Reading • Part 1

Questions 1 – 8

You are going to read an extract from a novel. For questions **1 – 8**, choose the answer (**A**, **B**, **C** or **D**) which you think fits best according to the text.

Mark your answers **on the separate answer sheet**.

Jamie tried to ignore the shouts from the spectators, urging the players on. Across the squash court, Danny Powell glared back at him. But there was an element of satisfaction in Danny's face. His arrogance had gone – the first two games had at least knocked that a bit – but having fought back with usual aggression to two games all, he clearly felt he was in with a chance of taking the match.

Jamie tried to focus his mind and energy. He knew the pressure was on him now. He had been two games ahead and had thrown that lead away. Though this was meant to be a minor event, the semi-final of the Under 19 Knockout in the 'friendly' atmosphere of their own club, it was obvious that everyone wanted to know who the winner
line 12 would be, as they saw it as a taster for the Regional Championships in two weeks' time.

Jamie glanced up at the faces in the gallery. Their classmates were all there, and, of course, Bob Powell, who was going on and on with pride every time Danny won a point, as though his son were a superstar and not the show-off that he was. But there was only one face up there Jamie was bothered about – his own father's. And right now, he did not dare to look at it.

'Fifth and final game,' called Geoff, the umpire. The shouts from the gallery died away and Jamie forced his mind back to the match. Danny served. Jamie started to dive forward. Earlier in the match, he would have reached this shot, but now, with his energy almost spent, he stopped, knowing it was out of reach, anxious to save what strength he had left.

Powell's voice bellowed out: 'Good boy, Danny, good boy! He's finished!' Jamie heard disapproving noises from Joe who, as owner of the club, always tried to limit Powell's open hostility towards his son's opponents. It never did any good.

Jamie turned back to the court, determined to fight back, but now desperately jaded. It seemed to him suddenly that he'd been on a squash court every waking moment of his sixteen years. And before the next ball came towards him, he just had time to reflect that this wasn't far from the truth. No wonder these walls had come to feel like a prison cell; and it was a cell of tension, with moments of victory, but dominated for the most part by an ambition he sensed he would never fulfil.

The next point was given to Jamie. Danny turned to Geoff: 'It was out.' Jamie looked away. He knew it was his point but he didn't expect a problem. Geoff was not a person to be fazed by anyone, not even Danny or his father. 'Come on,' said Danny. 'It was my point.' Jamie had heard this sort of dialogue so many times from Danny and, if it went on long enough, which it usually did, Bob Powell was bound to join in. 'I've given my decision,' said Geoff. 'Now play on.'

Jamie said nothing and continued to wait, ball in hand. In a strange way, he was grateful for this interruption. It gave him a moment to catch his breath. But not for long. Geoff leaned on the rail and fixed his eyes on Danny. 'Danny, play on, please, or I'll award a penalty point.' Danny, with a final glare, walked back into position to continue the match. Jamie served at once, hoping the incident would have unsettled Danny's rhythm.

But Danny was now fired up. The ball came back like a bullet. To Jamie, the next four points seemed to fly past in a maze of volleys and smashes that forced him back, pulled him forward, played with him like a toy. He knew then that he could not beat Danny. Not today. Perhaps not ever. Danny was too strong.

LIVEWORKSHEETS

1 In the first paragraph, Jamie noticed that Danny

A wasn't happy with the way he was playing.
B wasn't quite so sure of himself as he had been.
C was annoyed by the noise from the spectators.
D was being less aggressive than normal.

2 What does 'it' refer to in line 12?

A the winner
B the club
C the atmosphere
D the semi-final

3 What did Jamie feel when he looked at the gallery?

A anxiety about what his father would be thinking
B pride that his father was watching him
C annoyance that Danny had more supporters
D pleasure that his friends were watching

4 In the fourth paragraph, how did Jamie react to the ball?

A He misjudged where it was going to land.
B He thought it wasn't a good shot.
C He decided it wasn't worth trying to hit it.
D He tried to hit it and missed.

5 What do we learn about Joe in the fifth paragraph?

A He didn't think Danny was a good player.
B He attempted to stop Danny's opponents shouting.
C He thought Powell should praise his son more.
D He had little effect on Powell's behaviour.

6 What did Jamie realise in the sixth paragraph?

A He should have concentrated harder on his practice.
B He was tired of the constant pressure he felt.
C He didn't need to worry so much about his skills.
D He should be more ambitious for the future.

7 What did Jamie think when Danny argued with Geoff?

A He expected Geoff to stick to his decision.
B He knew Geoff might ask for his opinion.
C He wondered how Geoff would react.
D He hoped Geoff would sort the problem out quickly.

8 In the last paragraph, the expression 'played with him like a toy' is used to illustrate the fact that

A the match had become more entertaining.
B the match had gone on for too long.
C Jamie was no longer serious about winning.
D Jamie had little control over the match.

LIVEWORKSHEETS