



# The Poisoned Chalice: The rise and fall of the post-isolation Springbok coaches

*Gavin Rich*

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The Springboks have had several post-isolation coaches, and if they agree on nothing else, they will concur that everyone in the job suffers enormous pressure. Unlike coaches from other rugby-playing countries, they also face many obstacles outside of the game, such as South Africa's complicated politics and the often unrealistic expectations of both the public and the media. It has been called a poisoned chalice, and everyone, from the first post-isolation coach, John Williams, to the incumbent, Heyneke Meyer, can attest to its veracity. Now, for the first time, their journeys are recorded in one book, and as part of one story. The Poisoned Chalice takes an in-depth look at each of the coaches in the post-apartheid years, and at the same time examines how the role has evolved over the past two decades. From the triumphs to the controversies, the boardroom to the rugby field, this book reveals exactly what it takes to be the Bok coach, and why each and every one of them, at some time or another in the toughest job in South African sport, lost it. A riveting, often revelatory and definitely controversial read!

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