



# How We Beat The All Blacks: The 1971 Lions Speak (Aurum Sports Classics)

*John Reason*

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It remains a unique achievement. In 1971 the British Lions went to New Zealand and beat the All Blacks in a test series on their own soil. With gritty, never-say-die forwards like Ian McLaughlan and Mervyn Davies, and brilliant backs like Barry John, Gerald Davies and David Duckham, and under the inspired management of one of the finest coaches of all time, Carwyn James, the Lions won the first match, lost the second, and then came back to clinch the series in the third. But this unique rugby feat also spawned a unique book, for after the touring party had returned to the UK, the Lions captain John Dawes had the idea of organising an International Players' Conference, at which he and some of the key members of his victorious team would discuss the latest trends in rugby and offer the fruits of their experience in how to beat the greatest rugby team in the world. These talks and lectures were subsequently edited into a book, *The Lions Speak* by the Daily Telegraph's Rugby Correspondent, John Reason. In the years since it was first published, it has assumed cult status as one of the best and most insightful books ever published about the game of rugby. It stands as both a fascinating period piece about a sport that was played very differently in those days - when Bob Hiller would toe-punt penalties and conversions from a lovingly-crafted mud tee, and scrum halves like Gareth Edwards would launch his back-line from the scrum with a flamboyant diving pass - and a brilliant and witty deconstruction of the game's strategy and psychology by some of its most greatest and most intelligent practitioners, that is as relevant and valuable today as it ever was. Who better to talk about kicking and controlling the game than Barry John, or Mike Gibson on the role of the centre, or Carwyn James himself to reveal the secrets of his coaching methods that brought about the 1971 Lions' historic victory and British rugby's finest hour?

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