

# **RUGBY FOOTBALL**

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Rugby football by D. R. Gent

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**D. R. GENT**

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FOOTBALL**



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BY

D. R. GENT



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## PREFACE

MY object in writing this book has been to help people either to play Rugby or to appreciate it. During the years since the War, the interest displayed in the game has been greater than ever. But unfortunately, both with regard to the players and to the enthusiasm of the spectators, there often seems to be a lack of knowledge of the game. Keeness for a game is certainly the prime requisite, but the greater the knowledge that is possessed, the better for the game. For that reason, I hope that what I have written may conduce to a fuller enjoyment of Rugby by everybody who may happen to read it ; and if it leads to a little less applause on the part of the spectators sometimes, for what is rank bad football, I shall feel not a little rewarded.

A word or two as to my " idea " of the book may be of assistance. The chapter headings will possibly mislead people. The last thing I should like to happen is for a full-back, let us say, to read the chapters on " full-back " play only, as he will then miss many points that concern his play. I have

conceived the game as a whole, so that in order to get the fullest benefit that may accrue from the book, it is best to read it right through. That is one reason why I have made it so comparatively short, for the reading of fat tomes and the playing of Rugby do not always go hand in hand. The division into the chapters that I have chosen only implies that in those chapters are to be found the main points that crop up in connection with the various positions.

Throughout the book, readers will find continual reference to names of players who excelled at various phases of the game. These names have been chosen on two grounds only. First of all, I have included only the names of players I have actually played with, or of those whom I saw play when I could discriminate between good Rugby and bad. This means that many of the great "lights of other days" are not even mentioned; but this must not be interpreted as a lack of admiration for them on my part. I do admire them immensely, and realise what the game owes to them. Still, I consider it much more satisfactory to keep on the sure ground of personal experience than to use book knowledge, or to go by hearsay. Again, I have endeavoured—and a great task it has been—to refrain from reminiscence, except for the sole purpose of illustrating some aspect of the game. An intimate acquaintance with club, county, and international



football for the past twenty years must needs have furnished one with a good deal of personal matter that would probably interest Rugby folk. I know, however, that had I succumbed to the temptation, there would have been precious little on how to play the game, and a vast amount about great names and games of the past twenty years. The absence of more reminiscences may disappoint some, but it would have been stretching the purpose of the book to include more.

D. R. GENT.

*July 1922.*



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