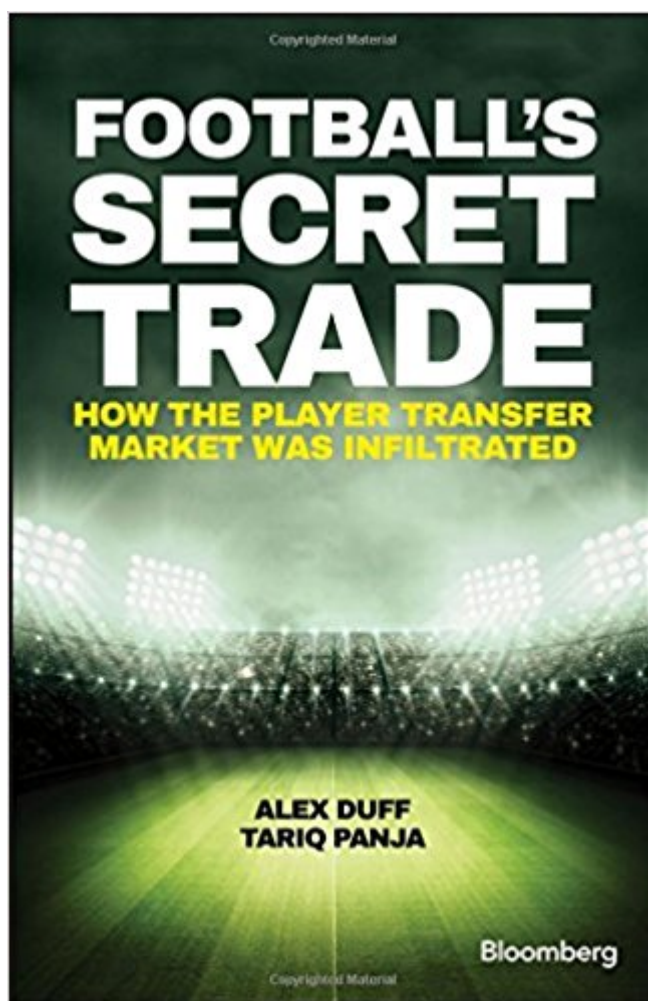




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Football's Secret Trade: How The Player Transfer Market Was Infiltrated (Bloomberg)



Synopsis

A no-holds-barred exposé on the financial transactions of the world's favourite sport. The transfer fees clubs pay to sign top players now top €4 billion a year but much of the money has been flowing out of the game. A small group of wealthy investors including Russian oligarchs, English racehorse owners and a former billionaire gold miner have seized the opportunity to enter this booming market. Some have moved in on the territory of banks and lent money to clubs in exchange for a share in fees generated by Cristiano Ronaldo, Neymar and dozens more of today's stars. Others have acquired obscure teams to get a piece of the pie. Even as the global financial crisis sent fortunes tumbling this select group found a profitable place to park their money. The size of the transfer market has continued to rise – it increased seven-fold in value the last two decades, more than the FTSE share index. Between them, these wealthy investors have amassed hundreds of millions of euros in profits. At the same time, they have managed to stay out of the spotlight the world's most popular sport brings. Football's Secret Trade follows the money along a trail very few know about, from nondescript offices in the U.K. and ramshackle stadiums of South American clubs you have probably never heard of to offshore bank accounts in the Caribbean. Warning – you won't see a major transfer deal in the same light again.

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The transfer fees football clubs pay to sign players now top 4 billion a year, but much of the money

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PRAISE FOR FOOTBALL'S SECRET TRADE "Nobody knows more about football's underbelly than Alex Duff and Tariq Panja. This hugely important book sheds light on the shadows of the game we all love." —Rory Smith, European soccer correspondent, New York Times "A fascinating insight into the murky finances, backroom deals and shadowy figures that lie behind football's glamorous façade." —Jonathan Wilson, journalist and author of the award-winning football book Inverting the Pyramid "Both authors have been preeminent in the investigations of world football's secret 'third party ownership' deals. They have untangled a web of intrigue which always has money at its core." —Martyn Ziegler, chief sports reporter, The Times of London "Tariq Panja is a top-rank journalist, always thorough and far-reaching in his research. Here, he and Alex Duff apply their considerable skills to unpicking the opaque world of 'third party ownership' in football." —David Conn, sports writer, The Guardian; author of The Beautiful Game? Searching for the Soul of Football "The authors expertly guide you through the dark maze of football finance." —Stephen Wade, sports correspondent, Associated Press - Rio de Janeiro "Bravo! Duff and Panja have done us all a service by shining a bright light on football's underbelly, the practices that reduce humans to horseflesh and football club finances to a casino." —Stefan Szymanski, professor of sports management, Michigan University; co-author Soccernomics

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