



Best of Rivals: Joe Montana, Steve Young, and the Inside Story Behind the NFL's Greatest Quarterback Controversy

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In this revealing, in-depth look at the NFL's greatest quarterback controversy, Adam Lazarus takes readers into the locker room and inside the huddle to deliver the real story behind the rivalry--when Joe Montana and Steve Young battled on and off the field and forged one of the finest football dynasties of all time. From 1987 to 1994, the two future Hall of Famers spurred each other on to remarkable heights, including three Super Bowl wins and four MVP awards, and set new standards for quarterback excellence.

The two men couldn't have been more different in background, personality, and playing style, and their competition created as much tension as it did greatness, forcing Montana to prove that he was still the game's best quarterback and Young to prove that he was a worthy successor.

Featuring candid interviews with Montana, Young, Jerry Rice, George Seifert, and many more, *Best of Rivals* brings to life the story of two sports legends, the golden era of football their rivalry presided over, and the amazing legacy it produced.

Best of Rivals: Joe Montana, Steve Young, and the Inside Story Behind the NFL's Greatest Quarterback Controversy Details

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From Reader Review Best of Rivals: Joe Montana, Steve Young, and the Inside Story Behind the NFL's Greatest Quarterback Controversy for online ebook

Vince Cooper says

Would you say that reading this book was time well-spent? Why or why not?

Yes, it was a great history review and reveals that QB controversy has and even in recent years, still was a major part of 49ers history.

Would you recommend Best of Rivals to your friends? Why or why not?

Yes, but I would imagine non-49ers fans might not enjoy it.

If this book were a movie would you go see it?

No, no point since I watched the actual events which were far better than any movie.

Mark says

I was really hoping for more actual insight in to their relationship and fewer game recaps (felt like they made up 80% of the book).

Danny says

I'm biased because I'm a life long 49er fan who watched both of these QB's grace the playing surface of Candlestick Park. This was also a damn good football book. Some chapters had me almost in tears remembering some of the things that happened and what it felt like when Joe Montana left for Kansas City. other Chapters had me so pumped up I couldn't sleep remembering comebacks by both of them, like Super Bowl 23 against Cincinnati and "The Catch II," when Young slipped before hitting Terrell Owens for the game winner. Lots of memories in that book for me.

Michelle Hopkins says

Only football fans (especially 49er fans) probably will read this book. And that's too bad because it has something to say for all of us. Actually, it didn't hit me--the book's several messages about life in general--until a quote from Steve Young on page 222:

"I've been jumping through hoops for years. They keep putting 'em up there, and I keep jumping through 'em. It's tough, trying to keep track of what you're trying to validate."

Steve Young worked incredibly hard, on the sidelines, in Joe Montana's shadow, trying to fulfill HIS dream by being what everyone wanted him to be. It wasn't until, after months and years of jumping through hoops, and finally blowing his stack at the coach that Young really began to be who he was, instead of everyone's idea of Steve Young.

That's when it hit me how often we do the same thing, in our own personal world, jumping through hoops,

losing sight of what it really is we're trying to validate because it changes so often, even we can't keep up. And how often in life do we do the work and expect the reward? It's a simple equation. If we're deserving (and aren't we always?) then the reward should be ours.

The two men in this story did "the work," beyond the realm of human possibility most of the time. We think of them and remember them as sports heroes, in their victorious moments. But that misses a big part of the story: the many times they lost and lost their way--Steve Young, especially, at least in this telling of their story. (The book seems more sympathetic to Joe Montana.)

They did not always make the right choices. They did not always get what they deserved. They did not always stay true to themselves. They did not always have the right attitudes. What they both DID do was take the cards they were dealt and do the best they could at the time. At any juncture, they could have made other choices, often for more immediate gratification.

Joe Montana and Steve Young are both champions, larger than life in football legend. But in life itself, they are two worthy protagonists with lessons to teach us, if we are willing to see their exhausting, spirit-numbing and body-crumbling struggle as well as the Super Bowl result.

Anthony says

Not as the title implies. More of a hodgepodge chronologically ordered telling of the 49ers glory years in the 1980s and 1990s.

And it is told in a confusing manner overlaying one week to the next and drawing from a mismatch of sources.

I just wasn't all that impressed with the telling or the writing. And I am a huge Niner fan.

If anything it made me dislike the handling of the entire qb change. I was never a Young fan and I'm even less of one now. Sorry Steve. Joe blew your doors off and I believe they would have won another SB if they had stayed with him. ALONG with the one you won.

Steve says

In the late '80s and early 90s, the 49ers were blessed with two great quarterbacks, Joe Montana and Steve Young. Montana was the cool pocket passer with a fragile body that was breaking down nearly as often as he engineered winning drives. Young was his backup, a mad scrambler who could win games with his feet and his arm. Adam Lazarus takes us inside the locker room and shows why this fierce rivalry made both QBs even better. He interviewed all the key players (including Montana and Young), coaches, front-office staff, and reporters to bring fresh insights into an unforgettable era in Bay Area sports history. A must-read, really, for football fans everywhere.

Jack Barraclough says

I didn't enjoy this book as much as I thought I would. There was too much detail about what seemed like

almost every game played in every season. I guess if you had remembered the controversy at the time, it might have been a more enjoyable read.

Russ Bertetta says

Great book for 49er fans. Extremely well researched and remarkably unbiased. Lots of memories throughout.

Andre says

I had two major issues with this book. First, the title was misleading. It is a pretty straightforward title, one that leads a reader to believe he/she knows exactly what is in store. Unfortunately, that was not the case. A better description—and title—would be a chronological examination of the San Francisco 49ers' quarterbacking legacy. This book was not what it was marketed to be. In this regard, the book wasn't bad; it just wasn't what I thought I was buying. I feel misled. Had it been titled accurately, I would not have purchased it.

The other, more serious, issue is that things presented in the book as facts were incorrect. I don't think examples are necessary here, but there were many blatant errors that disrupted my reading experience. When I read a work of nonfiction and know that some things are wrong, I begin to doubt the truthfulness of the presented items I did not already know. Some of the things are minor, yes, but the shadow of doubt they cast is large. This is the primary reason for the low rating I gave the book. Still, it is a nostalgic read for anyone who fondly remembers the DeBartolo-era 49ers.

Kian Kashefi says

I really enjoyed this book because I was originally interested in the topic of the story. I knew after Joe Montana came Steve Young, but I never learned the story behind why Montana was let go before he could finish his career in San Francisco. The story itself was very fascinating, as we got a full story on Joe Montana and Steve Young about their lives before their NFL careers, along with what each of them did before and after the QB controversy. In addition to all this, the fight for the 49ers starting quarterback job was very well documented in this book. Overall, I think Adam Lazarus did an amazing job, giving a biography on both Joe Montana, and Steve Young, and merges their worlds into one; the battle for the team of the decade's starting quarterback job.

Doug Adamson says

I thought that Lazarus did a good job tracing both men's lives up to and through the controversy but not as well afterward. The epilogue was far too short. Overall, Montana received more attention in the book and yet, in some ways, Young came across as being a better man—more willing to put the controversy behind him and to be gracious toward Montana.

Tom Gase says

A pretty good book on two of the greatest qb's of all time in the NFL, Joe Montana and Steve Young. This book, by author Adam Lazarus, explains how the two players coexisted for many years in San Francisco. I learned a lot from this book that I may have forgotten over the years. One, is that although Joe Montana is one of the greatest players of all time, time has been very good to him. Although he won four Super Bowls, he was hurt for a lot of the games during the years of his last two. In fact, he was hurt a lot from 1986 to 1992, hence San Francisco going out and trading for Young and never trading him away even though his market value was strong. So Montana won the big games in 1989 and 1990 playoffs, but Young had a lot to do with the success of those seasons as well. Maybe not as much as 'Joe Cool', but he was a part of it. This book gets you rooting for both players and both players come off as good people after finishing the book. Montana comes off as a little jealous, but you have to wonder if you would do the exact same thing in the situation. The detail of this book is really good for the regular seasons and goes week by week to bring back a lot of childhood memories for me. It talks about Young's mad scramble in 1988 against the Vikings (which I thought had come much later in his career) and it talks about Montana's great regular season game comeback against the Eagles and Bengals. I thought this book could have talked about the Super Bowl's a little more. For instance the author takes the reader through the 1989 season game by game at almost a page for each game, but then the Super Bowl he talks about for a paragraph. I wished it would be the other way around. It's a short book and most 49er fans will love it. One of my biggest problems with the book is it had a "No Country for Old Men" ending. The author tries too hard with the Tom Brady/Matt Cassel comparison in the last chapter. That wasn't really a rivalry at all. The better comparison would have been Brett Favre and Aaron Rodgers. Anyways, not a bad book and I look forward to reading more by Lazarus.

Demarkus says

The main characters are Joe Montana and one of the greatest quarterbacks. Joe Montana had a sequence of injuries and was worried he was getting too old for this hard hitting sport. He was sitting out a game with a lower back injury and his doctor said he might be done playing football but Joe kept thinking to himself that he loved the game too much to be done playing. After he was cleared by his doctor he proved to be in good shape by the games he started in and won. He came over his conflict of not being able to play when they seen his performance of the first game back that he started in. If i had to sum up Joe in one i would say perseverance because he thrived to show the doctor, his mom, and the coaches he is still the prime Joe Montana and can still perform the way he always has.

Robert Morrow says

A good history of the great years of quarterback excellence from the San Francisco 49ers. I lived in the City during the Montana-Young years and will always appreciate the excellence they both brought to the game. The book chronicles the competition between the two fairly satisfactorily, weakened somewhat by the lack of recent interviews by those who were there. The most disappointing aspect of the book is the weird epilogue where the author wanders off to make an inappropriate comparison between the Montana-Young battle and the Brady-Cassel battle in New England, an absurd as comparison as I can imagine.

Jim Mcclanahan says

An interesting book on a familiar subject (for SF 49er fans of a certain age). A very nice recap of some classic events both on and off the field. Unfortunately, I feel the author picked some sources for opinions which tended to be self-serving, especially Carmen Policy, whose motives in most football operations are suspect IMHO. As a result, Joe Montana comes out sometimes looking like nothing more than a prima donna; Bill Walsh: a schemer who can't be relied upon to tell the truth; Steve Young: an insecure over-bearing self-promoter who can't keep his mouth shut. The only person who comes out looking like a saint is Joe's wife, Jennifer.

I'm sure there is an element of truth in any such characterizations, but the events and circumstances of the times would have made mincemeat of lesser beings. In the end, credit is generally given where due and the descriptions of the big moments and many of the small ones are quite entertaining. It's actually hard to believe that Montana and Young could suffer so many injuries and still keep playing. Required reading for the Forty-Niner Faithful.
