



Making Everything Easier!™

3rd Edition

Rugby Union

FOR
DUMMIES®

Learn to:

- Understand the laws that form the heart of the game
- Talk tactics and share your opinions on lineouts, scrums and offside
- Scrum down and get involved
- Get to grips with the history of the game, the club scene and the World Cup

Nick Cain

Rugby columnist, The Sunday Times

Greg Growden

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Rugby Union For Dummies[®], 3rd Edition

Visit www.dummies.com/cheatsheet/rugbyuk to view this book's cheat sheet.

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by Nick Cain and Greg Growden



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He had a chequered playing career punctuated by such diversions as travelling, working on farms and in demolition in New Zealand, and as a young journalist on an English language newspaper in the military junta Argentina of the early 1980s. He played rugby for Manchester University, Ponsonby (New Zealand), and Belgrano (Argentina) before grinding to a halt with Wasps thirds almost two decades ago.

Greg Growden is one of Australia's best-known sports writers. He began writing about rugby union in 1981, and since 1987 has been the chief rugby writer for the *Sydney Morning Herald* and *Sun-Herald* newspapers.

Greg has written for numerous international newspapers, including *The Guardian* and the *New Zealand Herald*. He is also a regular on New Zealand television rugby shows.

Greg's other books include *A Wayward Genius: the Fleetwood Smith Story* and *Gold, Mud, Guts, The Incredible Tom Richards: Footballer, War Hero, Olympian*.

Dedication

Dedication? Well, one thing's for sure: not everyone who picks up a copy of *Rugby Union For Dummies* is going to have the dedication, in terms of hours of practice and self-analysis, that it takes to become the next Jonny Wilkinson. Hopefully, though, whatever your aspirations as far as this great game is

concerned, you will find something in these pages to help you meet them.

As for my own dedication, I would like to thank my better half, Gill. Her patience, sunny disposition and unstinting support, despite the fact that she must sometimes feel like a rugby widow, are priceless. Thanks also to my son, Hugo, and daughters, Ella and Martha, who never complained as their dad yet again disappeared to 'The Shed At The End Of The Garden' to work (at least they didn't jump for joy in front of me). A dedication too to my mother, Marion, and late father, Tony, for their faith in their sometimes wayward offspring.

— Nick Cain

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— Nick Cain

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Introduction

Congratulations! You have *Rugby Union for Dummies* Third Edition in your hands, written specially for people in Britain and Ireland who are keen to find out all they can about one of the most exciting sports there is. With this book, we aim to satisfy your curiosity, fill the gaps in your knowledge and show you that rugby is a whole new exciting world waiting to be explored.

Thousands of people around the world are passionate about rugby union, and nowhere more than in the British Isles, where the game originated. For the uninitiated, rugby union may seem like a game from another planet where the inhabitants speak a strange language and talk about things called scrums, rucks, mauls and lineouts. All these strange words, the laws that govern the game, the positions of the players on the field and what they are supposed to do can easily overwhelm the beginner.

We wrote this book so that rugby union beginners can get to know the game quickly and easily, without ever feeling overwhelmed or intimidated. Before long, you find you are an expert on the game, the most innovative and fascinating of football codes, a code that is forever evolving.

About This Book

Our simple aim in writing this book is to provide you with everything you want to know about rugby. All the information is here. You don't have to read this book right through from page one to the end though in order to make the most of it.

Each chapter covers a rugby topic in itself, so you can easily dip into those chapters where we talk about the bits of the game that you don't quite understand. When you are watching a game

on television, for example, and a referee's signal confuses you, just turn to the chapter that explains the referee's signals and the basic laws that govern the game.

If you want to become a player, you can easily navigate your way to the sections of most interest to you, and also take advantage of the handy hints throughout the book. Whether you want to become a referee, a club official, or simply a spectator, a chapter has been written with you in mind.

No matter where you sit on the rugby totem pole, whether you are an outright beginner or a self-adjudged expert, *Rugby Union For Dummies*, Third Edition has something that you find interesting.

How to Use This Book

To make it easier for you, *Rugby Union for Dummies* Third Edition follows certain conventions. For example, to make it easier for you, every time we use a new term or an important phrase, it is in italics and its meaning is explained.

We explain everything very, very clearly, and not in language full of rugby gobbledegook. For a quick reminder of the meanings of certain terms, you can always turn to the glossary at the back of the book.

Don't be restricted by the order in which the contents of this book appear. Flip through it, maybe starting with the chapter on the laws, where we explain the most important rules of the game. Check out the diagrams, drawings and photos, which make it easy for you to immediately understand the most important aspects of the game.

You may find that in a discussion of a particular aspect of rugby in one chapter, we refer to another aspect of the game. Whenever that happens, we tell you which chapter to turn to

for more information about that other aspect. For example, when we talk about tactics, we mention player positions and tell you which chapter to turn to for more detailed information on positions.

Foolish Assumptions

Don't feel intimidated if you know nothing about rugby union. Even some players have difficulty remembering things like the laws, so never worry that you are a rugby dummy – we certainly don't think you are! Before long, you are going to feel like an expert.

You may have been watching a game and asked

- ✓ Why are all those players grabbing each other around the waist and then charging at each other like stampeding rhinos?
- ✓ Why does the referee keep waving his arms around?
- ✓ Why are the players standing in a straight line and jumping for the ball?
- ✓ Why is a hooker called a hooker?
- ✓ What is a ruck and what is a maul?

This book answers these questions, and many, many more. Our assumption is that you basically know nothing – and we go from there.

How This Book is Organised

This book is organised into six parts according to the famous *For Dummies* design. Each part focuses on an important part of the world of rugby union.

Part I: Rugby: Roots, Boots and All

If you are totally new to rugby, this part sets the scene for you. We describe the history of the game, how it all comes together on the field and how the popularity of rugby circles the planet. We also explain what all those lines on the pitch mean and how the scoring system works. This part ends with handy hints on how to kit yourself up for a game of rugby and how to take precautions to minimise the risk of injury.

Part II: Getting Down and Dirty

A really important chapter starts this part. We give you detailed information on the positions the players occupy and their roles. Then we introduce you to the most important laws that govern the game as well as to the officials who control the game. This part helps you to improve your skills on the field, and explains rucks, mauls, scrums and lineouts. It then moves on to an explanation of tactics before describing some of the best ways in which to get fit and stay fit for rugby. You can also find out about coaching and how to get involved in it.

Part III: Welcome to Planet Rugby

This part tells you all about the competitions, the tournaments, the teams, the players and the fields on which they play. We describe the World Cup, international rugby competitions like the Six Nations, and the most important national competitions.