



# Showboat: The Life of Kobe Bryant

By Roland Lazenby

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**"With surgical precision, Roland Lazenby expertly dissects the life of this generation's most fascinating basketball player. What made Kobe Bryant tick so loud for so long? Lazenby shows you with a tour de force in reporting and an intimate inspection at Bryant's trials, accomplishments and tribulations." -- Jonathan Abrams, author of *Boys Among Men***

**"With the publication of *Showboat: The Life of Kobe Bryant*, it is high time we recognized author Roland Lazenby for what he has become: the finest sports biographer of our time. First with the astonishing *Michael Jordan: The Life* and now his having written an incredibly researched, beautifully written biography of this enigmatic Laker superstar, Lazenby has entered rarified air: one is wowed by what one learns and at the same time you can't wait to read what comes next." -- Peter Golenbock, author of ten *New York Times* bestsellers**

Eighteen-time all-star; scorer of 81 points in a game; MVP and a shooting guard second only to Jordan in league history: Kobe Bryant is one of basketball's absolute greatest players, a fascinating and complicated character who knew when he was a mere boy that he would be better than Jordan on the court.

The debate about whether he achieved that is a furious one--but Kobe has surpassed Jordan on the all-time scoring list and has only one less championship than Jordan (5 to Jordan's 6). He is set to retire after the 2015/16 season, just in time for Roland Lazenby's definitive biography of the player and the man.

The Lakers are the flashiest team in all of sports, and the context in which Bryant played is salacious and exciting. Provocative stories mixed with good old fashioned basketball reporting make for a riveting and essential read for any hoops fan.

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## Editorial Review

Review

### Praise for SHOWBOAT

**Named one of the top Holiday Gifts by *Publishers Weekly*, the *Wall Street Journal*, *CBC Books*, and the *Los Angeles Times***

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"Lazenby tells Bryant's story well...this is bound to be the best biography of Kobe Bryant for some time." ***Kirkus***

"Like [Lazenby's] recent book about Michael Jordan, [*Showboat*] finds new angles to approach people we've been looking at every day their whole careers. Mr. Lazenby smartly focuses much of the book at the last few years of Mr. Bryant's career." ***Will Leitch, Wall Street Journal***

"This book is easily going to end up on some definitive must-read list for Lakers books. I've read Phil Jackson's *Eleven Rings*, Jeanie Buss' *Laker Girl*, and *Madmen's Ball*, but none of those quite compare to *Showboat*.

Check out the book and grab a copy of it." ***Lakers Outsider***

"Lazenby's detailed research and fantastic writing paint a complex, engaging picture of one of the NBA's greats." ***Kurt Helin, Pro Basketball Talk, NBC Sports***

"Roland Lazenby's the David McCullough of the sports biography."  
***Matt "Money" Smith, Fox Sports Radio***

"There is more than enough analysis of Bryant's on-court accomplishments to satisfy the hard-core hoops fan, but the meatier material is in the Bryant family dynamics....*Showboat* is an often insightful look at a complicated and still relatively young man." ***Phil Taylor, Washington Post***

"'Showboat' is more than just for show. It's a tell all that shows us there's more to a man than the name on the back of his jersey...or even the one on the front." ***Tim David Harvey, Basketball Buzz***

"A very good biography."? **Bill Reynolds, Providence Journal**

"Stands to be one of the popular go-to sports books on the holiday gift list."? **Tom Hoffarth, Los Angeles Daily News**

"Essential reading."? **Jeremy Schaap, ESPN**

"Roland Lazenby is one of the preeminent voices when it comes professional hoops.... His latest book *Showboat* is a dynamic biography of the loved and loathed Los Angeles' swingman.... The book does a masterful job of going beyond what the public already knows about Kobe - that he was a maniacal competitor - and gives the reader a comprehensive look at what propelled him to reach the apex of his sport."? **Sean Burch, FOX Sports' "Lake Show Life"**

**Praise for Michael Jordan**

**One of Amazon's Best Books of the Year: Sports & Outdoors**

"In his thoughtful, extraordinarily well-researched biography "Michael Jordan: The Life," Roland Lazenby... gives us the life and much more.... The exhaustive narrative of Jordan's basketball career is written with appropriate awe. But what makes this portrayal especially worthwhile is everything else."? **Mike Greenberg, New York Times Book Review**

"An utterly definitive biography.... The most comprehensive attempt yet made to explain the factors that have gone into producing the most famous basketball player and marketing phenom in the history of world sports.... I don't know how it would be possible to write a more complete biography of him."? **The Chicago Tribune**

"Roland Lazenby's new biography of Michael Jordan is as breathtaking as a dunk by 'His Airness.' ... A richly detailed, thoroughly researched book.... Lazenby expertly sifts through the myths to produce a definitive portrait of Michael Jordan."? **Bob D'Angelo, Tampa Tribune**

"Right from its early pages it's clear that Roland Lazenby's biography of Michael Jordan is in full-press mode to be the best volume ever written on perhaps basketball's greatest player.... Lazenby's a born researcher and some serious legwork went into gathering all of the quotes and facts here, which add up to a kind of Jordan-centric encyclopedia."? **Colin Fleming, The Boston Globe**

"Lazenby's thoroughly enjoyable biography is an impressive portrait of a man consumed by his competitive ambitions. It is also by far the most complete book on Michael Jordan to date.... Essential reading for all sports fans and particularly for those interested in American cultural history and popular culture."? **Library Journal (starred review)**

"A lot has been written about arguably the greatest basketball player of all time, Michael Jordan, but Roland Lazenby's *Michael Jordan: The Life* is easily the definitive version. The journalist has covered Jordan's career for nearly thirty years and his knowledge of the game and of this miraculous player shows in what is one of the best sports biographies in years."? **Parade**

"Engaging... Lazenby, author of *Michael Jordan: The Life*, turns his eye to another basketball legend: the recently retired Kobe Bryant."? **Publishers Weekly**

"It's not every day that I'm blown away by a book about a sports figure. But MICHAEL JORDAN: THE LIFE, by Roland Lazenby, ranks up there with the very best: *The Boys of Summer* by Roger Kahn, *Friday Night Lights* by Buzz Bissinger, and *Joe DiMaggio* by Richard Ben Cramer. The depth of reporting, his frequent ascent into poetry, and his intelligent analysis of the life of this complicated, fascinating American icon deserve Pulitzer Prize consideration. For the first time I understand what makes Michael Jordan tick. I was captivated, fascinated and beguiled from beginning to end."? **Peter Golenbock, New York Times-bestselling author of *George* and *In the Country of Brooklyn***

#### About the Author

Roland Lazenby is the author of the definitive and bestselling biographies *Michael Jordan: The Life* and *Jerry West: The Life and Legend of a Basketball Icon*, among other books. He has spent the past three decades interviewing NBA players, coaches, staff members, and other figures while writing about the league. He lives in Salem, VA.

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