

1985

David Kirk Born 1960

Otago & Worcester

All Black captain, doctor, political adviser, businessman

David Kirk has made his mark in diverse fields. But to many New Zealanders he will always be the first – and so far, only – All Black captain to hold up the Rugby World Cup in triumph.

He took up his scholarship with a sense of relief, exchanging the devotion of his Kiwi fans for the anonymity of a 16th century campus on the other side of the world.

But Kirk could not completely escape his celebrity status at Oxford. It annoyed him when journalists called on him, asking him to pose next to his dilapidated car or with his

bicycle outside one of the university's picturesque colleges. 'They all want me to be the quintessential Oxford student, which is the quintessential wank as far as I'm concerned. There's no such thing.'

A medical graduate from Otago, Kirk studied for the PPE degree (politics, philosophy, economics) at Oxford. The change of direction served him well, propelling him first into the political arena as advisor to National Prime Minister Jim Bolger, and more recently into a business career in Australia.

Kirk is one of four All Blacks to have been awarded a Rhodes scholarship. The other three are Colin Gilray (1907), George Aitken (1922) and Chris Laidlaw (1968).

He is now based in Sydney, as Regional Director for Norse Skogg Australia.



David Kirk kisses the William Webb Ellis trophy, Eden Park, Auckland, June 1987. (Dominion Post collection, Alexander Turnbull Library, Ref:EP/1987/2998-F)

'I think everything you learn is useful. Everything you do contributes to you as a person'
