

# Books reviewed

## Blue Moon: Down among the dead men with Manchester City

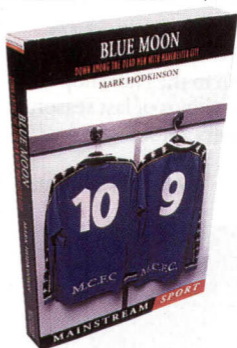
Mark Hodkinson

Mainstream, £7.99

★★★★★

One club, one season: if a writer takes up that challenge in the hope of selling books to anyone other than fans of that one club, he or she has to be sure there's plenty to say and that it is said interestingly. Mark Hodkinson's account of Manchester City's 1998/99 fulfils both criteria.

Crucially, the season Hodkinson spent with City – then in the third tier of English football – was no ordinary one.



City were the classic fallen giants, keen to rediscover greatness. Even Liverpool fans have never had to bear (whisper it) Second Division football.

Hodkinson's writing is at its most graphic when he exposes the attitudes of the club's pivotal figures. From Joe Royle saying 'I hate this division' down to the fans, City believed promotion to Division Two would be a stroll, and the arrogance of the club is well captured.

Stylishly compiled and written with a rare intelligence – a must-read.

**Louis Massarella**