



Rugby's Great Split: Class, Culture and the Origins of Rugby League Football (Sport in the Global Society)

Tony Collins

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Since its first publication, *Rugby's Great Split* has established itself as a classic in the field of sport history. Drawing on an unprecedented range of sources, this deeply researched and highly readable book traces the social, cultural and economic divisions that led, in 1895, to schism in the game of rugby and the creation of rugby league, the sport of England's northern working class.

Tony Collins' analysis challenges many of the conventional assumptions about this key event in rugby history – about class conflict, amateurism in sport, the North-South divide, violence on the pitch, the development of mass spectator sport and the rise of football. This new edition is expanded to cover parallel events in Australia and New Zealand, and to address the key question of rugby league's failure to establish itself in Wales.

Rugby's Great Split is a benchmark text in the history of rugby, and an absorbing case study of wider issues – issues of class, gender, regional and national identity, and the impact of the commercialization and recent professionalization of rugby league. This insightful text is for anyone interested in Britain's social history or in the emergence of modern sport, it is vital reading.

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