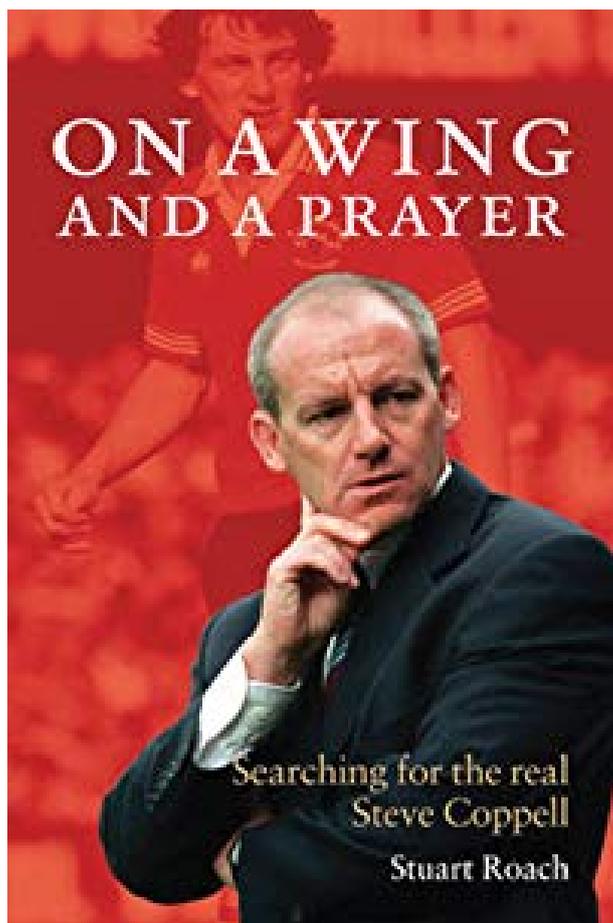


Steve Coppell: On a Wing and a Prayer



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Steve Coppell was one of England's most gifted wingers, who went on to become a successful manager. He led Crystal Palace during their halcyon era of the late 80s, briefly managed Manchester City before returning to Palace and winning promotion again. He then held the reins during difficult times at both Brentford and Brighton, but was on the brink of winning another promotion with the Seagulls when he took the job at Reading. Bed with an ability to spot raw talent such as Kevin Doyle and Steven Hunt, Coppell led the Royals into the top flight for the first time in their history with a record points tally. Reading took the Premier League by storm, finishing just outside the European places. Sadly they wilted in their second season and slumped to relegation, and then failed to win a return straight back into the big time in 2008-09. Following Coppell's resignation as Reading manager in May 2009, Stuart Roach went on a journey to discover the real Steve Coppell. From his humble origins on Merseyside to his glamour move to Old Trafford and into the England side, Coppell proved an exciting winger, capable of creating scoring opportunities for his strikers. But a cruel injury cut his career dead and Coppell reinvented himself as the then youngest ever Football League manager at the age of 28. This book will reveal what lies beneath Coppell's famously cool exterior, why his manager at Manchester United Tommy Docherty christened him "the number 27 bus," what Coppell gained from taking an Economics degree from the University of Liverpool and how he nearly caused a rift in the marriage of Charles Saatchi and Nigella Lawson! Features contributions from major figures in Coppell's career such as John Madejski, Ian Wright, Jonathan Pearce, Mark Bright, Martin Buchan, Dick Knight, Ron Noades, Alan Pardew, Lou Macari, Bobby Zamora, and Graeme Murty.