



# Cantona: The Rebel Who Would Be King: The Turbulent Life of Eric Cantona

*Philippe Auclair*

[Download now](#)

[Read Online](#) 

# Cantona: The Rebel Who Would Be King: The Turbulent Life of Eric Cantona

*Philippe Auclair*

**Cantona: The Rebel Who Would Be King: The Turbulent Life of Eric Cantona** Philippe Auclair  
Many have tried to persuade Eric Cantona to write his autobiography. He never will. Philippe Auclair has interviewed every key player in Cantona's life to produce a biography that reveals, for the first time, the heart and inner thoughts of this most extraordinary character. Cantona played for six different French clubs, making his international debut at twenty-one, before going to England in 1992 and making an immediate impact with Leeds United. He transformed the team but became even more talismanic when he moved to Manchester United, where to this day Manchester United fans refer to him as "King Eric." Eric Cantona graced the Premiership like few others and he remains a deeply compelling figure to anyone who cares remotely about football.

## Cantona: The Rebel Who Would Be King: The Turbulent Life of Eric Cantona Details

Date : Published October 21st 2009 by Macmillan (first published August 6th 2009)

ISBN : 9780230706347

Author : Philippe Auclair

Format : Hardcover 288 pages

Genre : Football, Biography, Sports and Games, Sports, Nonfiction

 [Download Cantona: The Rebel Who Would Be King: The Turbulent Lif ...pdf](#)

 [Read Online Cantona: The Rebel Who Would Be King: The Turbulent L ...pdf](#)

**Download and Read Free Online Cantona: The Rebel Who Would Be King: The Turbulent Life of Eric Cantona Philippe Auclair**

---

## **From Reader Review Cantona: The Rebel Who Would Be King: The Turbulent Life of Eric Cantona for online ebook**

### **Rebecca says**

Well, first of all, Goodreads' page count for this hardback edition is out by nearly 200 as there are 469 pages, rather than the 288 it tells me there are.

But listing issues apart, this is a very good book. I think it helps that the author is a fellow Frenchman, who can explain Cantona's Marseille background in cultural and social terms that most English biographers would not bother with. And of course, Auclair has been more detailed and done more actual research than most previous biographers - again, the English tendency had been to cobble together tabloid stories with a view to sales rather than accuracy.

What we get here is a thoroughly researched, calm and sensitive look at the life of a man who remains adored in the red half of Manchester to this day. As someone who knew little about Cantona's career prior to his arrival in England, the sections dealing with his early career were particularly interesting and informative. Achievements and controversies are reported equally - and vitally, with the context that sensationalist English reports often omitted.

An engrossing and high-quality biography.

---

### **James says**

Fantastic insight into a grossly misunderstood footballer. This is not a platform to defend his actions, nor pour scorn on them, but a chance to present his career in facts rather than tabloid hyperbole. Instead of using simple guesswork, it analyses his state of mind and asks 'why' rather than judging.

Auclair writes this in such a way that it does not feel like a biography of a famous personality but a historical or psychological piece on one of history's great characters. He manages this whilst keeping the reader enthralled in the narrative.

He also relies on the accounts of those who knew him best (which includes a number of prominent people in French and English football).

A first class account & the best biography that I have read.

---

### **Rohit Pahari says**

A superbly crafted narrative on the life of one of the most misunderstood characters in the history of football. It's tempting to choose sides in a biography, particularly when it's the biography of a man who has simultaneously been deified and vilified by the same society, at the same frame of time. However, Philippe Auclair shows excellent balance throughout this meticulously documented archive of Cantona's life - up to his 'death' in 1997 - and combines it with marvellous, free-flowing prose that makes the book an absolutely delightful read, despite the amount of dry detail it contains.

Highly recommended for every football fan.

---

### **Richard Leeming says**

Curiously a much better book than Auclair's autobiography of Thierry Henry, possibly because Cantona is a much more interesting man than Henry (and I speak as an Arsenal fan who loathes Manchester United with every fibre of my being!).

Auclair is even handed about Cantona's strengths and his accompanying weaknesses, his skewering of the mob reaction to Cantona's attack on Matthew Simmonds at Selhurst Park is one of the stronger passages of the book, as is a section towards the end when Auclair examines how carefully calibrated Cantona's rebel image given the commercial revenue it earned him. But that passage serves as a useful marker for the book as a whole - it's a short passage which doesn't do more than raise an extremely interesting critical question, Auclair is unable to get any answers. Given the difficulties of the subject, to criticise him for that is perhaps unfair.

So you get an honest appraisal of Cantona's football career and some of his motivations, but ultimately Auclair is unable to get through the protective wall that cantona set around him. But I'm not sure that anyone else could have done.

---

### **Smh624 says**

An excellent book about a complex character. More than just a sports story, it was a pleasure to read both from revisiting the incredible talent and events I followed in the 90s and the interesting cultural issues that existed at the time...football-wise, England vs France, and the advent of megabucks in the football (soccer) world.

---

### **Priyank Acharya says**

Cantona - the rebel, the revolutionary, the show man, the artist..a human fighting with the world and with himself for his existence

Opinion keeps on changing as you go through the book... initially it runs on a track of 'portrayal of cantona' as an unusual freak , ill tempered but a passionate lad , however as it builds up its totally up to the leader to form an opinion

Book is worth a read on account of fine details of league football , behind the curtain world of french journalism and sports fraternity be it England or France, interpersonal relationship of coaches - players and players-owners.

---

### **E. J. says**

A terrific account of the career of a footballing genius and an unmissable read for any fan of Cantona or

Man. Utd. It should appeal to the neutral too. Cantona found his football and spiritual home at Old Trafford because Alex Ferguson "got him" in a way few managers before did. When Cantona went from Leeds to Man. Utd, the fortunes of both clubs changed dramatically and it's not hard to see that Cantona's transfer had a big part to play in this. For Man. Utd, he was the catalyst and foundation of a new football dynasty. His style of play encouraged others to express themselves, and he was a father figure to the "kids" who would dominate the game for years to come.

There are many interesting stories in the book particularly the one describing how Cantona turned down the chance to return to the French national team after his football suspension. If he had, he would surely have featured in France '98.

Very few people truly know or understand Eric Cantona, a man as elusive as he is brilliant, but this book comes closer than any to explaining the motives and ambitions of the gallic genius.

---

### **Adam Whitemore says**

So much more depth than the typical football bio

---

### **Nicolas Ronvel says**

Une petite déception. Après Open de André Agassi, je pensais retrouver une biographie intéressante, mais je la trouve un bon niveau en-dessous.

Le soucis vient principalement de sa longueur, et surtout des résumés de matches qui ralentissent considérablement la lecture. Les phases d'analyse, ou celle qui décrivent l'environnement, la personnalité de Cantona, sont toutes très intéressantes. J'étais encore jeune lors des événements, je m'en rappelle brièvement. J'ai vu beaucoup d'images, de vidéos depuis. Et redécouvrir tout ça, la chronologie, des interviews et commentaires d'époque, c'est vraiment intéressant.

Savoir qu'il a gagné contre Sunderland 2-0 en ayant fait un centre pour Ryan Giggs, ça me gave. Et ces passages sont un peu trop nombreux dans la seconde partie du bouquin (sa vie professionnelle en Angleterre), dans une biographie déjà longue en termes de pages.

Il faut vraiment apprécier le joueur et le personnage pour s'y lancer.

---

### **David Miller says**

If you are a Manchester United fan born in 1975, then Eric Cantona is, and always will be, 'the King'. This book is no hagiography and quite unique in many respects for a sports biography / autobiography.

---

### **Akhlaq says**

The literary world is not overly filled with biographies of Eric Cantona despite his career and becoming the driving force and personality of the newly established Premier League in 1992 so Philippe Auclair's contribution is definitely the most definitive.

The author has taken immense research to get a full picture of Cantona's life and career with recounts of his professional career in France which is rarely told in this depth. His journey from France, his parallel career with his national team and ultimately his exit from France to Leeds United in 1991. There's much needed context on his international career which, sometimes, gets lost because he wasn't able to win a trophy yet he achieved success at a lower level and stayed on with the team after the failure to qualify for the 1994 World Cup.

Cantona's disciplinary record is discussed and Auclair's analysis that this was down to the style of football United played (aggressive) but to make a comparison with Don Revie's Leeds, I felt, was a tad extreme. Premier League football was played a certain way from 1991-1997 and that intensity was seen at other clubs also plus Cantona quickly became a target for opposition players so naturally would respond in some way if he felt the referee wasn't helping.

Auclair captures Cantona's influence post-suspension in 1996 wonderfully, with words to paint the pictures of the Frenchman's goals that saw United eclipse Newcastle United to the title.

One of the reasons of Cantona's final season ended lacklustre for him as it did, in my opinion, was the summer malaise of seeing France perform in this country and he wasn't there (to his own decision as the author states), plus also he must have felt some unhappiness with the lack of support from France's FA (incidentally, he didn't speak to journalists for a long time during his final few years at United) yet this wasn't mentioned at all as a reason to why he turned down Aime Jacquet's request to play in the Euros of 1996.

Overall, this is a definitive read on Eric Cantona. Like many sports stars, he has contradictions but also his moments of sincerity and generosity. Auclair tells his story with the in-depth research via newspaper cuttings, videos to show how Cantona's career was pivotal to the rise of the Premier League as a product. There is much weight behind his sources such as Guy Roux, Gerard Houillier, his France Football colleagues, Sir Alex Ferguson etc. For a Manchester United fan, this is a must read.

---

### **Martinxo says**

Apart from the too detailed (for me) accounts of Cantona's exploits in the French first division and the post-Kung Fu/Palace episode Man Utd days, I thoroughly enjoyed this book.

Cantona was (and still is) an interesting bloke and even greater footballer. Auclair's book is intelligent and well written, certainly worth reading if you like football with flair, passion and panache, Eric had plenty of that!

---

### **Mohd Farid Scott says**

First off, this book is my introduction to Philippe Auclair. I wasn't familiar with his writings before but now I am a fan!

For me, Auclair's credibility (which he maintains throughout) comes from his detachment from Eric himself. Yes, both of them are French but that's about it. No grandiose claims of being in the circle or unobstructed link to the man himself. In this book, Auclair intertwined the highs and the lows broadening the story right from the very beginning in a little household full of Cantonas in a small, rustic village just off the coast of

Marseille.

What else do we need to know about Eric Cantona? Well, definitive doesn't even begin to describe this book. He can be imperviously imperturbable to impetuously impetus in a split second! From the off, you get the who's who of football punditry out and aloud.

Cantona - the book - was gripping, engaging and poignant at times with Auclair's masterful display of musings from former coaches, teammates, managers which incidentally made me scurry through the video archives of YouTube just to re-live the moments narrated in the book. Auclair also included with appeasing clarity all the moments of sheer brilliance for club and country. There's one whole chapter dedicated to that infamous 'kung-fu kick' with Auclair steadily pacing the moment of madness from previous chapters with an honest look at Eric's psyche.

Critically, I'm sure that 'Cantona' will divide opinions on him more than ever and might even surprise the most ardent fan of the Frenchman. It is literally enthralling to know that at the heart of it, Eric was a football journeyman who finally found his spiritual home in England.

---

### Thiago S. says

Cantona is a very interesting character but this book certainly isn't. Couldnt finish it even containing less than 300 pages, mainly because of the very long paragraphs which made the read boring and the story hard to follow.

I give it 2.5 stars and I was really fooled by the high av. rating this title possessed here on goodreads. Maybe hundreds of man utd fans have just voted without reading it. Of the part I had the endurance to read, got one or two good anedoctes, the rest were endless sentences about who-gives-a-shit characters (coaches, journalists, fellow players) of the average french football.

---

### ... says

??? ?? ?????? ??? ???? 5 ??? ?? 60 ??? ??,?? 120 ???,?? ?????? ??? ??? ???? ??? 180 ???  
?????? ?????? ??? ? ???? ???????

????? ?????? ?????? ?????? ??????..????? ?? ??? ?????? ?? ?? ?????? ??? ?????? ?????? ??? ????  
????..??? ??? ?????? ?? ??? ?????? ?? ??? ?????? ?? ??? ?????? ?????? ?????? ?? ? ???? ??????  
????????..? ???? ???? ?????? ? ???? ???? ???? ??

????? ?? ?????? ???..??? ?????? ?????? ???? ? ???? ???? ? ???? ?????? ???? ? ???? ???? ????  
???????? ???? ?????? ???? ?????? ??????

????? ?? ? ???? ???? ???? ????..? ???? ,????,????,????..???? ???? ???? ???? ???? ?????? ?????? ? ????  
????????..??? ???? ???? ???? ???? ???? ???? ???? ???? ???? ???? ???? ???? ???? (?????  
?????)..? ???? ???? ???? ? ? ? ???? ? ? ???? ???? ???? ???? ..? ???? ???? ???? ???? ? ? ????  
???????? ???? ?????? !

????? ???? ?????? ???? ???? ? ? ???? ???? ?????? ???? ???? ..????? ???? ???? ? ? ???? ???? ??????  
?? ????..?? ???? ??????..????!..??? ???? ???? ? ???? ,????????,????????..??? ?????? ??????  
???????? ???? ?

i have this passion inside that i cant handle. its like a fire inside which has to get out and which you let out.

sometimes it get out and do harm. i do myself harm. it worries me when i do harm. especially to others. but i cant be what i am without those other things in my character.

????? ??? ??????? ?????? ?????? ??? ?????????? ??? ????..????? ?????? ?????? ??? ??????? ?????? ?????? ??????? ???  
??? ?????? ??????? ??????? ?? ????

(?????)

---