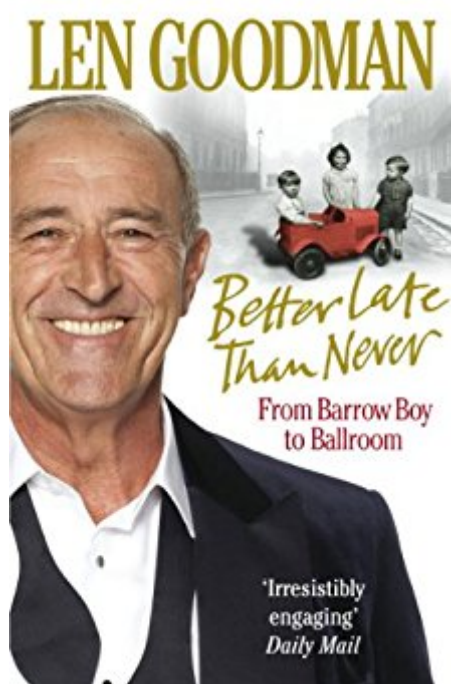


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Better Late Than Never: From Barrow Boy To Ballroom



Synopsis

Better Late Than Never is the extraordinary true story of how a man born into poverty in London's East End went on to find stardom late in life when he was chosen to be head judge on BBC1's Strictly Come Dancing. Len Goodman tells all about his new-found fame, his experiences on Strictly Come Dancing, and also on the no.1 US show Dancing with the Stars and his encounters with the likes of Heather Mills-McCartney and John Sergeant. But the real story is in his East End roots. And Len's early life couldn't be more East End. The son of a Bethnal Green costermonger he spent his formative years running the fruit and veg barrow and being bathed at night in the same water Nan used to cook the beetroot. There are echoes of Billy Elliot too. Though Len was a welder in the London Docks, he dreamt of being a professional footballer, and came close to making the grade had he not broken his foot on Hackney Marshes. The doctor recommended ballroom dancing as a light aid to his recovery. And Len, it turned out, was a natural. At first his family and work mates mocked, but soon he had made the final of a national competition and the welders descended en masse to the Albert Hall to cheer him on. With his dance partner, and then wife Cheryl, Len won the British Championships in his late twenties and ballroom dancing became his life. Funny and heart-warming, Len Goodman's autobiography has all the honest East End charm of Tommy Steele, Mike Read or Roberta Taylor.

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Customer Reviews

I am a huge fan of autobiographies/biographies, however, I was very disappointed with this one; in fact, after attempting to get involved with Len Goodman's story by reading at least 1/2 of the book, I was utterly bored and disappointed. The book does give credence to his family history, however, it begins to bore you with the technical aspect of ballroom dancing including his long personal history of his beginnings and continuation of his climb up the ballroom judging ladder.. in fact, that is what makes up most of the book. I ended up putting the book down as it caused me frustration which is opposite of what other autobiographies/biographies offer me...don't waste your money; in fact I paid more for this book than I normally would and regret it

Slightly disappointing, as I expected there to be more atmospheric, in-depth stuff about the ballroom world. The barrow-boy start is played up (I suspect by the editors/publishers). This still gets a 4, as I chose to buy/read it and Len can only write about the life he's had, about which he is fairly, commendably, modest.

I'm DWTS addict and it was fun to learn more about Goodman. He writes using lots of British slang, which was fun to read since I'd lived for a time in the UK. Would have liked to learn more inside info about the American pros and judges, but all in all a fine read.

Len Goodman, the crusty judge of "Dancing With the Stars" has had quite the career. From humble roots to competitive dancing to international fame, Len tells his story with his typical "tongue in cheek" style.

Once I got past the "David Copperfield kind of crap," I enjoyed the book quite a bit. As a ballroom dancer I enjoyed precisely the things that an earlier reviewer did not. I recommend the book to anyone interested in ballroom dancing.

I really enjoyed this book. I would recommend it to anyone. Excellent.

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