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Match Day sample
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MATCH DAY

Level 3 - A2/B1 Intermediate (1) Graded Reader from I Talk You Talk Press

Copyright

Match Day

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ISBN: 978-4-909733-54-2

Publisher: I Talk You Talk Press

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I Talk You Talk Press contact: info@italkyoutalk.com

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Acknowledgment

With thanks to Colin Dixon for sharing his memories of rugby and the match.
He is the original Old Jack.

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Introduction

Hello my friends! I'm Old Jack. Usually I write ghost stories. But this time, I am going to tell you about an important event from my childhood. My hometown is in the north of England. It is very famous for its rugby team. When I was a child, I went to the rugby matches with my father.

Long ago, my town's rugby team played at a stadium on Taylor Road. People outside the town called the stadium "Taylor Road", but in the town we just called it "The Road".

It was more than 100 years old when I was young. "The Road" is gone now.

Yesterday, I was walking along Taylor Road. Now, there are houses on the old stadium ground. It is sad. I miss the old stadium. When I walked past the houses, I closed my eyes. I returned to my past. I could see the old stadium. I could hear the fans in the stadium cheering and shouting. I could see the tall lights on the stadium roof. I could see my father and me, standing in our usual place, watching our team. I was back in my childhood. People called me Young Jack then. I miss those days. When I got home, I wrote my memories in my notebook. These are my memories. I hope you enjoy them.

1. What is rugby league?

Maybe you know about rugby. But, do you know that there are two kinds of rugby? There is “rugby union” and “rugby league”. Both kinds of rugby have a long history. Before I tell you my story, I will tell you about the history of rugby.

In 1895, rugby was an amateur game. The players got no money. However, sometimes, when the players took time off work to play a match, they got a little money. In the north of England, the players were working class men. They were poor. They needed this money. But in the south of England, the players were richer. They didn't need the money to play rugby.

The organisation called the Rugby Football Union didn't like the payments to the players. They said, “The sport must stay amateur. Stop giving money to players”. So, in 1895, 22 rugby teams from the north of England had a meeting. They decided to leave the Rugby Football Union and make a new kind of rugby. This new kind of rugby was called “Rugby League”. Over the years, they changed the rules a little. In rugby union there are fifteen players, but in rugby league, there are thirteen. The players from number one to seven are called “backs”. They are small and fast. The players from eight to thirteen are called “forwards”. They are big and strong. Now, rugby union and rugby league are very different sports.

How are points scored? There are three kinds of points in rugby league. There is a “try”, which is four points. To score a try, the player has to put the ball down over the line at the opposite end of the playing field. The playing field is called the pitch. A try is four points. If a team scores a try, they have a chance to get a “goal”. To score a goal a player puts the ball on the ground and tries to kick it between H-shaped sticks. If the player does this, the team gets two points. There is also another kind of point. This is a “drop goal”. A player kicks the ball over the sticks, even if there is no try. This is one point.

The players have to pass the ball backwards to each other. They cannot pass it to a player who is in front of them. The other team try to bring the player with the ball to the ground. This is called a tackle. After a tackle, the player with the ball passes it through his legs to a teammate.

My town's team plays rugby league. The team is very important to the people in the town. Watching the team play is a hobby and a passion for many people. I am going to tell you about a match between my town's team “Glass Town Rovers”, and a nearby

town's team called "Pier Town Trinity". These two teams are big rivals. When I was young, they played a match every year on the 26th of December. The towns are only around 20km away from each other, but the rugby supporters in the towns don't like each other. They always want to beat the other team.

So, come back in time with me, as I tell you about a rugby match in my town when I was Young Jack. The match was on the 26th of December. For me, this is an important memory. At that time, Pier Town Trinity was a very strong team. They were champions. No other team could beat them. They had good players from the north of England and they also had good players from Australia and New Zealand. My team, Glass Town Rovers, had not won a major competition for over ten years. They also had players from New Zealand. But they still could not beat Pier Town Trinity. When we played them, everyone thought, "Hope for the best, expect the worst". This means, "hope to win, but expect to lose". But one day, a long time ago, something special happened. Now I am old, but I can remember the match very well. It was a special day for Young Jack.

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