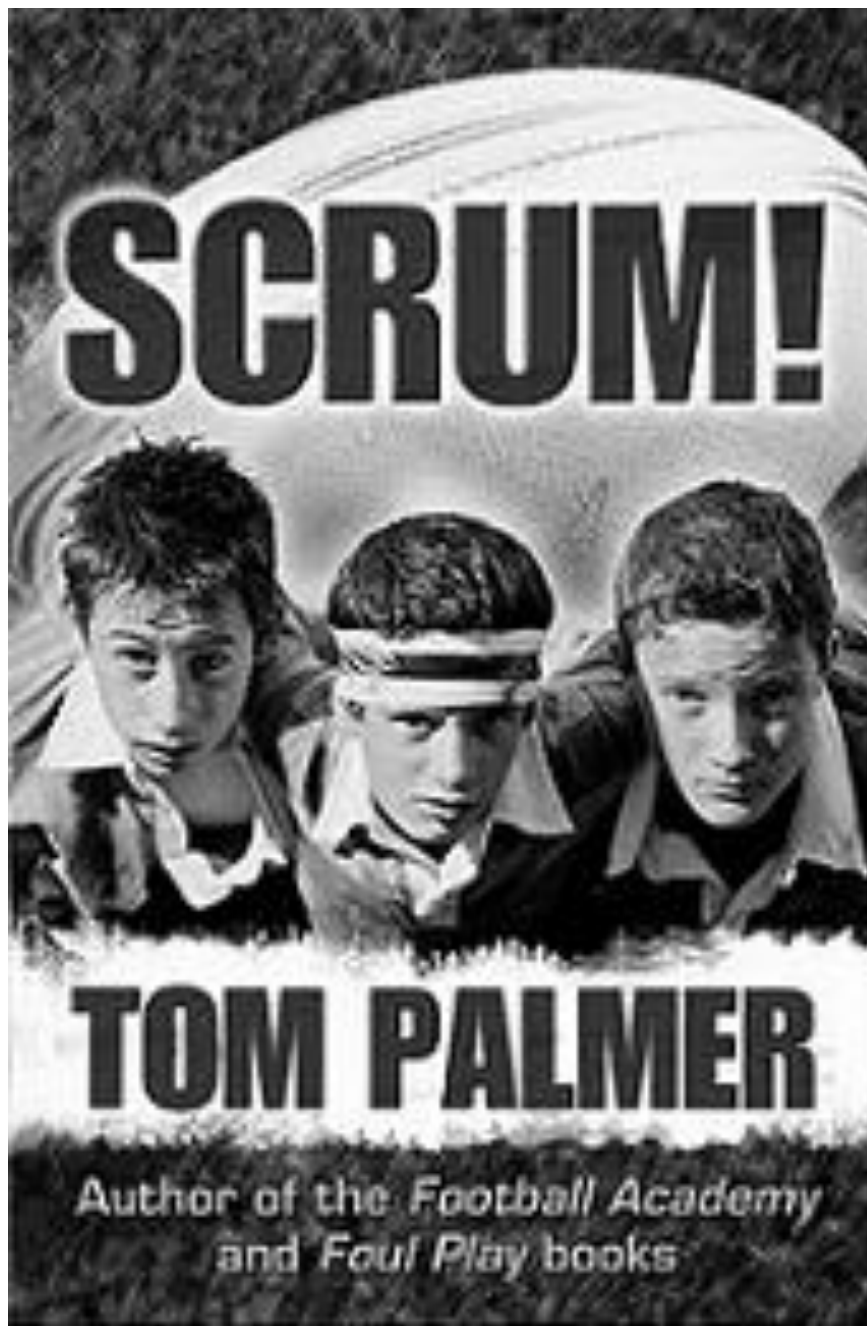


# **TOM PALMER**

## **Rugby and Literacy pack**



Literacy activities based on Tom Palmer's novel, *Scrum!* to encourage children to love reading.

Linking to the September/October 2011 Rugby World Cup and the February/March 2012 Six Nations. Or any time.



# Dear Teacher or Librarian

We have put together this bumper pack of exciting literacy activities to celebrate the publication of Tom Palmer's new children's rugby book *Scrum!*

We hope it will be an effective tool in helping you to encourage children to enjoy reading and writing for pleasure. Also, that it may be useful to introduce or follow up a visit from Tom. There is background information on Rugby Union, Rugby League, the 2011 World Cup and the 2012 Six Nations competitions.

You are welcome to copy any of these pages, and the first chapters of *Scrum!* and first chapters of all of Tom Palmer's *Football Academy* and *Foul Play* books are available at [www.tompalmer.co.uk](http://www.tompalmer.co.uk).

Tom has also written an accompanying Rugby World Cup Toolkit, **Love Rugby: Love Reading** which is available FREE from the National Literacy Trust at [http://www.literacytrust.org.uk/resources/practical\\_resources\\_info/3632\\_love\\_rugby\\_love\\_reading](http://www.literacytrust.org.uk/resources/practical_resources_info/3632_love_rugby_love_reading)

For more free resources sign up to Tom's once-a-term literacy newsletter – email [info@tompalmer.co.uk](mailto:info@tompalmer.co.uk)

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**Happy reading!**

# About Tom Palmer



Tom Palmer is a sports fan and author. He didn't always do well at school, but once he got into reading about sport – in newspapers, magazines and books – he decided to be a sports fiction writer.

His new book for Barrington Stoke – *Scrum!* – is about a boy called Steven who feels he has to choose between rugby union and rugby league, between living in the north or south and his between dad and his step dad.

Tom has already written twelve books for Puffin, including five in his popular *Foul Play* series and six in the brilliant *Football Academy* series for younger children. You can download free first chapters of all the books at [www.tompalmer.co.uk](http://www.tompalmer.co.uk).

Tom is also a specialist in promoting reading. He visits hundreds of libraries and schools every year up and down the UK, inspiring tens of thousands of young readers. He has worked frequently for the National Literacy Trust, the Reading Agency, Booktrust and the British Council.

You can find lots more about Tom on his website [www.tompalmer.co.uk](http://www.tompalmer.co.uk), where he also writes a blog about his writing, his life and the schools he has visited.

# Tom Palmer Interview

We asked Tom some questions to help introduce you to him as a writer and to his new book, *Scrum!*

## **How did you become a writer?**

I started by writing a diary, then poems and stories. Once I got confident I tried to write whole books.

## **Which rugby team do you support, and why?**

Leeds Carnegie, Leeds Rhinos and Hunslet. I come from Leeds.

## **Which sort of rugby did you play?**

Bad rugby. I was rubbish. I was better at football and cricket and table tennis...



## **Where is the weirdest place you have played rugby?**

I had a game in the Sahara Desert in 1998 when I was on a walk raising money for charity. At midday. I'm on the left. You can see the camels behind us. Hard core rugby! I even scored a try.

## **What books have you enjoyed reading about rugby? And what are books do you like to read?**

I love *The Flea Thing* by Brian Faulkner and *The Rugby Zombies* by Dan Anthony. Also histories of the game.

## **Who are your favourite rugby players?**

In rugby union it has to be the England and Stade Francais lock... Tom Palmer. In rugby league, it's Kevin Sinfield.

## **Why did you swap from writing about football to writing about rugby?**

Children in places like St Helens and Leeds, South Wales and Northampton asked me to, because there was nothing for them.

## **Where is *Scrum!* set?**

The north and south of England.

## **What else do you like to do when you are not writing?**

I like talking in schools and I like fell funning. But my favourite thing is to be with my family.

# ***Scrum!* Storylines**

The fictional story of *Scrum!* has lots of storylines that could be useful to discuss in class with different age groups. We have added some questions that could be asked about certain passages.

## **Divorce / parents splitting up**

- pp. 4-5      What did Steven hope for his parents? What did Steven think his dad wanted?
- p. 38        How is Steven feeling about going home to the north?
- p. 40        Why doesn't he tell his dad the real reason why he's tired?
- pp. 58-50   How does Steven's mum respond to Steven being cross with his Dad?
- pp. 61-62   What makes Steven want to call his dad? How does Steven feel when he sees his dad's car?
- pp. 63-65   Why is Steven's dad upset? Who has Steven's dad turned to for support? How does Steven feel to see his dad upset?

## **Having a new parent**

- pp. 5-6      How does Steven's dad react to the other car and why?
- p. 8         What different feelings does Steven have towards Martin than he does for his dad?
- p. 30        How does Steven feel about being called 'Martin's lad' and why?
- pp. 58-60   How does Martin respond to Steven being cross with his dad? Does it surprise you?
- pp. 65-71   Where do Martin and Steven's dad go at the end of the book and why?

## **Moving home**

- p. 4         How often does Steven see both his parents?
- pp. 11-12   How do you think Steven feels about moving?
- p. 14        What does Steven do to help himself calm down?
- p. 16        Who does Steven choose to talk to about the move and why?
- pp. 19-22   What good has come out of the move for Steven? How is Steven feeling? How does Steven imagine his dad feels?

## **Starting a new school**

pp. 25-26 How does Steven feel on his first day at his new school?

pp. 31 What is different about his new school?

pp. 42 How do we know Steven is settling into his new life?

## **North v South**

p. 17 How does Craig think all southerners talk? Why does he think that?

p. 18 How does Craig think all southerners behave?

## **Rugby code & family loyalty**

pp. 1-4 What sort of rugby does Steven play?

p. 17 What sort of rugby do they play where he is moving to?  
How will Steven carry on playing?

pp. 23-24 Does Steven want to go to the rugby union match? Why?

p. 30 How does Steven react to being asked to play rugby union? Why?

pp. 32-35 What is the different rule Steven forgets about playing Rugby Union?  
How does he feel when he realises he made a mistake?  
How does he feel when he's invited to play again?

pp. 45-46 How does Steven think his dad would feel about him playing Rugby Union?

pp. 48-49 What is significant about the hotel?

pp. 51-56 How does Steven play in the rugby league match?  
Why does Steven think he played differently?  
Why does Steven tell his dad he's played Rugby Union?  
How does Steven's dad react to this news?  
How does Steven feel after telling his dad?

# Scrum! Reading Comprehension

From Page 2 , Tom Palmer reads it aloud [www.tompalmer.co.uk/index.php?page\\_id=50](http://www.tompalmer.co.uk/index.php?page_id=50)

'Steven saw the other player come from the left. He stepped up his pace until he was running fast. Very Fast.

That was all it took. Pace.

The other player, a winger, was left behind. He was so far behind that Steven could run back to the middle and dive over the goal line between the posts.

They won the game.

"That was fantastic, son, said Steven's dad in the car on the way back to Leeds after the game. He was on a high.

"You were the best player on that pitch by a mile," his dad went on. "It's only a matter of time before some club comes and snaps you up. A Super League club." Steven smiled and looked at his dad. He loved this. His dad was so sure that one day Steven would be a famous Rugby League player.'

1	Was the other player coming from Steven's right or left?
2	What position did the other player play?
3	Where did Steven dive over the goal line?
4	Who collected Steven?
5	What city were they going to?
6	What sort of club did Steven's dad think would snap him up?
7	How did Steven feel about his dad's belief that he would be famous?

# Scrum! Literacy Exercises

**Chapter 1** Imagine you are reporter interviewing Steven after his match. What questions would you ask? Work with a partner to take it in turns to be the reporter and the player.

**Chapter 2** In groups of three take it in turns to read out the dialogue between Steven, his Mum and Martin. Now imagine other ways the conversation might have gone and write one of them up like a play.

**Chapter 3** What would you say in a letter or text to Steven to cheer him up? You could share with him a time when you've felt low but remind him how things got better.

**Chapter 4** Write a timetable for Steven to help him organise himself to get to Leeds in time on Saturday morning, from what time he needs to set his alarm to when he should arrive in Leeds.

**Chapter 5** There seem to be too many things going round in Steven's head. Help him work through his feelings by writing a diary entry for him.

**Chapter 6** Write a match report for the school newspaper or website about Steven's debut rugby union match.

**Chapter 7** Steven is travelling home by train. Write a poem, perhaps using the rhythm of the train. You could base it on what you imagine Steven sees out the window or how he is feeling physically or emotionally.

**Chapter 8** Imagine Steven's dreams that night after being told he might play for his country one day. (Draw some empty thought bubbles and write/draw in them what Steven dreamt about, or create a timeline of events that shows all the things that Steven needs to do to help him achieve his dream.)



**Chapter 9** Write a description of The George Hotel for a hotel leaflet. You could focus on its history or try to describe the building's physical appearance.

**Chapter 10** After he stormed off, what do you think Steven's Dad wished he'd said instead. How do you think he would have preferred the conversation to have gone? Imagine the scout's conversations with Steven's dad. (Create a comic strip version of these conversations.)

**Chapter 11** What messages do you think Steven's dad left on the phone for him? (Using blank templates of an iPhone screen, write the messages down in order.)

**Chapter 12** What might have happened if Steven's dad had arrived shouting rather than crying? (Construct a flow diagram to show your predicted events.)

**Chapter 13** What do you think happened next? (Plan or write your own short story.)

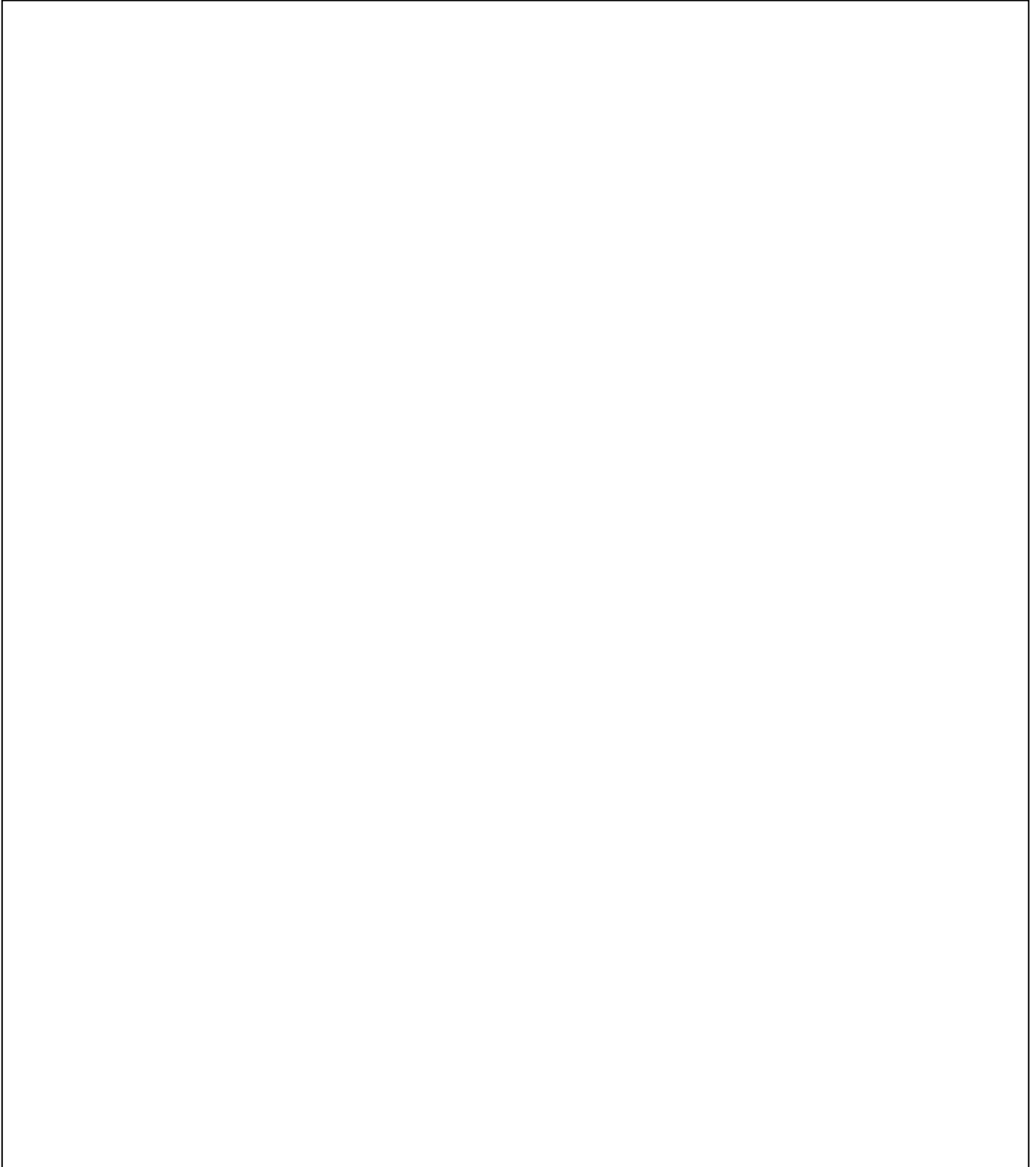
# My Own *Scrum!* Story

What do you think happened next to Steven? Did he continue to enjoy school? Did he carry on playing Rugby Union or Rugby League or both? What happened when his dad and step dad came back? Did he become an international rugby player?


# Draw My Own *Scrum!* Story

Fans of Tom Palmer's *Scrum!* book know all about rugby player Steven. But what do you think Steven looks like? Use the space below to draw him. You might like to sketch him playing rugby or on his first day at his new school.

My *Scrum!* character:



# Rugby League & Rugby Union

Rugby **League** and Rugby **Union** are both popular sports in the UK and many other countries. Rugby Union has been played for 200 years and Rugby League for over 100 years. The two sports split at a famous meeting in the George Hotel in Huddersfield, which is featured in the story.

In the UK, Rugby League is played mostly in the north of England, whereas Union is best known in the midlands, the south and in Wales and Scotland.

Both games have **scrums**, where players from both sides push against each other to win the ball. They both also have **tackles**, where a player has to release the ball if they are brought to the ground by an opponent.

Rugby League rules state that a team can only be tackled **six** times before handing the ball over to the other team. In Rugby Union this does not happen. The players use **maul** and **rucks** (where they push each other) to try to win the ball.

Rugby League has 13 players in each team and Rugby Union 15 players. They play with the same oval ball and with the same 'H' shaped goals at each end. Points are scored in both by scoring **tries**, where the ball is touched down over the try line, or kicking the ball between the **posts**.

# Rugby Calendar 2011-12

## 9 September - 23 October 2011

The **2011 Rugby World Cup** will be the seventh Rugby World Cup and the largest sporting event ever held in New Zealand.

South Africa are the current World Champions, having won the 2007 Rugby World Cup final in France. England were world champions in 2003.

This year teams from 20 countries will be competing in 4 groups or "Pools" of 5 and the winners will go through to the knockout of Quarter finals, Semi Final and Final.

The final will be played in Auckland at Eden Park.

Pool A Canada France Japan New Zealand Tonga

Pool B Argentina England Georgia Romania Scotland

Pool C Australia Ireland Italy Russia United States

Pool D Fiji Namibia Samoa South Africa Wales

## 4 February -17 March 2012

The **2012 Six Nations Championship** is an annual international rugby union competition involving six European sides: England, France, Ireland, Italy, Scotland and Wales.

This will be the 13th Six Nations Championship. It is the successor to the Five Nations and the Home Nations Championship, which was the first international rugby union tournament in the Northern Hemisphere, and was founded 120 years ago. The event is currently sponsored by the Royal Bank of Scotland.

England are the current title holders, beating France, who won a Grand Slam in 2010. England won the 2011 title on 19 March, when France defeated Wales at the Stade de France in a 28-9 win.

## Olympics 2012

The seven-a-side version of the game, known as Rugby Sevens, has been admitted into the programme of the Olympic Games from Rio de Janeiro in 2016. There is a strong possibility that Rugby Sevens will also be a demonstration sport at the 2012 London Olympics.

# Rugby Prediction Game

Test your rugby knowledge with this rugby prediction game! It is ideal to run over the whole school year. But you can adapt your own quiz so that you can run it over a competition like the World Cup or Six Nations or even one weekend's rugby matches. Also, there are two spaces at the end of the sheet for your class to choose things they would like to try and predict. Here are Tom's predictions for 2011-2012. See if you can beat him. You can ask him what his predictions are for your class idea by emailing [info@tompalmer.co.uk](mailto:info@tompalmer.co.uk) .

## Rugby Union

Can you predict ...	Your prediction	Tom's prediction
Winner of Aviva Premiership		<b>Leicester</b>
Relegated from Aviva Premiership		<b>Worcester</b>
Winner of Heineken Cup		<b>Northampton</b>
Winner of six nations		<b>England</b>
[Your class's idea for something else to predict]		
[Your class's idea for something else to predict]		

# Rugby Quiz

This is a selection of questions for use in or out of the classroom. They get harder in each group of five. You can find the answers in by reading about rugby in newspapers, magazines and books. (You can check your answers on Page 18).

1 Where is a player is sent for ten minutes if he does a deliberate foul?

2 How many players are there in an adult rugby union team?

3 Who kicked England's winning points in the 2003 Rugby World Cup Final?

4 What is the name of the rugby union European club trophy?

5 Which country do the club Toulouse play in?

6 Which Wales player took part in Strictly Come Dancing?

7 Which team won the 2007 rugby union World Cup?

8 What is the name of the move when a ball is thrown from the side of the pitch to two sets of players?

9 What is it called when a player fumbles the ball when trying to catch it?

10 Six countries enter the Northern Hemisphere's Six Nations tournament. Can you name them all?

11 Which country was the first to win the Rugby Union World Cup?

12 What year was the first rugby international match played?

13 What is it called when one team beat all the other five in the Six Nations competition?

14 Which country won both the first Five Nations and the first Six Nations tournaments?

15 What does it mean if the referee puts both hands over his head?

16 Which two teams compete for the Calcutta Cup?

17 Which former player wrote about his rugby career and his dyslexia in "The Hardest Test"?

18 What is the name of the boy who is supposed to have invented rugby by picking up a ball in a football match?

19 What year did the women's world cup start?

20 Who captained Ireland in both 2004 & 2006 to win the triple crown?



# Rugby Wordsearch

Hidden in this grid are 20 rugby terms. Can you find all 20 in one sitting?

(You can check your answers on Page 18).

Try	Forwards	Australia
Scrum	Centre	Conversion
Tackle	England	Leeds Rhinos
Hooker	Scotland	Leicester Tigers
Winger	Wales	Warrington
Prop	Ireland	Gum Shield
Backs	New Zealand	

R	U	A	I	L	A	R	T	S	U	A	R	U	N	G	Y
L	H	I	P	R	E	T	S	E	H	C	N	A	O	O	O
E	S	O	R	I	T	J	S	P	U	R	S	K	I	A	O
I	U	O	O	S	C	O	T	L	A	N	D	M	S	E	P
C	N	A	P	K	N	U	Z	L	O	I	U	A	R	S	R
E	D	L	R	C	E	Z	A	T	E	R	T	N	E	C	E
S	E	R	S	A	R	R	X	C	V	E	Y	S	V	R	V
T	R	U	X	B	E	T	R	Y	E	L	T	O	N	U	D
E	L	B	Y	O	D	A	H	E	S	A	I	N	O	M	N
R	A	F	S	N	N	C	A	S	A	N	C	I	C	O	A
T	N	O	C	V	A	K	Z	L	Z	D	E	H	U	B	L
I	D	R	B	I	L	L	K	E	A	O	K	R	O	K	A
G	C	W	I	N	G	E	R	H	Y	N	O	S	M	P	E
E	S	A	R	L	N	N	P	C	F	U	T	D	O	L	Z
R	A	R	M	A	E	D	L	E	I	H	S	M	U	G	W
S	G	D	Y	E	M	N	U	P	N	H	S	E	J	P	E
S	S	S	E	L	A	W	A	R	R	I	N	G	T	O	N

# Answers

## Quiz answers

- |   |                        |
|---|------------------------|
| 1) Sin bin  | 11) New Zealand        |
| 2) 15   | 12) 1871               |
| 3) Jonny Wilkinson                                      | 13) Grand Slam         |
| 4) Heineken Cup   | 14) England            |
| 5) France   | 15) A scrum            |
| 6) Gavin Henson   | 16) England & Scotland |
| 7) South Africa   | 17) Scott Quinnell     |
| 8) Line Out   | 18) William Webb Ellis |
| 9) A knock on   | 19) 1991               |
| 10) England, Scotland, Ireland,<br>Wales, Italy, France | 20) Brian O'Driscoll   |

## Wordsearch answers

R	U	A	I	L	A	R	T	S	U	A	R	U	N	G	Y
L	H	I	P	R	E	T	S	E	H	C	N	A	O	O	O
E	S	O	R	I	T	J	S	P	U	R	S	K	I	A	O
I	U	O	O	S	C	O	T	L	A	N	D	M	S	E	P
C	N	A	P	K	N	U	Z	L	O	I	U	A	R	S	R
E	D	L	R	C	E	Z	A	T	E	R	T	N	E	C	E
S	E	R	S	A	R	R	X	C	V	E	Y	S	V	R	V
T	R	U	X	B	E	T	R	Y	E	L	T	O	N	U	D
E	L	B	Y	O	D	A	H	E	S	A	I	N	O	M	N
R	A	F	S	N	N	C	A	S	A	N	C	I	C	O	A
T	N	O	C	V	A	K	Z	L	Z	D	E	H	U	B	L
I	D	R	B	I	L	L	K	E	A	O	K	R	O	K	A
G	C	W	I	N	G	E	R	H	Y	N	O	S	M	P	E
E	S	A	R	L	N	N	P	C	F	U	T	D	O	L	Z
R	A	R	M	A	E	D	L	E	I	H	S	M	U	G	W
S	G	D	Y	E	M	N	U	P	N	H	S	E	J	P	E
S	S	S	E	L	A	W	A	R	R	I	N	G	T	O	N

# My Book Review

What did you like best about it? Which character did you like the most? Did anything surprise you in the story? Did you like the ending?

**Words that may help you** exciting / adventure / action / torn / loyalty / relationships

**Reader's name**

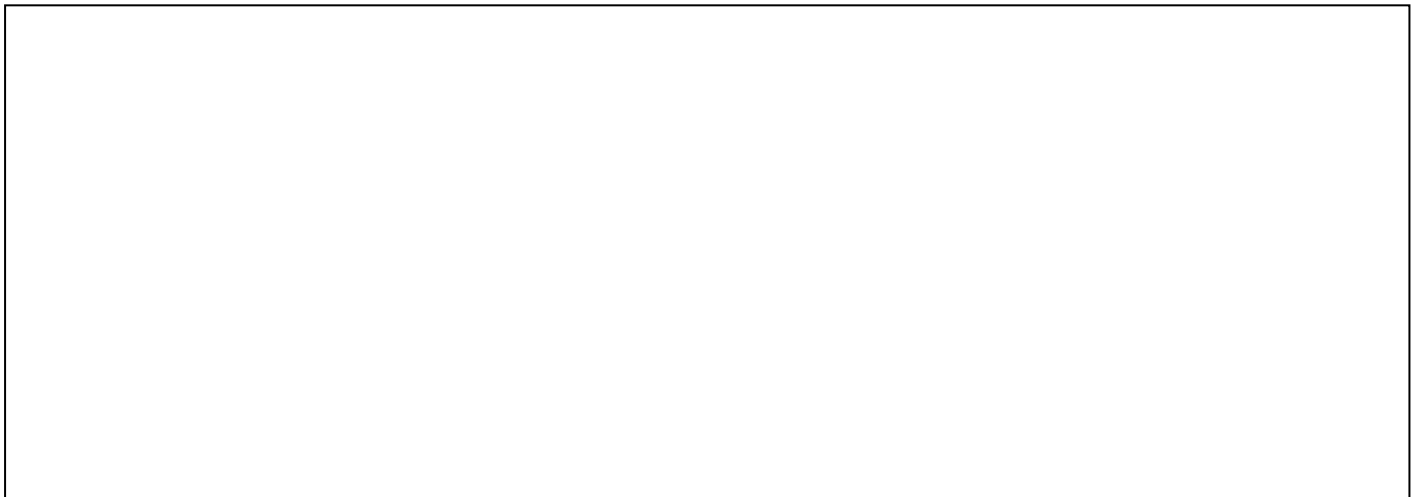
**Book Title**

**Author**

**What did you think about the story?**

**Who was your favourite character and why?**

**Draw a picture of the favourite part of your story below**



# Further Reading

## Websites

[http://news.bbc.co.uk/sport1/hi/rugby\\_union/default.stm](http://news.bbc.co.uk/sport1/hi/rugby_union/default.stm)

[http://news.bbc.co.uk/sport1/hi/rugby\\_league/default.stm](http://news.bbc.co.uk/sport1/hi/rugby_league/default.stm)

the best places to look for rugby news and everything else rugby-related.

[www.literacytrust.org.uk](http://www.literacytrust.org.uk) the online HQ of the National Literacy Trust which produces fantastic resources to advance reading and literacy. It's also offering a new rugby literacy activity pack *Love Rugby Love Reading*.

[www.barringtonstoke.co.uk](http://www.barringtonstoke.co.uk) everything you need to know about its books and authors.

[www.tompalmer.co.uk](http://www.tompalmer.co.uk) Tom Palmer's official website.

## Full List of books by Tom Palmer

Scrum (Barrington Stoke) ISBN 978-1-84299-944-8

Foul Play 1 (Puffin) ISBN 9780141323671

Foul Play 2 : Dead Ball (Puffin) ISBN 978014132368

Foul Play 3 : Off Side (Puffin) ISBN 9780141323671

Foul Play 4 : Killer Pass (Puffin) ISBN 9780141331188

Foul Play 5 : Own Goal (Puffin) ISBN 978-0141331195

Football Academy 1 : Boys United (Puffin) ISBN 9780141324678

Football Academy 2 : Striking Out (Puffin) ISBN 9780141324685

Football Academy 3 : The Real Thing (Puffin) ISBN 9780141324692

Football Academy 4 : Reading the Game (Puffin) ISBN 9780141324708

Football Academy 5 : Free Kick (Puffin) ISBN 978014132471

Football Academy 6 : Captain Fantastic (Puffin) ISBN 9780141324722

The Secret Football Club (Puffin) ISBN 9780141328201

## Other resources

Don't forget that newspapers and magazines can be great sources of information for children. Keep library copies of newspapers available so that children can read match reports, previews and interviews, or perhaps cut out interesting stories and paste them into a special rugby scrapbook. You might also like to buy some copies of Rugby World and Rugby League World magazines. Don't underestimate the value of publications like these – many people, Tom Palmer included, became interested in reading in this way before getting hooked on books!