



When Nothing Else Matters: Michael Jordan's Last Comeback

By Michael Leahy

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As one of the greatest, most celebrated athletes in history, Michael Jordan conquered professional basketball as no one before. Powered by a potent mix of charisma, near superhuman abilities and a ferocious drive to dominate the game, he achieved every award and accolade conceivable before retiring from the Chicago Bulls and taking an executive post with the Washington Wizards. But retirement didn't suit the man who was once king, and at the advanced age of thirty-eight Michael Jordan decided it was time to reclaim the court that was once his. **WHEN NOTHING ELSE MATTERS** is the definitive account of Jordan's equally spectacular and disastrous return to basketball. Having closely followed Jordan's final two seasons, Michael Leahy draws a fascinating portrait of an intensely complex man hampered by injuries and assaulted by younger players eager to usurp his throne. In this enthralling book Jordan emerges as an ambitious, at times deeply unattractive character with, unsurprisingly, a monstrous ego. **WHEN NOTHING ELSE MATTERS** is an absorbing portrait not only of one athlete's overriding ambition, but also of a society so in thrall to its sports stars that it is blind to all their faults.

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Editorial Review

From Publishers Weekly

After serving as president and part owner of the Washington Wizards for two years, Jordan, bored by his executive duties and frustrated by the team's poor play, returned to the court in 2001 in a bid to revitalize the struggling basketball franchise. But the aging superstar's attempt to resurrect the team flopped as the Wizards failed to make the playoffs in either of Jordan's two playing seasons. While the highs and lows of Jordan's comeback are known to most basketball fans, Leahy, a *Washington Post* feature writer who covered Jordan's return, offers an in-depth look at the inner turmoil that plagued the Jordan-led Wizards. In a smartly written, often angry work that is as much a sports story as a psychology study and condemnation of the media that built up the Jordan myth, Leahy not only documents Jordan's performance on the floor, but examines what motivated him to play despite serious knee problems. Leahy also deals with the role sportswriters (he makes it clear he isn't one) play in building America's athletes into godlike characters, a practice he abhors. Leahy has no use for idol worship and casts all three of the book's main figures—Jordan, coach Doug Collins and majority owner Abe Pollin—in unfavorable lights. This engaging read is marred by one flaw: Leahy's tendency to insert himself into the story.

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From [Booklist](#)

Michael Jordan may have been the greatest basketball player ever to lace 'em up, but he has not always been a likable man. At 38, three years retired from his championship run in Chicago, Jordan was serving as president of the Washington Wizards when he decided to join the team as a player. *Washington Post* staffer Leahy observed it all, from the triumphs--now and then MJ did seem to be an ageless wonder--to the very ugly moments of humiliated coaches and teammates who did not measure up to Jordan's personal standard of excellence and acquiescence. This is not a pretty portrayal of Jordan, but it is consistent with the assessment of his strengths and weaknesses offered by Sam Smith in *The Jordan Rules* (1991). If anything, this account is tinged with melancholy in its portrayal of the alpha male finally being exiled from the herd. This is an intelligent, persuasively written account of an athlete who remains one of our most recognizable celebrities. Expect the phone lines to be buzzing on the sports talk shows. *Wes Lukowsky*

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Review

Stephanie Davis, "GQ," November '04 No one's covered Michael Jordan like Michael Leahy. In 2001, Leahy a staff writer for The Washington Post, was assigned to write about the legend's return to basketball with the Washington Wizards and nearly everything he did off court as well. (At one point, Wizard coach Doug Collins refers to Leahy as a "stalker.") This obsessive reportage resulted in an acclaimed series for the "Post" and is now a book, "When Nothing Else Matters: Michael Jordan's Last Comeback" (Simon & Schuster) -- easily the most fully formed portrait of Jordan ever written and one of the best sports books in recent memory. If you know Jordan from those "Be Like Mike" Gatorade commercials, you are unlikely to recognize the petulant protagonist of "When Nothing Else Matters." Leahy discovers an ailing star on the downward arc of his career -- "moving like a sea captain with a wooden peg for a right leg," he writes at one point. As he declines, Jordan claws at everyone around -- teammates (he calls one teammate a "faggot"), the competition (he lusts to destroy challengers like Kobe Bryant), and most of all, his employer (Wizards owner Abe Pollin). But this Jordan seldom makes the papers, because the sports media are so beholden to Earth's Most Beloved Star they dare not risk alienating him. "Around Jordan power flowed one way," Leahy writes. "Reporters were sharecroppers: They tilled him only at his pleasure." There's plenty of gossip in "When

Nothing Matters" -- Leahy doesn't hold back on the tales of Jordan's gambling and infidelities, and David Stern will enjoy the story of the NBA referee who allegedly set Jordan up with a girl -- but in the end, this is a far more melancholy than tawdry tale. Michael Jordan was undoubtedly the greatest basketball player of his time. It's just a shame it took us so long to find out he was a human being too.

Users Review

From reader reviews:

Daniele Chambers:

Information is provisions for people to get better life, information today can get by anyone with everywhere. The information can be a understanding or any news even a problem. What people must be consider any time those information which is from the former life are hard to be find than now could be taking seriously which one is appropriate to believe or which one typically the resource are convinced. If you have the unstable resource then you buy it as your main information we will see huge disadvantage for you. All of those possibilities will not happen in you if you take When Nothing Else Matters: Michael Jordan's Last Comeback as your daily resource information.

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