



Butkus: Flesh and Blood

Dick Butkus

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From 1965 to 1973 Dick Butkus was the most revered player in professional football. Although he never played for a championship team, and one can't say he set all kinds of records, no other defender in the entire history of the NFL has so electrified the game. The stories about Butkus are legendary. They make him sound so intense, so ferocious, and for the most part they are frighteningly true. Yet underneath the layers of mythology resides a man who is as thoughtful and emotional as he is intense.

In *Butkus*, Dick Butkus tells his entire life story, from growing up and getting into trouble in Chicago, to his uncomfortable yet glorious years at the University of Illinois. He reveals what it felt like to be the ninth child of two hardworking Lithuanian parents--one of whom was born in a Illinois coal mine, the other never fully learned to speak English--and the camaraderie and contentment he experienced while playing football. He recounts the historic nine seasons with the Chicago Bears where he played with and against such immortals as Gale Sayers, Jim Brown, Brian Piccolo, Mike Ditka, and Joe Greene.

Dick Butkus looks deeply into his own psyche to find the source of his passionate style of play--a style that has often been described as violence and intimidation on the football field. With honesty and emotion, he recounts his battles with George "Papa Bear" Halas, the NFL, and the media.

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