

RECENT PUBLICATIONS

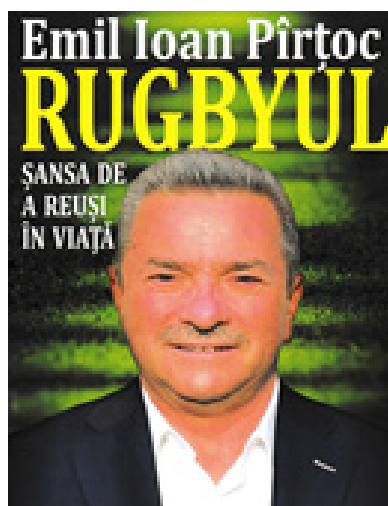
Book reviews

Rugby – the chance to succeed in life

Author: Emil Ioan Pîrțoc

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242 pages



The autobiographical book published by Emil Pîrțoc last year was well received by the sports community of Cluj. Emil Pîrțoc is an intelligent, ambitious and resilient man, as both author and persona of the book, but mainly as in day-to-day life as the mayor of the commune of Iclod, Cluj County. A former rugby player, referee, graduate of the Faculty of Physical Education, president of the Central Committee of Referees of the Romanian Rugby Federation, his life has been marked by the passion for rugby.

With great talent, humor and sincerity, the author describes important moments in his life, times when he was at crossroads, people who influenced his career and destiny. Young Emil Pîrțoc left his native village Iclod to study at the Railway Industrial School, where he had the unique and extraordinary chance (in his words) to meet the School Director, Professor Engineer Mircea Rusu, a legend of Romanian rugby, 23 times component of the Romanian National Rugby team. He was the man who forged his character and oriented him to this sport, which became his passion and “chance to succeed in life”.

The story is a praise for this wonderful, manly sport, a team game that confers confidence and teaches one that there is no victory without a joint effort, without the force of the whole team. The passion for rugby, friendship and people encountered while he was a player, then a referee, was the spur and a guarantee for the decisions made. Emil Pîrțoc proves real qualities of a story teller and journalist when

he recalls the period when he was President of the Central College of Referees in the Rugby Federation, happening, meetings and discussions with important personalities of national and international rugby. The love of rugby, the chance to be both player and referee, the understanding of the rules meant to guard against hazards, accidents that might harm players brought him wide appreciation. The postface of the book includes brief tributes to the Man, Chief Referee and Mayor Emil Pîrțoc. Here are just three of the more than 50:

- “When you get tired of politics, come back to refereeing, we need you so much” - Patrick Robin, manager of the referees, Amateur Rugby International Federation (ARIF) and Rugby Europe.

- “I am glad to have had the chance to meet, learn from each other, and I am sure we forged a lifelong friendship” - Donald Courtney, Referee Manager EPCR Dublin.

- “Besides rugby, he had the honor to be elected mayor of his home town, a wonderful confirmation for the man and leader. People know they are lucky to have such a man in their midst” - David Mc Hugh – referee manager Georgia Federation.

I truly enjoyed the last chapter of the book, “A change of destiny”, in which he makes a confession of faith. Returned from Dublin, after a meeting of the chief referees in Europe (2012), he pays a short visit to Iclod and sadly realizes the differences in infrastructure and living conditions compared to Ireland. As he confesses, he had the revelation of his duty “to give something back to my home town, something from my experience, from what I learnt through my efforts, from the people I met during the 35 years I was gone”. Encouraged by his wife, he decided to give up his sports functions and embrace public administration, as a candidate for mayor. Due to his outgoing, sincere nature, a gift of public speech, he won over the community, people being convinced that their Emil would not betray their expectations. The Mayor Emil Pîrțoc, now at his third mandate, surpassed himself, transforming Iclod into a modern commune with paved streets, school, cultural center, water supply, sewage system. His passion for sports and rugby materialized as a modern stadium, with stands and changing rooms, adequate for any competition. In the end of the book, he makes a confession from the heart: “It doesn’t matter who stands in front of you, what matters is who stands beside you”, which reflects what rugby truly represents, “a sport of ruffians practiced by gentlemen”, as Pierre de Coubertin said, himself a rugby player, meaning that what happens in rugby also happens in life.

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