

McMahon — Blowin' hot in the Windy City

McMahon
Jim McMahon with Bob Verdi
Warner Books

review by Dean Bennett

"I don't totally understand people. People probably don't totally understand me, but I'm in the same boat with them."

— Jim McMahon

McMahon is Chicago Bears quarterback Jim McMahon's way of trying to get the other people in the boat to understand him. His book, co-written with *Chicago Tribune* sports columnist Bob Verdi, recounts McMahon's college days, his early years with the Bears, and their Super Bowl season in 1985. Along the way, he makes some pointed remarks on the sportscasters, players, and management types he has run into along the way. Here are a few examples:

On former Washington Redskins quarterback Joe Theismann and role models: "Theismann is full of himself, always kissing behinds and self-promoting. I respect him as a quarterback, but is he a good role model, whatever that term means? Does he think youngsters should grow up like that?"

On Bears' President Michael McCaskey: "When he came onto the field in the fourth quarter at New Orleans (Super Bowl XX), smiling from ear to ear, I got that eerie feeling that he felt it was his team, his leadership, that did it all. That's why I went out of my way to avoid him and I wasn't alone. Walter Payton (Bears' running back) was right beside me and he was just laughing at McCaskey. Most of us just laugh to keep from strangling him."

On sportswriters: "Most reporters, I've found, are lacking in the humor department. They come to

the stadium on Sundays like they're covering World War III instead of just a game."

On the 1982 NFL Players' strike and players' union chief Gene Upshaw: "We went on strike for seven games . . . and got absolutely nothing for it. Nothing. The owners hung tough, and all we did was lose paychecks. He (Upshaw) seems to me to be a puppet. The owners tell



Chicago's Jim McMahon

him to jump, he asks them how high and when. It's brutal."

The above colorful comments notwithstanding, McMahon does have positive things to say about some of the people he's met, particularly Bears' running back Payton and the team's entire offensive line.

The book is definitely entertaining and highly readable. It's a rare autobiography when the author is so brutally honest in saying what's on his mind. Even his parents are not above rebuke. He writes:

"They (his parents) have nothing to say to (his wife) Nancy, and if it bothers her, it bothers me even worse. If they want to blame me for pulling away from them, fine. But I wish they'd check the mirror once in a while."

McMahon is definitely a vehicle for the author's "side of the story". He discusses the hypocrisy of the Mormons at Brigham Young University, where he played his college ball; he lashes out at the Bears' management and their penny-pinching ways, particularly when it comes to players' salaries. And he berates the media for not giving



him (and his personality) a fair shake. It's a diatribe that, at times, borders on paranoia.

"They (reporters) won't pick on anybody, but they'll fry me the first time I mess up. I know it, and I'm prepared for it. There will always be

some degree of resentment for me, not only because I've won some ball games wherever I've played, but because of the way I act. That's a given. I'll be a fall guy until I start kissing some behinds. That means I'll always be a fall guy, because I'm never going to start kissing behinds."

McMahon is a recommended book if only for its candidness. After reading the book one can understand why Bears' management went hard to sign quarterback Doug Flutie. Although McMahon enjoys being a Bear he does not discount the possibility of some day playing for a renegade team like the Los Angeles Raiders. Given Flutie's presence, this book and the poor play of current Raider quarterback Marc Wilson, this may be more than just a possibility.

CIAU Top Ten Rankings

Top Tens

(previous ranking in brackets)

BASKETBALL - M

1. Alberta (5)
2. Western Ontario (2)
3. Victoria (1)
4. Calgary (10)
5. Brandon (9)
6. Manitoba (NR)
7. Winnipeg (3)
8. McMaster (8)
9. U.P.E.I. (NR)
10. Toronto (6)

BASKETBALL - F

- Victoria (8)

2. Laurentian (1)
3. Bishop's (2)
4. Winnipeg (4)
5. Toronto (3)
6. Manitoba (6)
7. Calgary (5)
8. Lethbridge (7)
9. U.P.E.I. (9)
10. Dalhousie (10)

Scores from McGill Tournament

- Laval 54 Alberta 46
 Janz 15, Keats 11
 Alberta 67 New Brunswick 65
 Kruyer 21, Keats 16
 Regina 71 Alberta 53
 Keats 20, Kruyer 17

SWIMMING & DIVING - M

1. Calgary
2. Victoria

3. Toronto
4. Alberta
5. McMaster
6. U.B.C.
7. Montreal
8. Laval
9. Dalhousie
10. Western Ontario

SWIMMING & DIVING - F

1. Toronto
2. Calgary
3. U.B.C.
4. Alberta
5. Western Ontario
6. Laval
7. McGill
8. Brock
9. Mount Allison
10. Dalhousie



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