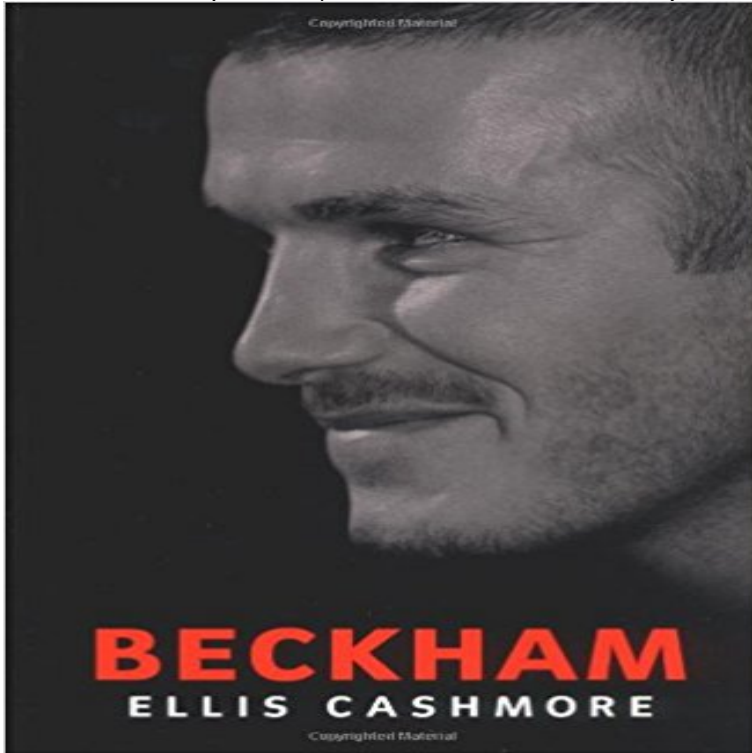


Beckham (Polity celebrities series)



There has never been an athlete quite like Beckham. Or, more accurately, there have been any number of athletes like him, but never a celebrity. His global status is challenged only by Tiger Woods: all over the world, people adore, venerate, even worship the boy with decorously pale good looks and his ex-Spice Girl wife. In the first serious analysis of Beckham and the culture of which he is part, Ellis Cashmore strips away the public persona to examine the real reasons why he has become the celebrity athlete par excellence. Is it because he is a great football player? Because of his supermodel looks, or his debonair dress sense? His rejection of the macho values typically associated with football? His marriage to Posh? Cashmore asks all the questions but uncovers different answers. Beckham has come to the fore at a unique time in history: when celebrity is venerated, when sport is entertainment and when Essex boys are icons. This is a book about the Beckham phenomenon. It examines the cult of celebrity, the changing configurations of the sports industry, the evolution of football culture, the role of advertising and marketing, the globalization of sports, entertainment and music and, most centrally, the emergence of an individual who has transcended the traditional boundaries between sport and entertainment.

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