

Teacher's notes

Great Football Stories

by Russ Williams



SUMMARY

Football is a game which inspires tremendous passion. Dramatic as well as hilarious events happen on the pitch as well as off it. In his entertaining and informative book, Russ Williams looks at the scandals, dirty deals, fights and even wars that have coloured the game throughout its history.

ABOUT RUSS WILLIAMS

Russ Williams is a journalist. He has written about football for many years, and writes for many different newspapers. In addition to writing he has also been a football presenter on both radio and television. He loves football!

BACKGROUND AND THEMES

Soccer football is the most popular sport in the world. It is played in over 200 countries by more than 117 million registered athletes, and its top matches are watched by billions of people on television screens around the world.

Ball games have been played for thousands of years, but the rules of what we now call football were established in England in the mid-19th century. At that time, there were already many football clubs around the country and the game was also played in schools. However, every school and club had its own set of rules. Some allowed the ball to be handled, while some did not. Some permitted tripping and pulling opponents down, but some banned these things. Some rules needed to be created so that all these teams could play against each other, and therefore in 1846 a group of men met at Cambridge University to decide a unified set of rules.

The rules decided upon at this meeting were generally accepted, and in 1863 the Football Association was formed in London to establish these rules throughout the country. The form of football upon which the Association agreed was essentially the game that we know now, and is sometimes called 'soccer' - short for 'association' - football. Those people who wanted to play the sort of football game in which the ball can be carried formed their own association to play what came to be called 'rugby' football.

After the regulation of the game, soccer became more and more popular. The Football Association held its first

cup competition - the 'Football Association Challenge Cup', or the FA Cup - in 1872, and the football league was started in 1888. By the 1880s, 128 clubs in England and Scotland belonged to the Football Association, and by the end of the century some of Britain's most famous clubs were already established.

During the same period, the English Football Association's version of the game was spreading to other countries, especially to the rest of Europe and to South America. Often, soccer was introduced into foreign countries by British sailors or settlers. Sometimes, foreign visitors to Britain introduced the game to their own countries when they returned home. Once other Europeans had been inspired by the game, they also spread it as they migrated across the globe. For example, it was Italian immigrants who really made football popular in South America. In Africa, the game was introduced by European colonists.

However, it is the French who have done most to organize international football. In 1904 in Paris, the Fédération Internationale de Football Association (FIFA) was founded to bring together the national football associations from all over the world. In the 1920s it was a French president of FIFA, Jules Rimet, who was the main force behind the launching of the World Cup tournament. Another Frenchman, Henri Delaunay, proposed the European Championship tournament in the mid-1950s when he was secretary of the French football federation.

The World Cup tournament is held every four years. The World Cup final matches are played in one, or possibly two, host countries and are only the last set of games in a long programme of matches. FIFA now has more than 150 members from all over the world, but only a very small number of them play in the final stages of the competition. In 1998 the number of teams in the finals was increased from 24 to 32, but this still means that all the other teams that enter are knocked out in series of local matches played in Africa, Europe, Asia and the Americas. Many teams have to play 12 matches even to qualify for the finals. The only teams that do not go through this programme of matches are the host nation's team and the existing champions, who qualify automatically.

The European Championship tournament is also held every four years, two years after the World Cup. This is

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another hard round of games for the players, who must play all their international matches in addition to the matches that they play for their clubs. Perhaps it is not surprising, then, that the players do not always play their best in every game, or that their tempers are sometimes high!

However, football continues to provide the world with some of the most dramatic moments and colourful personalities in all sport. It was for good reason that Pelé, who came from Brazil and was probably the greatest player of all time, called it 'the beautiful game'.

Communicative activities

The following teacher-led activities cover the same sections of text as the exercises at the back of the reader, and supplement those activities. Further supplementary exercises, covering shorter sections of the book, can be found on the photocopiable Student's Activities pages of this Factsheet. These are primarily for use with class readers, but with the exception of pair/groupwork questions, can also be used by students working alone in a self-access centre.

ACTIVITIES BEFORE READING THE BOOK

- Put students into small groups. Ask them to discuss the reasons why football is the most popular sport all over the world. If they need help, get them to think about the following things.
Playing: two people are enough for a game; people can play in wet or dry weather; people can play anywhere; it is fast, fun, exciting; people don't have to be really good before they can enjoy playing.
Watching: it is easy to understand the rules; it is fun to follow a team; it is an international game and teams can be the best in the world.
- Ask the class: Do you agree that Pelé was the greatest player of all time? Who is the greatest today? Get students to check the following in their dictionaries: goalkeeper, defender, midfielder, striker. Who is the greatest goalkeeper/defender/midfielder/striker today?

ACTIVITIES AFTER READING A SECTION

Chapters 1-3

- Most of the stories in these chapters are about fights, but football can also bring people together. Put students into pairs and ask them to answer: Football brings people together. What example of this is there in these chapters? Can you think of other ways in which football brings people together?
- Put students into groups. Ask them to discuss: There is less trouble at football matches in the UK now than there was in the 1980s. Is this true of your own country? Why?

Chapters 4-6

- Put students into pairs. They role play a conversation between a police officer and one of the criminals in the betting group in Italy in 1980. The criminal is unhappy

because the betting group gave money to players to lose, but then they won.

- Put students into groups. They discuss:
 - Why do players who are very rich cheat to get more money?
 - Can you think of other sports where people cheat to get the right result?
 - Can you think of other ways of cheating, such as using drugs (tell them to look up *drugs* in their dictionaries).
- Put students into pairs. They imagine that they have a brother or son of 12 years old, who could become a professional footballer. What would they say to him?

Chapters 7-9

Put students into pairs. They are Gary Speed and the hotel manager. Gary Speed tells the hotel manager that he has been robbed. The hotel manager asks him how it happened.

ACTIVITIES AFTER READING THE BOOK

In groups, students discuss:

- Do footballers behave in the right way for famous people? Are there any excuses for the 'bad' things they do? Is it good that they can have fun sometimes? Or is it bad, because young people copy footballers?
- Is it fair that newspapers write about a player's private life?

Glossary

It will be useful for your students to know the following new words. They are practised in the 'Before You Read' sections of exercises at the back of the book. (Definitions are based on those in the Longman Active Study Dictionary.)

Chapters 1-3

fan (n) somebody who likes a person or thing very much
goal (n) in football, when the ball goes through the middle of the two posts./ The two posts are called the goal.
kidnap (v) to take somebody away and ask for money before you will give them back
league (n) a group of sports teams who play games against each other
manager (n) this person looks after the team
match (n) a game between two teams
penalty (n) this is when a player can kick the ball into the goal (see above) of the other team, because the other team have broken the rules
pitch (n) a part of a field where games are played
referee (n) a person who watches a game and decides if it is fair
score (v) to win points in a game
stadium (n) a large sports field with seats all round it
violence (n) this is when people get angry and hurt things or people

Chapters 4-6

agent (n) a person who looks after business for other people
ban (v) to say that somebody cannot go somewhere
bets (n) to put money on a future result
championship (n) games to find out who is the best
cheat (v) to do something which is not honest

Chapters 7-9

alarm (n) a loud noise which tells people of danger



Student's activities

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Students can do these exercises alone or with one or more other students. Pair/group-only activities are marked.

Activities before reading the book

Look at the cover of the book and the pictures inside. What will you find in the book? Are the stories in the book true? Do you know the players on the cover?

Activities while reading the book

CHAPTERS 1 - 3

Chapter 1

- Fill the gaps in the sentences with the dates. Then put the sentences in the right order.
 - Nearly 2000 years ago
 - In about 1180
 - By the 1600s
 - Slowly, over the next 200 years
 - By the end of the 1800s

The History of Football

- people were playing football all over England.
 - Li Yu wrote about a game between two teams with a round ball.
 - people were playing football all over the world.
 - football became less like a war and more like a game.
 - William Fitz also wrote about a ball game that many people played in England.
- What killed two players at the game where a storm blew up?
 - What three things were used to kill people at games in South America?

Chapter 2

- Why does football make fans and players do things that are not sensible?
- What happened in the past in South America that explains the violent fights of the present?
- Match (a) - (d) with (i) - (iv) to make sentences.
 - At Wembley in England, during a match between Leeds and Liverpool
 - In Kigali, Rwanda, at a match between Ghana and Rwanda
 - In South America at a match between Argentina and Uruguay
 - In Yugoslavia, at a match between Dinamo Zagreb and Red Star Belgrade
 - fans, players and police all started fighting.
 - one of the players hit the referee and there was a big fight.
 - Johnny Giles suddenly hit Kevin Keegan.

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- not all the fans could get in to watch the match.

Chapter 3

- Put the sentences below in order.
 - The third match was in Mexico City.
 - A week later, the Honduran team went to El Salvador for the second game.
 - The next day El Salvador did not play as well as usual.
 - The El Salvadorian fans made a lot of noise outside the Honduran team's hotel.
 - El Salvador won again and went into the 1970 World Cup.
 - In 1969 a war broke out between Honduras and El Salvador.
 - Two weeks later El Salvador's soldiers crossed into Honduras.
 - But the El Salvador fans started to fight the Honduran fans.
 - The Honduran fans wanted to keep the El Salvador team awake, so they made a lot of noise outside their hotel.
 - A few hours later, the problems between the two countries were very bad.
 - The trouble started on the 7th June in the Honduran capital.
 - The next day, El Salvador won the match easily.
- Why do fans become so angry if their team does not win matches in the World Cup?
- Some people think that England lost to Germany in 1970 because of what happened to Bobby Moore. What did happen to Bobby Moore? Tell another student or write a paragraph.

CHAPTERS 4 - 6

Chapter 4

- Right or wrong?
 - In 1915, Liverpool decided to lose against Manchester United, and put bets on Manchester to win.
 - In 1965, Milan paid a referee to stay in Milan.
 - The president of a London team, Saint Germain, paid people to get the scores he wanted.
 - In 1978 in Brazil, Gremio tried to lose against Juventude, but won.
- Who did the worse crime in Italy in 1980: the criminals in the betting group or the players who took money to lose but played well to win? Talk to another student or write your answer.

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Student's activities

Chapter 5

- In 1891, the Aston Villa goalkeeper did something unusual. This made the Football Association change the rules of the game. What did he do? What new rule did they make?
- Did the Sarsfield Velez team from Argentina cheat or not? Write a sentence to explain what you think.
- Have you ever cheated in a game (perhaps by mistake!)? If so, tell a partner or write a paragraph about it.
- In this chapter, which is your favourite story about cheating? Tell your partner the story, from memory if possible.

Chapter 6

Who said these things? When did they say them?

- The manager of Preston North End
 - Arsenal's manager, George Graham
 - Fulham's George Parsonage
- 1995 (ii) The 1950s (iii) 1884
 - 'I didn't mean it. I was only being funny.'
 - 'If it happens to you, say No, No, No!'
 - 'I have to pay them. If I don't, we won't be as good as other clubs.'

CHAPTERS 7 - 9

Chapter 7

- Two sentences below are about Gary Speed, two are about George Best and two are about Malcolm Allison. Put the right name against each.
 - He came in with the girl when the players were in the bath.
 - He didn't want to tell his girlfriend, but a newspaper found out.
 - He tried to telephone Brigitte Bardot.
 - He arrived at Crystal Palace with a girl who was only wearing a coat.
 - He took two girls back to his hotel and they robbed him.
 - He was a wonderful player and he was also wonderful with women.
- Answer the following questions.
 - Why did Gary Speed's agent try to keep the story out of the newspaper?
 - Did Marjorie Wallace have a boyfriend? How did Best know?
 - Did George Best steal some of Marjorie Wallace's things?
 - How many of George Best's girlfriends were at the dinner table?

Chapter 8

- Fill in the gaps, using: *must, must not, or can*.
An agent....
 - be on FIFA's special list of agents.
 - get any player for a club if the

player is not already playing with another club.

- break FIFA's rules.
 - agree with clubs about the money they will pay a player.
 - generally do business for a player if the player asks him to.
- Fill in the gaps, using *West Ham, Swindon, or Oxford*.
Joey Beauchamp played for (a)
(b) and (c)
both wanted to buy him. He liked (d)
..... because it wasn't so far from where he lived,
but he agreed to play for (e)
He didn't play there for very long and moved to (f)
..... In the end he went back to (g)
.....

Chapter 9

- A player or players from which team or teams ...
 - ... tell the bus driver to drive the wrong way?
 - ... carried a woman out of a room?
 - ... thought there was a fire but there wasn't?
 - ... went on tour to Barbados?
 - ... talked about the tour in a room where the wives were?
 - ... had white faces?

- Correct this story about Frank Worthington.

Frank Worthington was a dancer for Liverpool. On one tour of Germany, he met a pretty New York actress. He wanted to spend some time with her, but there was a younger woman with her all the time. So he asked the other dancers to help him. He wanted them to take the younger woman away somewhere.

He went to the actress's room but the younger woman answered the door and the actress was not there. She was acting in London, the woman said.

Worthington started talking to the younger woman and liked her. He was becoming less friendly with her when the other dancers came into the room and carried her away!

Activities after reading the book

Choose your favourite stories. Which are your favourite stories about...

- ... fighting?
- ... cheating?
- ... girls?
- ... tours?

Which of the stories you have chosen is the best of all? Why? Tell the other students in the class. Have they chosen the same story?



Football (or soccer as the game is called in some parts of the world) has a long history. Football in its current form arose in England in the middle of the 19th century. But alternative versions of the game existed much earlier and are a part of the football history. Early history and the precursors of football. The first known examples of a team game involving a ball, which was made out of a rock, occurred in old Mesoamerican cultures for over 3,000 years ago. The history of the most popular sport in the world is incredible. Centuries have passed since the introduction of the sport we now call soccer or football (or whatever you want to call it), and in that time, history has been made... So sit back and enjoy the most bizarre soccer stories of all time. And I promise, every single one is true. All Fogged Up Michigan's Greatest Football Stories. I wrote it in 2013 and they're still great stories. But also please consider Miracle Moments in Michigan Wolverines Football History, which I co-authored with my son, Derek, this year for Skyhorse Publishing, NYC. Go Blue: Michigan's Greatest Football Stories. 25 August 2018. Check out our new Facebook page: Miracle Moments in Michigan Wolverines Football History, just released! The best football stories you've probably never heard before, written by some of the world's leading sports journalists. Spanning over 100 years of sporting history from across the footballing planet, the stories are narrated by leading actors and feature rich sound design and specially composed music. Some obscure football stories worth telling. Some stories are drab and not worth being narrated. However, there are some events that are so beautiful or ugly that it etches itself to the walls of eternity. And the intention of this article is to bring to you the ones worth telling. From the dog that saved United to Emmanuel Adebayor's story of God's divine intervention—here are the 7 most unbelievable football stories of all time! #1 The dog that saved United. Ah, isn't it kind of wonderful to make misleading titles/sub-titles?