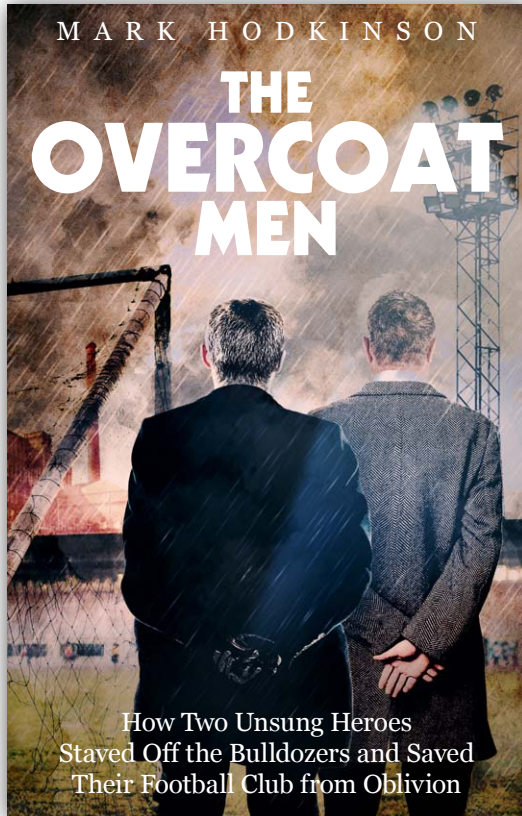




Title information



The Overcoat Men

How Two Unsung Heroes Staved Off the Bulldozers and Saved Their Football Club from Oblivion

By Mark Hodkinson

Key features

- A unique take on a class of football hero routinely taken for granted by fans
- Small-club directors often take huge risks to keep their clubs, and dreams, alive
- The inspirational story of directors Kilpatrick and Morris, at lowly Rochdale FC
- Written by *Times* columnist and BBC Radio producer Mark Hodkinson, recently long-listed for William Hill Sports Book of the Year
- Colour photo section to tie in with the text
- Publicity campaign planned including radio, newspapers, websites and magazines

Description

In the early 80s David Kilpatrick and Graham Morris spied architects' plans to turn Spotland, the home of their beloved, beleaguered Rochdale AFC, into a housing estate. They set about saving the club but first had to take on the alleged 'enemy within' – fellow directors. They worked tirelessly, persuading companies to write off debts while securing loans and donations, a tricky proposition when your club is bottom of the Football League. Meanwhile, the town of Rochdale was on its knees, the last of the cotton mills closing down. The limit of most fans' investment in their club is routinely the price of a season ticket. Directors often risk their houses and businesses, sometimes forfeiting marriages, families and their health in the name of their club. People such as Kilpatrick and Morris – moderately wealthy local businessmen – who serve on football club boards are the unseen, unsung heroes of football, even in the modern age.

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