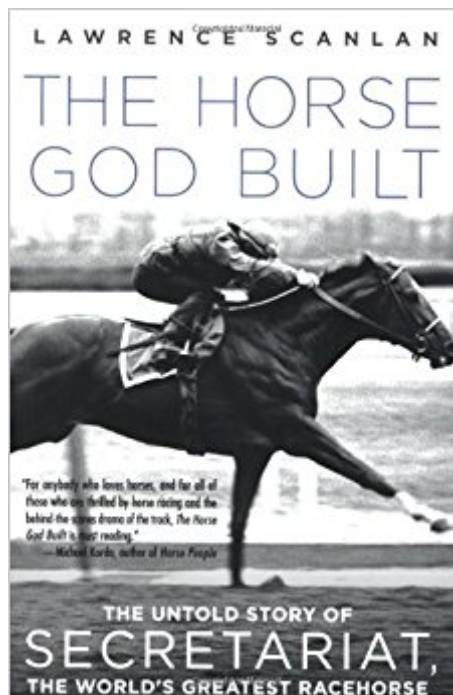




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# **The Horse God Built: The Untold Story Of Secretariat, The World's Greatest Racehorse**



## Synopsis

"For anybody who loves horses, and for all of those who are thrilled by horse racing and the behind-the-scenes drama of the track, *The Horse That God Built* is must reading."--Michael Korda, author of *Horse People* Most of us know the legend of Secretariat, the tall, handsome chestnut racehorse whose string of honors runs long and rich: the only two-year-old ever to win Horse of the Year, in 1972; winner in 1973 of the Triple Crown, his times in all three races still unsurpassed; featured on the cover of *Time*, *Newsweek*, and *Sports Illustrated*; the only horse listed on ESPN's top fifty athletes of the twentieth century (ahead of Mickey Mantle). His final race at Toronto's Woodbine Racetrack is a touchstone memory for horse lovers everywhere. Yet while Secretariat will be remembered forever, one man, Eddie "Shorty" Sweat, who was pivotal to the great horse's success, has been all but forgotten---until now. In *The Horse God Built*, bestselling equestrian writer Lawrence Scanlan has written a tribute to an exceptional man that is also a backroads journey to a corner of the racing world rarely visited. As a young black man growing up in South Carolina, Eddie Sweat struggled at several occupations before settling on the job he was born for---groom to North America's finest racehorses. As Secretariat's groom, loyal friend, and protector, Eddie understood the horse far better than anyone else. A wildly generous man who could read a horse with his eyes, he shared in little of the financial success or glamour of Secretariat's wins on the track, but won the heart of Big Red with his soft words and relentless devotion. In Scanlan's rich narrative, we get a groom's-eye view of the racing world and the vantage of a man who spent every possible moment with the horse he loved, yet who often basked in the horse's glory from the sidelines. More than anything else, *The Horse God Built* is a moving portrait of the powerful bond between human and horse. Praise for *The Horse God Built*: "Scanlan's scope is encyclopedic" --*Publishers Weekly* "The author's tribute is heartfelt..." --*Kirkus* "...detailed in all its equine awesomeness." --*Maxim* "...will satisfy those who can't get enough of Secretariat." --*The New York Times* "An informative read that hardboots and novices alike can enjoy." --*The Lexington Herald Leader (Kentucky)* "Eddie Sweat's story represents the last great untold chapter in the Secretariat saga. Larry Scanlan has honoured both groom and horse by giving it to us at last." --John Jeremiah Sullivan, author of *Blood Horses: Notes of a Sportswriter's Son* "This well-researched book is a must for readers who are fans of the horse, but if you just want a good read, you're going to love this animal/human interest story." --Monty Roberts, author of *The Man Who Listens to Horses*

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

In this rambling tale, author Scanlan (*The Man Who Listens to Horses*) declares his intention to explore the relationship between Triple Crown winner Secretariat and his long-time groom, Eddie Sweat. For Scanlan, the African-American Sweat is a symbol of the exploited, underappreciated workers who make the sport of kings run but receive a pittance of the winnings and even less recognition. Scanlan's mission is a noble one, but although he's right there in the subtitle, the groom is strangely absent from the text, and the quest becomes a McGuffin that allows the writer to travel to racetracks around the country. The journey is not without its pleasures, however. Scanlan has written over a dozen books on horses, and this volume bulges with insight into and sensitivity toward the world of Thoroughbred horse racing. He offers hundreds of racing anecdotes and endless minutiae about Secretariat's career. More interestingly, he introduces readers to the marginal figures—grooms, hot-walkers, exercise riders, smalltime trainers, breeders and owners—whose love for horses and hope for a lucky break outweigh their desire to make a decent living. Sadly, he also explains that all too many broken-down Thoroughbreds end their careers in the abattoir. In this backstretch meditation, Scanlan's scope is encyclopedic, but his narrative never finally coheres. (May) Copyright © Reed Business Information, a division of Reed Elsevier Inc. All rights reserved. --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

One might question whether another account of Secretariat's life is really necessary. Bill Nack's marvelous *Big Red of Meadow Stable* (1975) still stands as the definitive biography of the 1973

Triple Crown winner's racing career, and Raymond Woolfe's *Secretariat* (2001) took us through the great horse's death in 1989. Scanlan takes a different approach, however, focusing largely on the horse's bond with his unsung groom, Eddie Sweat, and the roll that Sweat played in *Secretariat*'s unprecedented success and popularity. Scanlan makes a convincing case that Sweat was instrumental in keeping his horse healthy and happy, a necessary precondition for the success of any equine athlete. Extrapolating from the relationship between *Secretariat* and Sweat, Scanlan argues, again convincingly, that grooms are the largely unappreciated and universally underpaid bedrock upon which the entire edifice of Thoroughbred racing is built. His point is driven home by the poignant circumstances of Eddie Sweat's death in 1998. While *Secretariat*'s owner and trainer gained both fame and wealth through their association with the horse, the groom died penniless and-until now-unknown to all but a few racing insiders. Dennis Dodge

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As a person who has been enamored with horses...I loved watching the Triple Crown races since I was a little kid. I fell in love with Big Red the moment I laid eyes on him. More important, I was in awe of the man who was able to take care of him. This book fills in all the information I could only imagine! A great read of the love between a great horse and the man who made and loved him.

I loved the personal insight and the historical details regarding the story of *Secretariat*. I found the book stirring and informative as the story unfolded with information about Thoroughbred racing and the life of those who serve the sport, as grooms and riders. The details lacked some focus at the close of the book but the culmination of all that was written earned 5 stars with me.

I love this book! Of course I'm intrigued by horses of any breed. But I do love reading the stories about the thoroughbreds past and present. I'm soooo glad that someone finally recognized the extremely important role that Eddie Sweat and all of the grooms throughout the years have played in the well being of these animals. Knowing their likes and dislikes, having a calm demeanor with them, gaining their trust, I believe makes for a more mentally balanced horse which in turn gives the horse the confidence it needs to give their all.

Great book for horse lovers and racing fans. Who could not miss the love and passion for this horse? Who could miss the love of winning shown in an amazing animal? And what an awesome

God who enjoys surprising us with his creativity from time to time. I am glad I saw the movie, more glad that I read the book as well.

This book is beyond interesting! A really good read about an amazingly awesome horse that we will never see the likes of again.

The book arrived on time and was packaged properly so there was no damage to the book. I appreciate a professional job when it comes to shipping in order to get the package shipped so it would arrive in good condition. I have no problems with this order nor the seller. I would I have no problems in the future to place an order with this seller if needed. I'm still currently reading this book and I'm enjoying it a lot. I find the untold stories of Secretariat is very interesting to know. My only regret is in 1973 I was 21 years old. If I would have liked horses as much as I do today, I'm sure I would have attended all 3 races when Secretariat who won Won the triple crown and set the track record. For me to have been a part of that history in some small way would have been awesome and to share the stories would have been really great and the memories would live on forever.

Book is in excellent condition. Great read .. can hardly put it down.

This book has been recommended to me by numerous people and I can't wait to read it!

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