Lesson 7 One Team, One Country

Part 1 Why was Nelson Mandela arrested?

Imagine growing up in a country with no basic freedoms. If you drank out of the wrong water fountain, you might be arrested by the police. Growing up in South Africa under apartheid meant that this and worse things were part of daily life.

Apartheid, which means “apartness” in Afrikaans, was a policy of racial discrimination made by the white minority government in 1948. The majority black population had no freedom to live or to go where they wanted to. They always had to take a passbook with them. If they forgot to carry it, the police could arrest them or even kill them.

Nelson Mandela fought against such injustice as a leader of the anti-apartheid movement. Because of that, he was arrested and put in prison. For more than a quarter of a century, even in jail, he was a symbol of black people’s hope for freedom.
Part 2 Why did Nelson Mandela seize on the Rugby World Cup in South Africa?

Thanks to various sanctions on the South African government, Nelson Mandela was freed in 1990 and apartheid was officially abolished in 1991. In 1994, Mandela was democratically elected the first black president of South Africa. But he found it very difficult to rebuild his country because it had been torn apart by the policies of apartheid. Mandela was desperate for a way to unite his people. He knew the political impact sports could have. That's why he seized on the Rugby World Cup, which would be held in his own country, as a way of achieving his goal.

Rugby, however, had long been viewed in South Africa as a game for the white population. There was only a nonwhite player on the national team at that time. Mandela tried to persuade all South African to think of the Springbok rugby team as their own and to show a spirit of reconciliation. He talked with Francois Pienaar, the captain, who was white, and urged him to inspire his team so that they would fight with pride for all of the nation in the 1995 World Cup.

The Springboks unexpectedly beat Australia, France and other teams. The team reached the final against the New Zealand All Blacks, then the best team in the World.
The day came. The final game was so tough and exhausting that nobody knew which team would win. During the intermission, Pienaar reminded his teammates of the importance of the game. “Look around you,” he told his exhausted teammates. “Do you see those flags? Play for those people. This is our only chance. We have to do this for South Africa. Let’s become world champions!"

During the final seven minutes of extra time, Joel Stransky scored a dramatic drop goal and South Africa was finally ahead of New Zealand again. When the final whistle was blown, people hugged each other and cried for joy. “It was impossible for us to say anything that could express what we felt,” said Stransky, looking back on the game.

When Mandela appeared on the field wearing a Springbok jersey to present the trophy to Pienaar, there was a big call of “Nelson Nelson!” by people in tears. The whole country, black and white, had united for the first time in its history for one goal.

During his acceptance speech, Pienaar made it clear that the team had won the trophy not only for the sixty thousand fans at Ellis Park, but also for all forty-three million South African.
Part 4 According to Mandela,/ what kind of power does sport have?

“An hour before the game,/ I was still/ torn and confused,”/ said a black man, Justice Bekebeke./ who used to hold feeling of/ anger and hatred/ against the whites./ “I was battling myself!/ I could not still quite shake off/ the old hatred,/ yet/ something was happening to me./ I realized that/ I was changing./ Finally/ I said to myself,/ “Well,/ this is my team./ Black or white,/ it doesn’t matter/ anymore.”/ From that day on,/ everything change./

Nelson Mandela,/ who had worked hard/ for freedom and reconciliation/ in South Africa,/ said,/ “Sport can create hope/ where once there was only despair./ It is more powerful than/ governments in breaking down racial barriers./ Sport has the power/ to change the world./

Even though/ South Africa had many problems/ such as poverty and crime,/ in 2004 FIFA selected the country/ to become the first African nation/ to host the Soccer World Cup Finals./ The 2010 World Cup was successfully held/ in ten different stadiums/ in nine South African cities./

Today,/ the “Rainbow Nation” of South Africa is moving forward/ with a new spirit of Victory/ for all of its people./
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