



Jerzy Dudek: A Big Pole in Our Goal - Autobiography

By Jerzy Dudek

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Liverpool Football Club has won trophy after trophy. It has enjoyed success after success. Supporters on the Kop - the most famous stand in football - have worshipped hero after hero. But some of them are more unlikely than others. Jerzy Dudek suffered third degree burns as a child in his native Poland. He grew up in a flat in an industrial Eastern Bloc town. He learned to play football on a patch of grass with bricks as goalposts and worked as a miner in his teens. A career as a professional footballer seemed unlikely - some would say impossible - but this is the story of how he overcame those odds to star for Liverpool FC in the most remarkable Champions League final of all time. Three goals down to AC Milan at half-time in Istanbul 2005, Liverpool produced a stirring six-minute comeback to take the game to extra-time, but with moments to play Europe's most deadly striker, Andriy Shevchenko, had two golden opportunities to win the European Cup. Dudek denied him twice, producing one save so miraculous that it defied belief. Then, in a heart-stopping, nerve-jangling penalty shootout, Dudek's wobbly-legged antics on the goal-line distracted the Milan players as they stepped forward to take their kicks. They missed three of them, two of which Dudek saved from the legendary Italian midfielder Andrea Pirlo and - to clinch Liverpool's 5th European Cup - from that man Shevchenko again. Ten years on he returned to the city to celebrate the tenth anniversary of that famous night. And the idea to tell his story was born. All is revealed about the chaos in the Liverpool dressing room at half-time, the secret signals he received from the touchline during the penalty shoot-out and how a security guard at The Ataturk Stadium mistook him for a fan and tried to prevent him from celebrating with team-mates on the pitch. Jerzy also lifts the lid on what his Anfield team-mates and managers Gerard Houllier and Rafa Benitez were like, gives his recollections of the night in Portugal when Craig Bellamy attacked John Arne Riise with a golf club and speaks of the highs and lows he encountered in two huge matches against Manchester United. He also takes readers back to the wild teenage days that saw him end up in a cell following an incident with the Polish Army on a train, and his experiences with Concordia Knurow, Sokol Tychy, Feyenoord and Real Madrid, where he discovered what working under Jose Mourinho is truly like. From a Polish pit to the pinnacle of European football, Jerzy Dudek is one of the most unlikely heroes in Liverpool Football Club's history. It makes his autobiography as unmissable as the chance Andriy Shevchenko had to score

against him in Istanbul...

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About the Author

Dariusz Kurowski is the long-time Polish correspondent for World Soccer magazine, and a respected football journalist who has written for over 70 worldwide. He is co-author of this title.

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