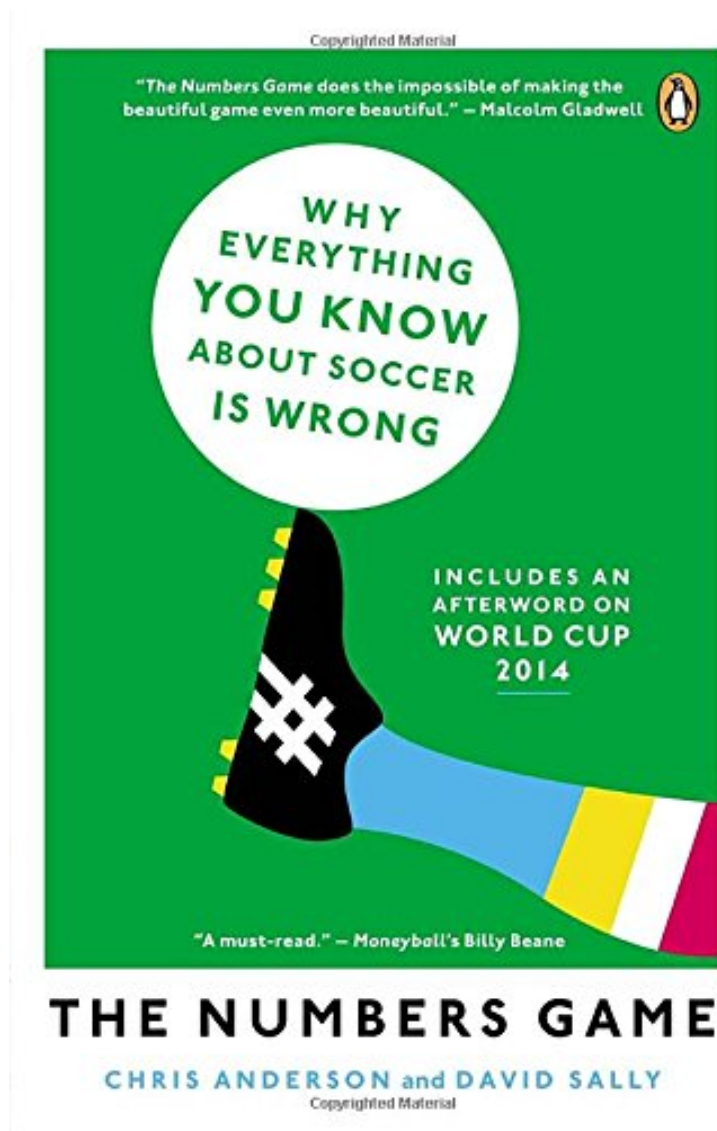


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The Numbers Game: Why Everything You Know About Soccer Is Wrong

Chris Anderson, David Sally
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#39078 in Books David Sally 2013-07-30 2013-07-30 Original language: English PDF # 1 7.97 x .82 x 5.261, .61 #File Name: 0143124560400 pages The PDFs Game Why Everything You Know About Soccer Is Wrong | File size: 27.Mb

Chris Anderson, David Sally : The Numbers Game: Why Everything You Know About Soccer Is Wrong before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised The Numbers Game: Why Everything You Know About Soccer Is Wrong:

6 of 6 people found the following review helpful. More Pluses than Minuses in "The Numbers" By J. Draper On the

plus side: "The Numbers Game," to paraphrase Mark Twain, makes a lot of good hamburgers out of sacred cows. Anderson and Sally provide us with much food for thought regarding assumptions about soccer that we may never have questioned before. One great example is the strong evidence they provide that the game's outcome is about half determined by luck. They go a little too far when they say this means soccer is a "coin-toss game," but still, it is a revelation to realize that so much is out of the hands (or off the feet) of the players and coaches. It makes you wonder how much else in sports--and in life--is determined by chance. There's also a connection here to much later in the book, where the authors address the issue of "regression to the mean." Again Anderson and Sally provide us with examples that question how much control coaches and players really have over the game they are trying to influence. It was astounding to learn that in many cases, whether you replace a manager or not can be irrelevant--a team can "regress to the mean" and start improving their play just as much by keeping the manager as by firing him. (The same goes for whether the manager screams at them for losing or calmly explains how they can play better--though the latter, they suggest, is better for morale.) One final point I thought was very important was the evidence the authors provide that money alone does not rule soccer--they prove that there are "plenty of clubs [...] that outperform their salary tab in any given season." This is akin to the argument made about Billy Beane and the Oakland A's in "Moneyball." It's heartening to know that the underdog can still win, any given Sunday, with the appropriate strategy and a bit of luck. On the minus side: One thing I found a little disappointing about the book was that it didn't really have one or two main heroes to root for like Billy Beane or Bill James in "Moneyball"--in fact the book probably mentioned those two sabermetricians almost as much as any other single soccer statistician, manager or player. I think it would've made the book's narrative more compelling overall if the authors had spent more time getting to know say, Tony Pulis of Stoke, Arrigo Sacchi of AC Milan or less famously, Jimmy Davies of Waterloo Dock AFC. All three men were mentioned as fascinating examples of managerial insight, but were only given a few pages to shine. I suppose we'll have to settle for the pioneering role of Wing Commander Charles Reep for now...14 of 15 people found the following review helpful. Data SoccerBy C. ParisI liked both this book and Soccernomics, but I thought this one actually focused better on the game and the impact of data. Soccernomics spent more time than I would have like discusses fans of soccer.1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. Interesting readBy TimDrumsSon loved it. Heard about this book in speech given my Malcolm Gladwell.

Moneyball meets Freakonomics in this myth-busting guide to understanding and winning the most popular sport on the planet. Innovation is coming to soccer, and at the center of it all are the numbers a way of thinking about the game that ignores the obvious in favor of how things actually are. In *The Numbers Game*, Chris Anderson, a former professional goalkeeper turned soccer statistics guru, teams up with behavioral analyst David Sally to uncover the numbers that really matter when it comes to predicting a winner. Investigating basic but profound questions: How valuable are corners? Which goal matters most? Is possession really nine-tenths of the law? How should a player's value be judged? They deliver an incisive, revolutionary new way of watching and understanding soccer.

From Booklist *Starred* Its a truism that soccer resists statistical analysis due to its free-flowing nature and few set plays. But times, and technology, are different, and now almost anything can be measured. To the recurring refrain of phrases such as Our data show, the authors subject the beautiful game to a gimlet-eyed accounting, determining which cherished beliefs are true and which are wishful thinking. And what do the data show? That luck plays more of a factor than most managers like to admit but that managers are more important than many think. That regional differences in playing style are overstated. That weak players are actually more influential than talented stars. And that's just for starters. Coaches should read this closely, though it may prove dispiriting for fans. After all, arguing about ambiguities is half the fun. Occasionally, the authors get lost in the weeds (as in their close reading of what it means to possess the ball), but no matter. By any standard, this is a landmark book, scrupulously researched and bound to be influential. Although its not light reading for casual fans, it may eventually change the game they watch. We compared Soccernomics (2009) to Moneyball (2003), but this hits even closer to the mark. --Keir Graff "The Numbers Game does the impossible of making the beautiful game even more beautiful." - Malcolm Gladwell, author of *The Tipping Point* and *Blink* Chris Anderson and David Sally have the ability to see football in a way few have before them. Be warned: *The Numbers Game* will change the way you think about your favorite team or player, and the way you watch the beautiful game. Billy Beane, Manager of the Oakland As and subject of *Moneyball* "I learned a lot, and it's hard not to applaud a project that is bent on the disenchantment of football's internal conversations and archaic practices, while simultaneously acknowledging an ineradicable core of the unpredictable and random at its heart." - David Goldblatt, author of *The Ball Is Round: A Global History of Soccer* for the *Times Literary Supplement* North American soccer fans would do very well to pick up this book. It will not only help them understand the game better, but it will also stimulate new ways to analyze and think about the game. Forbes [This] is the book that could change the game forever. *The Times* (London) By any standards, this is a landmark book, scrupulously researched and bound to be influential. Booklist (starred review) Witty and thoughtful should appeal not just to soccer fans, but to readers of Malcolm Gladwell and *Freakonomics*. Kirkus s "Their rather innovative and revolutionary way of looking at the game

makes for fascinating reading." -The Library Journal
A highly original contribution to our understanding of what we are seeing at a match, their book is unbeatable
The Independent on Sunday
Pundits, armchair fans and professionals, will find that several of their long-cherished truisms are not true at all.
The Guardian
Superb GQ
About the Author
Chris Anderson is a pioneer of soccer analytics and a professor at London School of Economics in the U.K. and Cornell University in the U.S.
David Sally is a professor at the Tuck School of Business at Dartmouth.