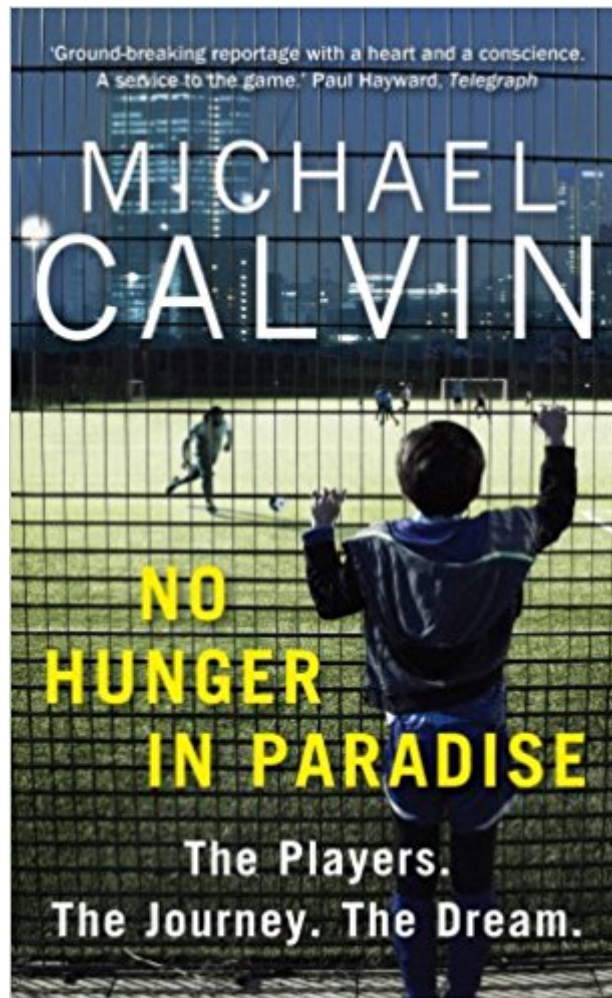




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# No Hunger In Paradise: How To Make It Is As Professional Footballer



## Synopsis

This is the third part in Mike Calvin's football book trilogy. First he wrote about scouts in *The Nowhere Men*. Next he wrote about the pressures of managers in *Living on the Volcano*. Now he writes about the players themselves, in his biggest and most ambitious book yet. Based on hundreds of hours of interviews, *No Hunger in Paradise* is the definitive book on what it takes to make it as a professional footballer in this country, and the pitfalls, pressures and casualties along the way. From visiting gangs in council estates in Brixton which have produced England internationals, to £200 million training complexes in Manchester, which only breed jealousy and entitlement, Mike follows the stories of the most promising young players up and down the country. He also interviews parents, coaches, agents and top managers and players to get an overall picture of the system, which is rife with corruption and abuse. *No Hunger in Paradise* is full of powerful human stories: of the youngsters who fall through the cracks and of those who fall prey to the entitlement and distraction of money. But in the vein of Gladwell's *Outliers*, he also explores the inspirational stories of grit and of success, and attempts to find out what common traits unite the rare individuals who make it.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

"Another landmark work from Mike Calvin, who has taken us beyond the surface of football to show its true workings. Ground-breaking reportage with a heart and a conscience. A service to the game."

-- Paul Hayward \* Telegraph \* "Extraordinary writing, a vital subject, a brilliant read" -- Jonathan

Northcroft \* Sunday Times \* "If you're in any way interested in what lies beneath the water of the Premier League Iceberg, read Mike Calvin's latest book *No Hunger in Paradise*" -- Owen Gibson \*

Guardian \* "A fascinating insight which gets to the heart of the matter - and problems - chasing every kid's dream. A compelling read for anyone who likes football and the stories surrounding the stars of tomorrow. I couldn't put it down." -- John Cross \* Daily Mirror \* "Another exceptional piece of work" -- Jason Burt \* Telegraph \* "Highly recommended reading. An excellent and important book . . . No Hunger in Paradise explores the world of youth football and, if the stories within do one thing, they press the claim for serious discussion about how the English game treats the thousands of children who come into contact with the sharper end of youth football - and their families who often get reeled in to a cut-throat environment without really understanding what is going on" -- Amy Lawrence "Eye-opening and compelling" \* Iain Macintosh \* "Terrifying" -- Richard Williams \* Guardian \* "No Hunger in Paradise is somehow both heart-breaking and uplifting. Just brilliant!" \* Waterstones Sport \* "No Hunger in Paradise is humbling, educational, worrying and a great read. Can't recommend it highly enough. One of the best sports books I've ever read." -- Barry Glendenning \* Guardian \* "Started reading this and it's brilliant. Seriously recommended. Yet another important football book from Michael Calvin. In-depth well-researched accounts of the journey from kids football to the professional game..or rejection" -- Adrian Durham \* TalkSPORT \* "If you've any interest in the future of football in this country and the young players who will provide it, No Hunger in Paradise is a must-read." \* Liverpool Echo \* "Bleak but brilliant. Contains stories that need to be heard." \* i-Paper \* "A brilliant & very important book. Vital, highly recommended. Tempted to say it's Michael Calvin's best yet, which is some praise." -- Oliver Kay \* The Times \* "The best sports book I'm likely to read this year. Highly recommend you buy it." -- Simon Hughes \* Independent \* "A brilliant insight into the journey young kids now make from kicking a ball around in their back garden, through the glossy facilities of academy football." -- David Preece \* Sunderland Echo \* "His research is, as ever, impeccable... No Hunger in Paradise is a fascinating and fitting finale to a trio of books any football lover should own." \* Sunday Sport \* "Heartbreaking . . . an excellent piece of reportage" \* i-Paper \* "The award-winning writer's new forensic, and sometimes alarming, case study into why some young prospects make the cut - and others fall away - is fascinating... The FA would do well to read this if they want success" \* FourFourTwo \* "Brilliantly sourced and written... As a portrait of the state of the modern game, No Hunger In Paradise is vital reading. With Calvin's previous studies, it serves as a record of what football is like today and should place him alongside Arthur Hopcraft, John Moynihan and Hunter Davies in providing the sport with its defining literature" \* When Saturday Comes \*

Michael Calvin is one of the UK's most acclaimed sports writers. He was named Sports writer of

the Year for his despatches as a crew member in a round the world yacht race and has twice been named Sports Reporter of the Year. He is currently chief sports writer with the Independent on Sunday. His last book, *The Nowhere Men*, won the Times Sports Book of the Year prize in 2014. *Proud*, his collaboration with former Wales and British Lions rugby captain Gareth Thomas, was named Autobiography of the Year in the Cross Pens British Sports Book Awards in 2015.

It is one of the books I would have loved to love. But even though there is a lot of heart in the book it simply doesn't deliver on analysis. The premise that only 0,012 pct. makes it to the PL is about all the statistics you get. The rest is "I feel so sorry for the disillusioned youth" but in the end you know this is about talent and money in combination. And the book is about broken feelings so the balance is all wrong.

A brutally honest look at the flawed UK academy system that has ramifications on the future of football. Well researched and thought provoking. Highly recommended for football coaches at grassroots

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