UNIT 10 B

READING SKILLS

Sports interview:

Tim White meets wheelchair rugby player, Laura Sabetta

A

The first thing I notice about Laura Sabetta is her arms. They're almost as big as my legs. The next thing I notice is a bandage on her arm. "I get injuries fairly often because we play to win," the Argentinian athlete explains,"... it's rugby, after all."

B

Wheelchair rugby has always been a tough, physical sport. Invented in Canada in 1977, it was first called "murderball." As the sport's popularity grew, the name changed to the more serious "wheelchair rugby." It was a new name, but the game was just as violent.

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C

People who have never played the sport might think of it as a fun way to spend an afternoon, but it's exhausting. Laura gives me a special wheelchair, and I move slowly onto the court. I wear gloves, but it's very hard work pushing the chair using only my arms. Wheelchair rugby is played on a basketball court that measures 28 x 15 meters, and it takes me over three minutes to cross it. Meanwhile, Laura has already finished warming up.

D

I'm soon happy to join the spectators and watch the game. Wheelchair rugby is a mix of basketball, rugby, and hockey. Two teams of four players throw and carry a volleyball, trying to score goals. Players score when their wheels cross the line at the end of the court while they are holding the ball in their hands.

Sports interview:

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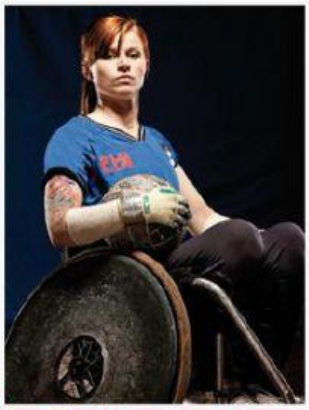

E

Wheelchair rugby's popularity exploded after it featured in the 2005 movie Murderball. Many of its players are now big names in Paralympic sports, like the star of the movie, Mark Zupan. The sport is now played in more than 25 countries, such as Japan and the U.S. So, however you look at it, wheelchair rugby is big news.

F

This places lots of responsibility on the players, as Laura explains. "There are lots of sports opportunities out there for people who need a wheelchair, such as skiing, tennis, and sailing. The important thing is making sure people know about them, so they can take part. We also need fans. We want big crowds watching the game. That's why I'm doing this interview!"

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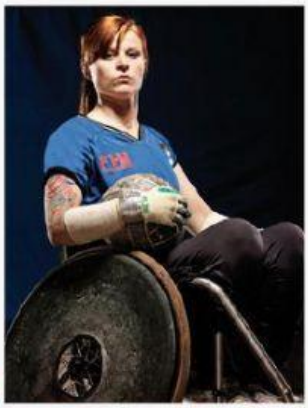

G

Getting involved is easy. There's plenty of information online. For example, there's the website of the International Wheelchair Rugby Federation at www.iwrf.com. It's also fairly easy to find a game in most large towns if you just want to watch. Many people only watch the sport once every four years at the Paralympic Games, but as Laura tells me, "For people like me, this isn't a hobby. Since I lost the use of my legs, it's been my life."

Read the Skill box. Then read the text quickly and match paragraphs A–G with topics 1–7.

1 how it feels to play wheelchair rugby ____
2 how to find out more about the sport ____
3 creating interest in disabled sports ____
4 Laura's physical appearance ____
5 media interest in wheelchair rugby ____
6 the origins of the sport ____
7 the rules of wheelchair rugby ____

Skill finding information in a text

When we want to find information in a longer text, we need to know where to look.

- Read the text quickly and understand the general topic of each paragraph.
- Read the question carefully and underline any key words.
- Match the question with the paragraph that has the information you need.
- Read this paragraph in detail to answer the question.