READING B2

12

Part 7

You are going to read a newspaper article about a young professional footballer. For questions **43 – 52**, choose from the sections (**A – D**). The sections may be chosen more than once.

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

Which paragraph

states how surprised the writer was at Duncan's early difficulties?	43
says that Duncan sometimes seems much more mature than he really is?	44
describes the frustration felt by Duncan's father?	45
says that Duncan is on course to reach a high point in his profession?	46
suggests that Duncan caught up with his team-mates in terms of physical development?	47
explains how Duncan was a good all-round sportsperson?	48
gives an example of how Gavin reassured his son?	49
mentions Duncan's current club's low opinion of him at one time?	50
mentions a personal success despite a failure for the team?	51
explains how Duncan and his father are fulfilling a similar role?	52

LIVEWORKSHEETS

Rising Star

Margaret Garelly goes to meet Duncan Williams, who plays for Chelsea Football Club.

A It's my first time driving to Chelsea's training ground and I turn off slightly too early at the London University playing fields. Had he accepted football's rejections in his early teenage years, it is exactly the sort of ground Duncan Williams would have found himself running around on at weekends. At his current age of 18, he would have been a bright first-year undergraduate mixing his academic studies with a bit of football, rugby and cricket, given his early talent in all these sports. However, Duncan undoubtedly took the right path. Instead of studying, he is sitting with his father Gavin in one of the interview rooms at Chelsea's training base reflecting on Saturday's match against Manchester City. Such has been his rise to fame that it is with some disbelief that you listen to him describing how his career was nearly all over before it began.

B Gavin, himself a fine footballer – a member of the national team in his time – and now a professional coach, sent Duncan to three professional clubs as a 14 year-old, but all three turned him down. 'I worked with him a lot when he was around 12, and it was clear he had fantastic technique and skill. But then the other boys shot up in height and he didn't. But I was still upset and surprised that no team seemed to want him, that they couldn't see what he might develop into in time. When Chelsea accepted him as a junior, it was made clear to him that this was more of a last chance than a new beginning. They told him he had a lot of hard work to do and wasn't part of their plans. Fortunately, that summer he just grew and grew, and got much stronger as well.'

C Duncan takes up the story: 'The first half of that season I played in the youth team. I got lucky – the first-team manager came to watch us play QPR, and though we lost 3-1, I had a really good game. I moved up to the first team after that performance.' Gavin points out that it can be beneficial to be smaller and weaker when you are developing – it forces you to learn how to keep the ball better, how to use 'quick feet' to get out of tight spaces. 'A couple of years ago, Duncan would run past an opponent as if he wasn't there but then the other guy would close in on him. I used to say to him, "Look, if you can do that now, imagine what you'll be like when you're 17, 18 and you're big and quick and they won't be able to get near you." If you're a smaller player, you have to use your brain a lot more.'

D Not every kid gets advice from an ex-England player over dinner, nor their own private training sessions. Now Duncan is following in Gavin's footsteps. He has joined a national scheme where people like him give advice to ambitious young teenagers who are hoping to become professionals. He is an old head on young shoulders. Yet he's also like a young kid in his enthusiasm. And fame has clearly not gone to his head; it would be hard to meet a more likeable, humble young man. So will he get to play for the national team? 'One day I'd love to, but when that is, is for somebody else to decide.' The way he is playing, that won't be long.

LIVEWORKSHEETS