season with him. It angers a reader when it talks about how Michael would refuse to pass the ball to his open teammates and the Bulls would lose because of it. I discovered that by reading this book that many teammates of Jordan did not like him because of how he refused to pass the ball when he was losing. By reading this I learn that if I work on something with a group of people I should not take control and do everything when others are willing to help. By not letting them do anything they will grow a hatred for me. They might not tell me but they will defiantly tell the others of the group about their feelings toward me.

Sean Polite says

Solid, revealing insider's tale on the MJ led Chicago Bulls. If you're interested in team psychology or the life of a pro sports team (or just a Bulls fan), this is the book for you. On a much deeper scale, what could be called a scathing analysis of Jordan in this book can also be viewed as a validation to the presence of the narcissistic, manically competitive shadows that complement the light of the gifted, excellent performers who are blessed to have achieved notable fame for it (in and out of sports). I didn't come out hating him at all, but felt a bit more knowing of his mystique, learning a bit more about how dynamic (and alienating) his drive was. All of the other players and staffers stand out on their own, but Smith focuses with laser accuracy on #23 much like the Detroit Pistons who crafted the hard nosed procedure of defensive style after which the book is named.

Joe Loncarich says

Finally read this book, you know, 25 years after it was relevant, but it's a great look into that Bulls first championship team of the 90s. At first I thought it was amazing that it didn't harm Jordan's reputation more, but then I realized that books are for nerds, and there's no place for nerds in sports.

Daniel O'Keefe says

His Airness®: The Book

Sam Smith may be the most boring singer ever, but the writer Sam Smith is a very good basketball writer. The Jordan Rules is a 1992 nonfiction book by the writer Sam Smith, not the boring Sam Smith. Also, Sam Smith is correct: He is not the only one (named Sam Smith). Fun Fact: Michael Jordan (not the actor) hates this book.

Why does Michael Jordan hate this book? Simply, because the books paints him as an asshole. Okay, asshole might be sort-of a strong word. However, it doesn't make people want to be Like Mike®, unless those people want to be a bullying (mean) teammate who purposely throws uncatchable (hard to catch) passes to expose (show) other players weaknesses. In this book, Michael Jordan is like the person who you think is your friend, but is actually just using you for his own gain. Smith paints this picture (shows) with extreme detail, and thus makes it so the reader has a clearer picture of Michael Jordan, the man, as opposed to Michael Jordan® (the media's portrayal of Michael Jordan).

This is the story of the 1990-91 World Championship Chicago Bulls. The Bulls were coming off of two consecutive conference finals losses to their arch-rivals (rivals), the Detroit Pistons, who used a defensive strategy called the "Jordan Rules" to contain Jordan. What were those rules? Put all the defensive pressure on Jordan, and make the rest of his team make shots. For those two years, the rest of the Bulls couldn't come through in the clutch (last four minutes of a close game), and thus the Bulls lost.

When this book came out, some people (mostly die hard (big) Jordan® fans) argued that the book painted him as an unlikable (mean) person who no one would want to play with. The book does make Jordan seem like that. This portrayal, however, is also included in other books about Jordan, including the official biography of Jordan that was released earlier this year. Smith shows the world the non-registered trademark (®) Jordan, instead, he shows the person named Michael Jordan. The human Michael Jordan. He describes him like a person, not like a god, which is something that hadn't been done before.

Enter 1990. Michael Jordan is hungry (wanting to win). Scottie Pippen is ready to win. Horace Grant has become a valuable role player. The rest of the Bulls are competent (okayish)... enough. And Sam Smith is granted unrestricted access to the Bulls. This results in one of the most in-depth books about one team ever. It's more in-depth than The Breaks of the Game. It's more in-depth than Seven Seconds or Less. It's more in-depth than The Last Season.

It's also better than all of those books. Those books all follow a tragedy. The Breaks of the Game: the Trail Blazers lose reigning MVP Bill Walton for the season, and eventually lose in the playoffs. Seven Seconds or Less: the Suns lose Amar'e Stoudemire for the season, and the eventually lose in the playoffs. The Last Season: the Lakers as a feud grows between Kobe Bryant and Shaquille O'Neal, and eventually lose in the playoffs. The Jordan Rules: the Bulls come together as a team over the course of the season, vanquish (beat) their demons, and eventually succeed in winning the NBA championship against the Los Angeles Lakers. Smith shows, in great detail, how the Bulls eventually came together over the course of the season. He writes as though he were writing a fiction novel (NOTE TO ALL JORDAN® FANS: THIS IS NOT A FICTION NOVEL), and it's super easy to read.

Phil Jackson plays the role of the chessmaster (coach), trying to make the individual pieces of the Bulls move

within his will; this playing style is known as the Triangle. The Triangle—a mystical (parameters unknown) offense strategy that is actually just telling people to pass more—values ball movement above anything else, which is kind of a problem when you have the greatest individual player in NBA history. Michael Jordan plays the role of the precocious (up and coming) youngster trying to prove that he can win by himself, which wasn't true at all (as proved by previous seasons).

In the background of all of the inner team tension, there is the Kukoc question. Jerry Krause, the Bulls General Managers, has been trying to bring foreign phenom (good player) Toni Kukoc over from Europe, while refusing to give a good contract extension to Scottie Pippen. So Krause is also one of the big evils in the book, along with Jordan's demons, the team not congealing, and the Detroit Pistons.

According to this book, Jerry Krause is like Barney from The Simpsons. He's a bozo (dumb dude) who doesn't know anything and is only focused on one thing. Is that portrayal incorrect? From other books that I've read, Jerry Krause is very much a buffoon (dumb dude). At least in this book, it shows that Krause is trying to make the team better, but he's alienating (pushing away) everyone by trying to lure over Toni Kukoc. So Smith tries to show both sides of the story on the arguments about Kukoc, but it ends up painting Krause as a jerk.

If the Pistons were a single person, they would be Bill Laimbeer. Bill Laimbeer was the Pistons starting center; like a boxer who only threw jabs, he just riled (annoyed) you up until you snapped and wanted to kill him (kinda like Joakim Noah, but eight thousand times worse). The Pistons represented the big bad in the story, the final battle that the Bulls had to win. Even though the Bulls still had to win the finals after they beat the Pistons, but whatever. Smith writes the story like a build-up to the fights against the Pistons, so it makes it seem like the real championship was being played when the Bulls were playing the Pistons.

I would put a spoiler alert here, but it's been twenty years since this season, so I won't. The Bulls the Pistons. They not only beat the Pistons, they demolished (beat) them in a four game sweep, and the Bulls eventually win the title by beating the Pre-HIV Magic Johnson Lakers.

Did the Pistons handle the sweep well? Aw hell naw (no). The Pistons walked off the court before the game actually ended and refused to shake any of the Bulls players hands or congratulating them on the win (In a later documentary, Isiah Thomas said that they meant no ill will to the Bulls. Sure). Everyone except for Joe Dumars, who was a chill dude (nice guy) who shook all of the Bulls players hands.

Throughout the Conference Finals matchup, Smith writes a play by play for each game. These are extremely helpful for people who wanted to know about the feel of each game, and it shows how the Bulls won each game. Smith expertly (does a good job) captures each important moment of each game, and it makes the book much more of a delightful (good) read.

The Jordan Rules is an exciting book that shines a light (shows) on the inner demons (problems) that the Bulls had to expunge (beat) to finally win a championship. Jordan once said, "Talent wins games, but teamwork and intelligence win championships," and it seems that he finally figured that out within the timeframe of this book. The Jordan Rules an extremely well written book, and it finally paints Michael Jordan like he had never been before: Human. So while Sam Smith may be the most boring singer ever, he sure knows how to write a good book. Wait, wrong Sam Smith.

Sean Flynn says

the book was worth reading for me if only because it's about one of my all-time favorite teams, and because i had never read it when it first came out, even though it was the source of much discussion and controversy back then. it's also interesting to remember the context of that team--the prevailing idea of the time that no MJ-led team would ever win a title, juxtaposed with the knowledge that he ended up with six rings. that being said, i didn't find it to be particularly good. it was basically like a really long newspaper recap of the season, sprinkled in with some juicy gossip you wouldn't get in a newspaper. the narrative connection

wasn't very strong--the chronological structure was not conducive to a cohesive explanation about the team. i learned that MJ was human--and obviously this was news back in 1991--but you don't get much beneath that, and the same goes for almost all the people in the book, perhaps with the exception of phil jackson. in the epilogue smith talks about how good a guy horace grant is and frankly, this did not really come across until he told me that at the very end.

lastly, i could not stand the hackneyed style and neverending use of really bad similes.
