



### **Rowling's Escape from Sticky Plots**

23 Jun 2004

HARRY Potter author JK Rowling has revealed she became addicted to chewing gum and playing computer games when she gave up smoking. The Edinburgh author said she now plays the popular Minesweeper game, which is installed on most personal computers, to take a break from writing since she gave up smoking four years ago. Before discovering the joys of the game Ms Rowling would often light up when she wanted to give her brain a rest. But the author has found she has something of a talent for Minesweeper and claims she is now adept at the expert level.

On her personal website Ms Rowling, who is currently hard at work writing the sixth Harry Potter novel, says she no longer reaches for the fag packet. She said: "In the bad old days when I wanted a few minutes' break from writing I used to light up a cigarette. I gave up smoking in the year 2000 and now chew a lot of gum instead. However, chewing a bit of gum does not give you an excuse for a nice little brain-resting break, so instead I like to escape the complexities of the latest plot by playing a quick game of Minesweeper. Since giving up smoking I must boastfully inform you that I have become rather good and that my current best time for expert level is 101 seconds.



### **Rowling refuses to write Potter with US accent**

Ian Johnson - 24 Jun 2004

JK Rowling has rejected pleas from fans in the United States to put an American character into her Harry Potter stories. The multi-millionaire author - said to have amassed a £430 million fortune - said her stories were set in a British school and she saw "no logical reason to insert foreigners". In an entry on her new website, [www.jkrowling.com](http://www.jkrowling.com) which she set up to answer fans' questions and correct false rumours about her or the Harry Potter tales, Rowling, 38, stated that if there was anyone who wanted stories about American wizards they were "free to write their own book".

The author also revealed that she stopped smoking by chewing gum and playing a computer game instead. She quit cigarettes four years ago and has now become so good at the Minesweeper game that she is close to being one of the world's top 100 players on the internet.

In response to a question asking if she will put Americans or characters of other nationalities into the books, Rowling said: "I'm afraid the answer to this question is 'no', although you have glimpsed Americans and other nationalities at the Quidditch World Cup. "The reason is obvious: I'm writing about Britain and a British school, and there is no logical reason to insert foreigners for the sake of it, because I'm sure they would feel gratuitous. Zin Craig, an American living in Edinburgh, congratulated Rowling for her decision not to put an American character in the book. "Good for her. I totally agree with her. I commend her for not being in pressurised by capitalism and dollars," she said.