



The prized possession you value above all others... My bulldog Lulu (pictured). I'm a real softie and love going for a walk with her. That's how I unwind.

The biggest regret you wish you could amend... Not convincing my parents, Harry and Violet, to move from their flat in the East End of London to our house in Dorset for their last years. Their flat in Stepney was covered in security bars. Mum died eight years ago after a series of strokes and Dad died two years later from cancer, at 82.

The way you would spend your fantasy 24 hours, with no travel restrictions... I'd begin the day with my wife Sandra at the Caruso hotel in Ravello, Italy. I'd have a full English on the terrace while looking at the Amalfi Coast, then walk into the town for a coffee. I'd take our grandchildren – I've got seven aged four to 14 – to Disney World in Florida. Lunch would be double pie and mash with liquor [parsley sauce] at Kelly's in Bethnal Green. Then I'd have jellied eels at two legendary stalls in Aldgate – one is owned by Tubby and the other by Barney. I'd have spicy lobster pasta for dinner at Pitrizza hotel in Sardinia with red wine. I'd end the day in Lapland with the grandkids going on a sleigh ride to meet Father Christmas.

The temptation you wish you could resist... Buying racehorses. I've got nine and it's very expensive, but I love it.

The book that holds an everlasting resonance... Bobby Charlton's autobiography. He's an icon of football.

The priority activity if you were the Invisible Man for a day... I'd hang around the dressing room at QPR to hear what the players say about me.

The pet hate that makes your hackles rise... People running down Britain. This country is a fantastic place.

The film you can watch time and time again... The Godfather. I love that gangster stuff, which is probably a throwback to growing up in the East End.

The person who has influenced you most... My dad. He was a docker but he was also passionate about sport. He taught me to be fair and honest.

The figure from history for whom you'd most like to buy a pie and a pint... Muhammad Ali. He was The Greatest and was poetry in motion.



"I'm a compulsive bird feeder, even at 5am in the dead of winter – I hate to think of them going hungry"

The misapprehension about yourself you wish you could erase... That I'm a jack-the-lad wheeler-dealer. I've been saddled with that because I have a cockney accent but I'm straight and honest.

The event that altered the course of your life and character... That car crash during the World Cup in 1990. Our minibus was hit by another car. My friend [former footballer] Brian Tiler died and I had a fractured skull. It was horrific and taught me to value every day.

The crime you would commit knowing you could get away with it... I'd rob anyone who is cruel to animals of their savings and give it to animal charities.

The song that means most to you... Barry White's Just The Way You Are reminds me of Sandra. We've been married for 47 years. When thinking of me, she'll probably relate to the line 'I don't want clever conversation!'

The happiest moment you will cherish forever... Meeting Sandra at a disco at the Two Puddings in Stratford in 1963 when I was 16. I'd be lost without her.

The saddest time that shook your world... When Sandra's sister Pat [mother of footballer Frank Lampard] died from pneumonia in 2008. It was awful to see the kids so heartbroken.

The unfulfilled ambition that continues to haunt you... To lead a football team to the Premiership title.

The philosophy that underpins your life... Be nice to people on the way up because you might meet them again on the way down.

The order of service at your funeral... I'd have a church service with Abide With Me because it reminds me of the FA Cup final. I want my ashes laid to rest overlooking the sea near Bournemouth.

The way you want to be remembered... As someone who had time for everyone.

The Plug... Always Managing by Harry Redknapp, Ebury Press, £20. ■

As told to Rob McGibbon

The DEFINITE ARTICLE

We ask a celebrity a set of devilishly probing questions – and only accept **THE** definitive answer. This week: football manager Harry Redknapp

The piece of wisdom you would pass on to a child... Manners maketh man.

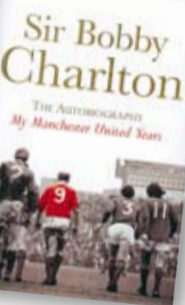
The unlikely interest that engages your curiosity... I'm a compulsive bird feeder! You'll see me out in the dead of winter at 5am, filling up our bird feeders and tables. We have about 30 and I can easily spend 80 quid on bird food a fortnight in the pet shop. I won't leave for work until I've fed them – I hate to think of them going hungry. Bit mad, innit?

The treasured item you lost and wish you could have again... A gold Omega watch I was given when I won the Junior World Cup with England in 1963. I was in a crash in Italy in 1990 and the watch was gone when I woke up in hospital.

The unending quest that drives you on... For my grandchildren to grow up into clean-cut, good-natured adults.

The poem that touches your soul... I'd be lying if I said I read poetry.

From top: Father Christmas in Lapland, Barry White, a bird feeder and one of Harry's racehorses, Moviesta



Above: Bobby Charlton's autobiography and Muhammad Ali



PS...

Martin Freeman's back as Bilbo Baggins in *The Desolation Of Smaug* – in cinemas Friday. The stage version of Julia Donaldson's *The Snail And The Whale* is at London's St James Theatre from Tuesday. And Leona Lewis's new album *Christmas, With Love* is out now



NEXT WEEK

- Kirstie Allsopp's top tips for a homemade Christmas
- John Torode and Gregg Wallace's turkey with a twist
- Monty Don shows you how to make a Christmas wreath
- Britain's best TV listings