



LISTENING: WHAT CAN FOOTBALL LEARN FROM RUGBY?

In order to do this task, you should follow these steps:

1. Listen to the podcast.
2. Do the exercises below.
3. Have a look at the vocabulary support and read the podcast transcript to help you understand the text if necessary.

✓ **WORKSHEET**

1. **The common origin of rugby and football goes back to...**
 - a. the famous public school boy called Webb Ellis
 - b. folk football
 - c. Rugby and football don't have a shared history.

2. **Rugby and football became two different sports...**
 - a. in the 19th century
 - b. when folk football started to be practised
 - c. when most boys in Britain and Ireland became either football players or rugby players

3. **What is the average time that is wasted in a football match?**
 - a. 55 minutes
 - b. 35 minutes
 - c. 90 minutes

4. **Any kind of complaint, swearing or dissent is more punishable in...**
 - a. In rugby and football these actions are common occurrences, so they are punished in the same way in both sports.
 - b. football
 - c. rugby

5. How many players and substitutes has a rugby team got?

- a. 15 players and eight substitutes
- b. 15 players and 11 substitutes
- c. 11 players and eight substitutes

✓ **VOCABULARY SUPPORT**

Folk football: a traditional game dating back several hundred years; often played on a festival at special days in the year

Limelight: spotlight; a prominent position in the news headlines

Wasted: useless

Goal kick: a free kick in soccer that is awarded to a defensive team when the ball has been driven out of bounds over the goal line by an opponent

Throw-in: return of the ball to play after it has crossed the touchline to go out of play. The throw must be taken with both hands from behind and over the head by a member of the opposing team to the one which sent it out of play

Stoppages: events which mean that the game has to be stopped

Injuries: physical damage or hurt

Free-kicks: a kick awarded for a foul or infringement, either direct, from which a goal may be scored, or indirect, from which the ball must be touched by at least one other player for a goal to be allowed

Average: an intermediate level or degree

Complaint: an expression of pain, dissatisfaction or resentment

Swearing: using bad language; inappropriate language

Dissent: arguing; complaining

To con: to trick; to cheat

Pundits: a person who is an expert or authority, or one who is treated as such, or one who is knowledgeable in an area or assumed to be so

Play on: when a referee allows the play to continue after a foul, believing the attacking side has an advantage

Advantage: a situation in soccer in which the referee has signalled that a foul has been committed but delays making the call because the fouled team has a more favourable position in play. If the fouled team loses this favourable position, the referee then makes the call.

Foul: an infraction or a violation of the laws of the game

Rugby union: a form of rugby football played between teams of 15 players

Up to: as many as

Fresh legs: new players; substitutes; players who have had a long rest

PODCAST TRANSCRIPT

WHAT CAN FOOTBALL LEARN FROM RUGBY?

Rugby and football have a shared history which goes all the way back to **folk football**. They became two distinct games in the 19th century when, famously, a public school boy called Webb Ellis picked the ball up during a game of football and ran with it. Since then, most boys in Britain and Ireland have either been football players or rugby players. But instead of being opponents of each other, maybe the two sports can learn from each other. In this listening report, we wonder how football could be improved by looking at the sport of rugby, currently enjoying the **limelight** with the Rugby World Cup.

Time keeping

A lot of time is **wasted** in football when the ball goes out of play for a corner, a **goal kick** or a **throw-in**. Add to this **stoppages** for **injuries** and **free kicks** and, in the last World Cup in Brazil, it was found that the **average** time there was football being played in each match was 55 minutes. As a football match is 90 minutes long, that's 35 minutes lost. Rugby, on the other hand, has a system that stops the clock when the game is interrupted.

Respect for the officials

Rugby is famous for the saying, 'the referee's decision is final'. Any kind of **complaint**, **swearing** or **dissent** is punished with a penalty or even moving a kick at goal closer when there has already been a penalty given.

In football, in contrast, swearing at the referee, surrounding the referee and complaining, trying **to con** the referee, are all common occurrences. Surely, football can learn from rugby on this one.

Communication with player and fans

Many watching football games, fans, **pundits** and players are left confused as to why a referee made a decision. Did a referee allow **play on** to allow **advantage** or did the referee think there was no **foul**? Was the yellow card for dissent or for repeated fouls?

Some referees can be very good at communicating their decisions, but many are not so good. In rugby, referees spend a lot more time explaining to players why they made a decision and with access to video, which is shown on the stadium screen, the fans can also see, and often hear, what is happening.

Substitutions

Although **rugby union** has more players than football, 15 versus 11, they can use **up to** eight substitutes. Perhaps, football would benefit from being able to bring on more **fresh legs**. After all, most people say the game has got faster and players need to be fitter than 10 or 20 years ago.