

ANOTHER VINTAGE LIVERPOOL PERFORMANCE

Issue
8

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March 1998

Fed-up Riedle kills Karlheinz

Liverpool striker Karlheinz Riedle has changed his name.

The startling revelation comes after months of confusion over the spelling of his forename.

The German international has

tired of English ignorance towards the spelling of his name and has dropped Karlheinz by deed poll.

Riedle, who scored two goals in last season's European Cup final, has traced his family history and found that

his great grandmother was in fact Brazilian. As a result of this he has decided that from now on he will simply be known as Riedle.

His team mates were not too surprised by the sudden change of name. Rob Jones said: "Riedle has been tiring of the misspelling of his first name ever since he set



Riedle tries to tell Robert Molenaar that the secret of the Can-can is in the timing

*Cont pg.
Kvarme*

Another Vintage Liverpool Performance

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As more and more people tell me that Roy Evans has lost his marbles, I am more and more coming round to that way of thinking. I'm totally at a loss to explain the whole Friedel affair. Surely he must be good to go to all that trouble to get him, but it would seem not. James' form means there's now little chance of him getting his permit renewed. So after barely a month it looks like he's on his way home. Madness.

I hate panic measures and Roy is a nice bloke, but there's only so much of the same cliché-ridden excuses you can take. In fairness he always comes out and says where the faults are, the problem is little gets done about them. Stig was finally dropped about 15 games too late, Matteo and Kvarme struggle to clear crosses but no-one seems bothered and Rob Jones continues to warm the bench.

Over the last year and a half Roy has made changes, but the same problems remain; namely, a crap defence, lack of bite and players still playing out of position. There is a serious lack of motivation throughout the squad and this brings the management into question. They just seem incapable of firing the players up. Ince has come in but his influence has not worked the miracles we were conned into thinking it would. Something more has to come from the top and it's becoming obvious that Roy isn't delivering. Things have been pretty stagnant over the last 18 months. Lessons from the '96 cup final have still not been learnt and tradition is holding us up. It's time to bring in a new approach. We're becoming too reliant on a few players. Macca's turned in some pretty awesome performances and Jamie's attitude and commitment has been first class of late. Then there's Michael Owen - phenomenal. Robbie's struggled a bit, but he's still our best goalscorer. I'm not surprised they're treating SOK a weak seriously. But to get the best from the team it needs cohesion, not money, and this has to be addressed - now. We need to be able compete with Manchester bloody United.

Anyway, welcome to our special 'slag Andy Cole off' issue. I sign off here with my fingers firmly crossed. We're going to have an awful lot of egg on our faces if the boy with two left feet doesn't stop scoring soon!

Andy

Views expressed in this fanzine by individual contributors do not necessarily concur with ours

Other LFC Fanzines

Red All Over the Land

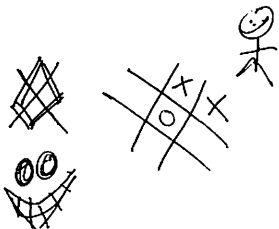
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L30 2SA



ED. SO MO WHATS GOING ON?
MO. ERM... WELL, YOU SEE, ITS LIKE THIS...ERM.. ALL MY GOOD PENS HAVE RUN OUT AND I CANT BUY ANY MORE BECAUSE YOU DONT PAY ME ENOUGH TO GO TO THE BIG SHOPS, BUT IF YOU CAN HANG ON A BIT MY NEPHEW GOT SOME FELT-TIPS FOR CHRISTMAS AND IM SURE I CAN BORROW THOSE WHEN HE'S FINISHED WITH THEM
ED. CANT YOU SELL ANYTHING?
MO. WELL... I SUPPOSE I COULD TAKE MY EMPTY INK-BOTTLES BACK !!!!!



Riedle name change shocker

from pg. James

foot on English soil. It was the final straw when David Pleat called him Koolhoorz."

Riedle himself said: "People have said that I changed my name because I didn't like sounding like a brand of baked beans, but that simply isn't true."

He added: "I haven't been getting in the German team recently either and I thought if I changed my name to a Brazilian sounding one, Mario Zagallo might pick me to play alongside Ronaldo."

When asked if he would consider changing his surname as well because of the T-shirt sellers outside Anfield who think his name is Reidle, he said the changing of one name was

enough and that if people were thick enough to buy these T-shirts they deserve what they get.

His only fear now is that fans and commentators will get his name mixed up with Anfield new boy Brad Friedel.

The move by Riedle is expected to spark a rush of Premiership players who want to relinquish their first name. Edwina Sheringham, Desdemona Hamilton and Lesley Ferdinand will formally change their names in the next few weeks.

When we asked Brazilian coach Mario Zagallo if all of these Brazilian sounding names would become confusing he said: "No, I can still tell a good player. But I believe you have an impressive striker called Dowie in your country."

Get off Macca's back!!!

That's the simple message I would like to start with as I pay homage to one of the greatest players in the Premiership.

The reason for this message. Well, I have read in fanzines and heard on phone-ins that there are some Liverpool fans that think Macca is past his sell-by date. Apparently these wise geezers would rather we sold him to Barcelona than have him continue to unlock Premiership defences week in, week out.

Well thank God they are not the managers of our club. Selling Macca would be the worst move since selling Aldo and McMahon and I can't honestly see why these people think Macca is a luxury item that we can afford to lose.

True, his shooting leaves more than a lot to be desired. True, he had a dip in form earlier this year that cost us quite a bit - but surely that just demonstrates how important he is.

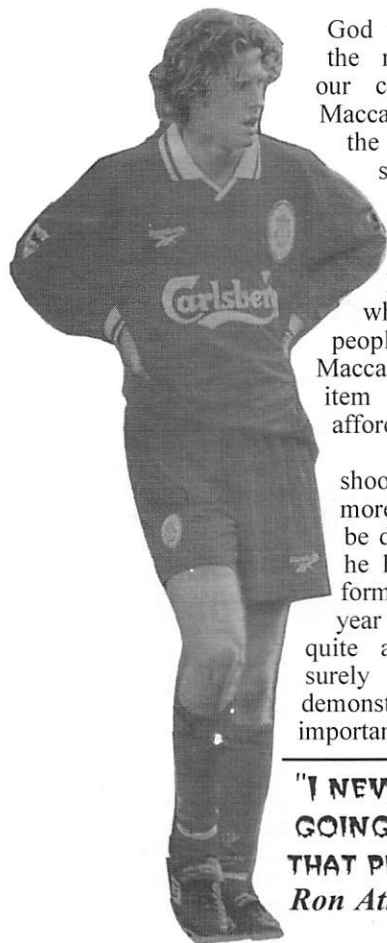
But think about what he does have. He has a pace while running with the ball which is unrivalled perhaps in the world. He has trickery and imagination that David Copperfield would struggle to match. His fitness to keep running throughout the 90 minutes is incredible and I wouldn't swap him for the contents of Mohammed Al Fayed's wallet.

My not-so-learned friends sitting around me in the Kop slag him off for not tackling. Well, I have a piece of advice I'd like to pass onto them and it isn't "stick your head up your arse until you can lick your lower intestine", it is that Macca isn't that type of player. That's what we bought Ince for, to give Macca and our other creative players the freedom to go forward. If you want to watch a team of Barry Hornes then go elsewhere. Besides, Macca does tackle. Certainly a lot more than other winger-style players and he shows a damn site more consistency and heart as well. If you look at his spindle-like frame you could forgive him if he gave up a physical sport such as football and took up table tennis anyway.

I know I seem like I am kissing Macca's arse, but I really do want to emphasise how good he is, so that Liverpool supporters can realise what a gem we have and what we would lose if he went. At least half of our threat would diminish if he jetted off to sunnier climes. On the continent they watch a lot of British football and they all love Macca. They can't all be wrong.

"I NEVER COMMENT ON REFEREES AND I'M NOT GOING TO BREAK THE HABIT OF A LIFETIME FOR THAT PRAT."

Ron Atkinson with his usual degree of intelligence



Not to sound boastful or anything, but I was on telly not long ago representing Liverpool on the Sunday Show. It was a thoroughly cheesy performance by myself, I freely admit, but while I got the chance I sung the praises of Macca calling him the best player in the land. It sounded biased (biased, you! -ed) and a bit like an exaggeration, but show me a better player, with the possible exception of Shearer, Bergkamp or our own Paul Ince. I can't think of many. (I rate Ronaldo myself - ed).

It just really pisses me off the way people constantly focus on his negative sides. So what if he can't shoot? Neither can Ryan Wiggs, but it doesn't prevent the media from exploring his anal passage at every available opportunity. Yet even for a player crap at shooting, Macca's bagged a few crackers this season; Celtic, Villa, Arsenal, Newcastle. It makes you wonder just how good he really could be.

How can Glenn Hoddle even consider leaving out Macca? Maybe he hasn't produced his best stuff for England (and that suits me fine as long as he does well for us) but Macca on an average day is as good as anything else in the country. Unfortunately, it appears the lad has ambition, and he wants to ply his trade at the highest level, so in my opinion he should be given this chance.

My real fear is that Shaggy will

get fed up with the Liverpool crowd who criticise every move, mistake or not, and also tire of a Liverpool team which does not utilise him or support him with good enough performances. Macca is the kind who would thrive on the chance to play in Europe against some of the best defenders in the world, so we need to show him he is needed. If we don't, and all he gets is stick from the fickle Kop, he may just tell us to sod off when it finally comes to the crunch over his new contract and not sign it. Now that would really be a blow. We need to get behind him and sing his name more often. I know he has the kind of name that would even be a mouthful for Janet Street-Porter, but the McManaman chant to the tune of "Phenomenon, do do do do do" is one that I know exists. It just isn't used, which is a shame because it's a quality song.

My parting message is to all Liverpool fans to get behind Macca. To any of you gits out there that calls him lazy, you just sit and watch him for the whole game. Sure, he acts casual, but you watch how much running he does - most of it to make space for others or himself which is often unnoticed - and you will realise what an asset he is. Please support him, because there are millions of football fans out there desperate to appreciate him instead.

Roy

After being told he could leave Everton, Neville Southall jettied off with his pet dog to Brazil hoping that a club over there might be willing to take a chance on him. Things didn't go too well, but they got worse on the flight home as the plane crash landed on a remote Pacific island. Neville and dog were the only survivors. After three months living on the seemingly uninhabited island Neville went for a walk to look for coconuts. Much to his amazement he discovered the island wasn't uninhabited after all. On the far side, sheep were freely roaming. Now, three months is a long time to go without female company and one night when the dog was asleep, Neville decided he'd go and pay one of the woolly mammals a visit. Yet as he tried to creep away, the dog awoke and barked. This happened again the next night and the night after. Then one day whilst out walking he noticed a beautiful young woman washed up on the beach. Neville dragged her from the sea and when she came round, she was so indebted to him for saving her life that she said she would do anything for him in return. "Er, could you take the dog for a walk?" he asked.



TEAM OF THE ISSUE



The "wouldn't trust him to
be a boy scout leader" XI

Seaman

Beresford Bilic Peacock Le Saux
Poborsky Keane Gascoigne Giggs
Barmby

Marshall

This team of misfits are a parent's nightmare. If you turned up at your local scout hut and you saw any of these blokes there is no way you'd trust little Johnny to their care.

In goal we have England keeper David Seaman. I haven't really got anything against Seaman but imagine the fright he would give your little nipper once he started talking. It could scar your kid for life. He sounds like he's swallowed a fog horn. I'm sure he would be a great authority figure with his booming voice but imagine trying to take your shaking offspring back for the second week. He'd have a sore tummy for weeks.

It could be worse though. Imagine if John Beresford was in charge of the scouts. He's as bent as Julian Clary (Allegedly - **legal ed.**) His hair is always so immaculate as he stands there at full-back. I don't know where he hides his handbag during the game but he must hide it well to avoid stick from his team-mates. Any bloke who takes as much care of his appearance as Beresford does over his highlights must have a defective gene somewhere.

The other full-back of this team is Graeme Le Saux who is there for a different reason. Baby-faced Le Saux would command no respect whatsoever from a bunch of 12-year-olds. He is more like a peer than a leader. You wouldn't be able to get him off the climbing frame long enough to look after a bunch of lads.

The centre-backs are Slaven Bilic and Darren Peacock.

If Slaven Bilic greeted you at the door of the scout hut you would make your excuses and leave straight away. There is no way I'd let a son of mine join in spliff sessions, which is surely what would happen if Bilic was in charge. Those red bags under his eyes didn't get there from playing tidly-winks.

As for Darren Peacock, maybe it's just a prejudice of mine about blokes with long hair, but apart from being a shit footballer the example set by Peacock would be a bad one. He'd have all the lads plaiting his hair instead of practising first aid and all the other scouty type things.

The midfield consists of an equally weird collection of individuals. The leader of the pack is the tight pants-wearing Roy Keane. I've heard numerous stories about his sexuality and he doesn't exactly disprove them by the way he vigorously enjoys goal celebrations. If you watch carefully, every time United score Julian is always the first on the spot to drag the scorer to the

floor and give him a tongue sandwich. Putting Royston in charge of a group of young lads could be worrying.

Ryan Giggs gets into this team because he is Keane's favourite victim. It doesn't happen as much these days due to Keane's illness and the fact the Giggs doesn't score too many any more, but once the two are back on form look out for their sessions in front of thousands of fans. When you add this to the fact that Giggs has an IQ of 13, it doesn't make him ideal scout leader material.

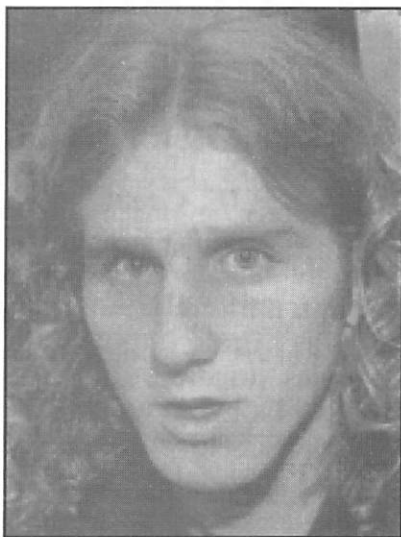
The third (now ex-) Manc in the midfield is Karel Poborsky. You wouldn't get as far as the scout hut if you found the leader was called Karel, let's face it. And then when you saw him with his poodle hair style and gormless appearance, no sensible parent would place the wildest of children in his care.

The final midfielder is Paul Gascoigne. Now I don't doubt that the scouts would enjoy a very active time while with Gazza, but you wouldn't trust a stick insect to his care, let alone a growing boy. He would have them passing the time playing drinking games, visiting night clubs and then in a bout of depression he'd probably slap a few of them around (careful - ed.)

The two forwards are Nick Barmby and Ian Marshall. As soon as Marshall opened his mouth all the boys would fall about laughing. He sounds like he's had his nads caught in a vice for three months. Either that or they were chewed off by a playful Dachshund. When you add that to the fact that he looks too much like Jimmy Nail for comfort, he probably wouldn't make a good scout leader.

Nick Barmby is just all wrong for the job too. For a start, as with Le Saux, he looks younger than most 12 year olds anyway. Then you have the fact that he is such a terrible example to young boys. Barmby is someone who had his whole life in front of him. A sparkling career was promised, and then he joined Everton. All young boys should learn a lesson from his story.

As for the manager. Who could you want to run a scout group less than Howard Kendall? If the kids find his secret stash of booze there would be a lot of explaining to do when they start rolling around on the floor in a paralytic state (or a Kendall as that state has become known).



Well, would you leave your kids with him?

Kids are very impressionable



Liverpool latest to try American defence



The signing of Brad Friedel, if nothing else, at least showed that Evans is aware of some of Liverpool's problems; namely that the defence is about as trustworthy as James Bond left alone in a room with a 16-year-old virgin and that David James isn't pushed enough. But is Friedel enough? And why wasn't something done sooner? James has been dropping howlers since the day he arrived and ever since Bruce went on to better things (sadly, pun intended) he's been under little pressure for his place. Good defences normally get better the longer they spend together. George Graham's sides are perfect proof of this. His Arsenal back four, whose children have probably started looking for accommodation in Bournemouth for them, is still fairly intact after the best part of a decade together. But at Liverpool this doesn't seem to happen anymore. The formation may have been tinkered around a little, but after five years of a defence centred around any four or five from Bjernebye, Jones, Wright, Ruddock, Babb, Matteo, Scales, Kvarme, Harkness and McAteer, little understanding seems to have developed. Last season it began to get a little silly and any man and his dog could see that changes needed to be made for this term, but have the lessons of last season been learnt? Well, if they have they were copied down wrongly from the blackboard. The defence has been a calamity waiting to happen all season and it came to head in the cup defeat by Coventry.

Thankfully, James has been relatively flawless this year, and even outstanding shortly after Friedel's arri-

val, but the defending has been the same old story, different day. Last season McAteer proved his worthlessness at right wing-back because he can't defend for toffee (though he'd look good in the Toffees' defence), so instead of getting more effective cover for Rob Jones, Evans decided to deploy McAteer at the much more defensive right-back this season. Stig proved to me about four years ago that his only good crosses are usually the ones he marks ballot papers with but he kept his place for the first half of the season. Babb has shown how poor he is in the alien surroundings of a five man defence but how pretty damn good he can be in a back four, but now Liverpool are playing with a back four he's not in the side enough. Kvarme is a pretty sound tackler and marker, but isn't brilliant in the air and is prone to dropping the odd clanger. Someone like Babb or Wright would probably be a better foil for him, but no, we'll pair him with Matteo, whose defensive capabilities would suit perfectly a sweeper role but not that of a centre half. He's brilliant at coming forward and cleaning up loose balls, but his tackling and aerial prowess could be better. It's easy of course for me to say this, but surely Roy must see the same things that 40,000 others can every week.

The organisation has been terrible. No one wants to take charge and at times you could throw a blanket over all of them. Mark Wright has shown over the last two years what a strong leader he can be, but his days as a Red are probably numbered now. Someone needs to take on his responsibility, but there seems to be a shortage of suitable

candidates amongst the current crop. It's becoming a matter of urgency because no one seems to have a clue who's doing what and it can all get a bit embarrassing. Evans can't keep papering over the cracks because it solves nothing, especially when defenders struggle to put one foot in front of the other.

We know the players aren't crap, but they're either not good enough in the positions they're playing in or they're not good enough for a side of Liverpool's calibre anyway. McAteer is clearly about as useful defensively as a goldfish. He's caught forward too often and he can't tackle when chasing. I'm a fan of Harky for his heart, but I don't think he's good enough. Stig would have a job pushing Jimmy Phillips out at Bolton on current form and Matteo likes to give forwards as much time as they need to get to shot in. It's this lot that have cost us precious goals this season, not James, although it seems to have become trendy to slag him off whenever a goal is conceded. I believe buying another half-decent 'keeper was the right thing to do but Roy isn't kidding anyone if he thinks we think that'll solve our problems. Is he trying to buy time or what? We need defenders, especially full-backs, who can play well in the positions they play in. It's no good having quality sweepers playing at centre-half and midfielders at full-back if they ain't up to the task. The same could be said of the midfield. Leonhardsen wide on the left/right? Surely if you want someone to play there you get someone who is used to playing there. I mean you never see England let Devon Malcolm open the batting do you? If you picked some of the teams Roy does on Championship Manager on my computer you'd get peed on, even by lesser teams. Which is pretty realistic really (Everton and Barnsley for God's sake!). Even if the title race isn't over yet, as the most defiant are saying,

it's becoming plainly obvious that we won't be in it, no matter how carried away the media seemed to be getting after the 2-1 at Newcastle. Four wins since Andy Cole and his mates humbled us is hardly a long unbeaten run and Coventry (league and cup) further showed just how uninspiring we can be. So maybe now would be a good time to put things right. It's pointless waiting for the summer. We did that in '95 after winning the Coca Cola Cup, thinking we'd be sound for the start of '95-96 and we were conned. It mightn't have been a bad start, Collymore and all, but that nightmare November showed our frailties and we never looked commanding after that and the cup final was just embarrassing. Last season, more of the same. Good start, bad patch, starting to look good again, but then all wheels flying off in various directions. This season... the same lacklustre kind of stuff. Ince has played well, but he hasn't had the impact we hoped he would, despite all his motivational skills. The buck has to stop with the manager. Time and time again, he's proved incapable of being able to fire up the side when it matters. At times they've been as willing to fight as Oliver McCall was against Lennox Lewis. The crowd haven't got behind the side nearly enough either, but that isn't something that can be taken for granted, especially these days. Roy has got to get his finger out. He has to be bold, make changes and be prepared to take risks every now and again. The two goals by Robbie (and even McAteer's horrendous miss of the season contender) against Leeds showed the effectiveness of the quick counter-attack and that other styles of play can be used. Now let's see more of it! Let's mix and match more often, give the opposition a hell of a lot to think about and for heaven's sake, play people in their best positions!

Andy

Quick quiz

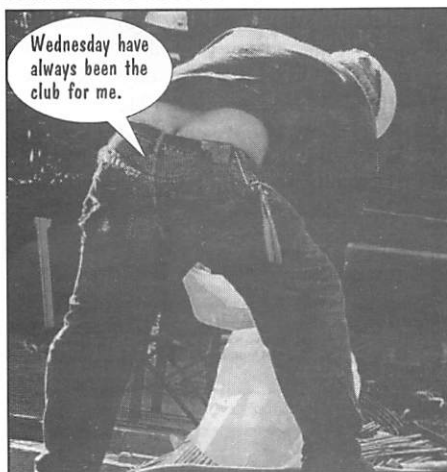
Liverpool score in the first minute, dominate play, fail to get a second and the opposition equalise in the dying minutes. Who were the opposition?

- a) Bolton
- b) Everton last season at Anfield
- c) Southampton
- d) Everton last season at Goodison
- e) Blackburn
- f) Wimbledon at home last season
- g) Southampton

The correct answer is a). Oh, and b) and c), d), e) and f) as well. And g).

Quiz sent in by Al Campbell - Sarcastic Bloke

Doubts emerge over where Ron Atkinson's words come from



Juan Kerr

(respected football journalist and friend to the stars)

AVLP would like to introduce a new columnist in place of the tired and weary Roy Rants section. Lifelong Liverpool fan Juan is fast making his mark in the world of journalism (honest!) and we're delighted to welcome him on board. We're sure you'll enjoy his words of wisdom and patronising anecdotes.

Hello Juan fans. I'm glad to be have this opportunity to bring a little ray of sunshine into your lives and I hope my opinions will keep you entertained.

Andy 'Goal'

Firstly I'd like to talk about my old mate Andy Cole. I actually used to go to school with Andy, or Barndoor as we used to call him. The reason for this? Well, Barndoor and I used to play up front for the school team and we used to laugh at how many chances he used to miss. He used to look a complete incompetent. So the lads used to joke that he couldn't hit a Barndoor from a yard with a beachball.

Anyway I'm glad to see Barny doing so well at the minute. We have both come a long way since remedial class. The thing that puzzles me though is how the media have suddenly decided that Barny is a great player. Until recently everyone thought he was a complete waste of money, and now he's in the England squad.

The difference has been the seven goals he got in three games against the might of Barnsley, Sheffield Wednesday and Feyenoord. Despite the fact that the defences of each of these

teams are about as useful as a chocolate fireguard, Barny seems to have got a lot of recognition.

Let's face it though, how many of Coley's goals this season have been good ones? Not many. I remember when we used to play footy in the playground. The only time Barny used to score was when he was trying to pass to someone else, or when Specky Harris, the lad with the 4 inch lens glasses, was in goal.

The only drawback about Barny scoring so many and doing so well is the fact that the media want interviews with him all the time again. Coley was never the best when he had to talk coherently. I remember when we were in a school play and we were performing a nativity scene. The audience were incredibly impressed with him, thinking he was delivering his lines in Hebrew. The fact was he just couldn't put his sentences together properly.

Despite all this Barny continues to enjoy the rub of the green. If you're reading Barny, good luck and I hope you don't get rumbled. (You sarcastic bastard - ed)

Betting scandals

Next I'd like to rant about the FA's ban on footballers betting.

Footballers having the odd

flutter is as much a part of the game as poncy Italians, liniment and talentless centre-backs, but my friends at the FA have decided to kick it into touch thanks to the excesses of some individuals.

It was discovered that John Hartson of West Ham as well as others have been betting on matters they can affect on the football pitch in order to clean up at the bookies. The particular incident that was highlighted was last season in a game at OT where one of the West Ham forwards kicked the ball into touch straight from the kick-off to win a bet about the time of the first throw-in.

After this scandal I observed that a similar misdeed was occurring involving Everton players. I noticed after watching the morgue mob a number of times that they were kicking the ball out of touch an inordinate amount of times and immediately suspected foul play. After investigation it was discovered that no Everton players had placed any such bets.

Anyway, while I agree in principle that footballers betting on matters they can change is wrong, I wouldn't lose any sleep about the bookies missing out on a huge profit for a change. Although the thought of highly paid footballers lining their pockets yet further does grate on me a little. Besides, how can the FA or any other body stop a player telling someone else to place a bet.

It makes me wonder though, just how far you could go with all this betting lark. Could a player bet on himself to get booked or even sent off. I suppose it must be possible. How about betting on a player to break someone's legs? Imagine the odds Neil Ruddock could have got on breaking not one, but two of the mentally chal-

lenged Andy Cole's legs. Rumour has it that the burly defender earned himself a few free pints from Manc fans anyway after that particular move.

Big Ron

Sheffield Wednesday have finally resigned themselves to their fate and accepted relegation by appointing Big Ron Atkinson.

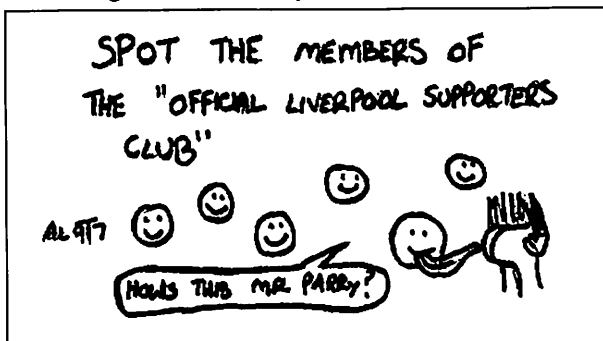
The club languishing at the foot of the table went all out to get themselves a good manager but only ended up with the oldest swinger in town.

Bo Jangles himself has a marvellous track record - rail track that is as he has caught so many trains out of clubs, even he must have thought his management career was over.

Now the increasingly desperate Sheff. Wed. Board have decided to take the biggest gamble in football and appoint a man whose league record is far from impressive.

It won't surprise you to know that Big Ron and I go back a long way.

Big Ron and I went for an interview for the new MBA Football Industries course at Liverpool University a few months ago. He was discussing with me afterwards how the interview went. Ron reckoned the course administrators had made up their minds about him as soon as they had seen his CV. I reckon it



had more to do with his answer to one of the interview panel's questions. Apparently when asked what he would do if he had £5 million to spend at a football club, he was given three possible answers:- A) Invest it carefully in a youth policy, B) Spend a little on ground improvements and the rest on scouring the lower divisions for the top talent, or C) Ensure the financial safety of the club by making wise investments.

Ron didn't like the sound of any of those options and made up his own where he would purchase an incredibly overpriced and dodgy striker from Mozambique club, FC Fastbutts, and spend the change on a few more gold chains, a magnum of champagne and a pack of cigars. Needless to say he didn't make the course.

Anyway, good luck to Ron and I hope he keeps Wednesday up. But even more luck to the Sheffield Wednesday fans. I hope you manage to get back into the Premiership next season when Ron has been sacked again.

Standing Mancs

Now, this being a Liverpool fanzine, I suppose you don't want me to say too much about Man U fans, but bear with me, because I'd just like to make a point about their row about standing up. The Taylor Report was always going to cause a few ripples of discontent simply because fans have always been allowed to stand up. Now they are denied the choice and that's a shame. Fans have always wanted to stand in the past and they still do now. Seats were introduced to make grounds safer and that's certainly been the case, but they shouldn't now be used as an excuse to kill off football fans altogether. If people are expected to fork out 20 odd quid for one, they should be given a bit of leeway and allowed not to

sit in it at times. It's totally unreasonable to expect fans to shut up and strap themselves to their seat for a whole match. Seats have completely altered the atmosphere within grounds and that's enough. We now don't need overzealous stewards forcing us to stay gagged and clamped to plastic seats. I'm right behind the Stretford Enders on this one. This is another example of how their club are allowed to walk all over them. They've been gullible enough to take it in the past (constant changes of strip) so it's about time they took a stand. Stewards ejecting people and confiscating their season tickets is out of order. At the moment they're not bothered because someone else will happily take them, but mark my words, the day will return when even the top clubs are desperate for the turnstiles to creak more often. A few weeks ago a Liverpool season ticket holder was told by a steward to put a banner away that was draped across the front of the upper tier in the Anny Road stand. Are clubs trying to stop us getting behind our teams now or what? It stinks. Why don't clubs realise this? Teams respond better to a good atmosphere, so why not designate areas where fans can sit, stand, shout, sing or whatever away from the others who don't want to so at least they can have a bit of fun when the match is boring. It'd surely be to the benefit of the lads on the pitch too. Or aren't clubs bothered about this. It seems they're only interested in money these days. Reebok and McDonalds are allowed to plaster banners all over the place but fans, without whom the club would die, aren't. I'm not impressed.

Well that's all for now folks. I've just seen a job ad for a fitness expert at Tottenham Hotspur FC. I've got to fill in my application. I used to swim with Duncan Goodhew you know. That'll impress them.

Left to concentrate on the Coca Cola Cup

With standards rising by the year, competition for honours in England is becoming increasingly hard fought.

Why then if this is the case are so many big clubs writing off the Coca-cola Cup?

The fact that this competition offers no place in Europe should be of little worry to top Premier League clubs, as you only have to finish in the top half of the table to qualify for the UEFA Cup nowadays.

At the end of the day it's another trophy in the cabinet, and right now that's exactly what Liverpool need.

Granted it's no real compensation for failing to win the league in what to a Liverpool fan seems like a lifetime, but it would be a building block, as we once again look towards 'next season.'

Newcastle away (quarter-finals) would have been one that last season might have tested us, but it has to be said that without Shearer knocking the goals and a run of form that we have

hardly come to associate with the Toon army, they looked a team that we should swept under the carpet with consummate ease anyway.

This aside there are a couple of good sides left in the cup, and should we make it to the twin towers of Wembley I doubt that we'll face opposition as easy as Bolton or Sunderland. Arsenal have suddenly realised they're now in with a chance of winning it after hardly trying in the early rounds and Chelsea are always a danger. They are two sides worth reckoning with, and you can guarantee that facing either of them would not be easy. Middlesbrough first though. Emerson might have departed these shores for good this time, but they're not top of Division One because they're crap.

At the end of the day every competition is important. It's good to see that Roy Evans is taking it seriously - the only reason Fergie didn't is 'cause he knows his boys are incapable of winning the treble!

Nick Wyatt

A man went into an antiques shop. He spotted a nice little brass rat on one of the shelves and offered the dealer £20 for it.

"I'll happily take 20 for it, but be careful with it," the dealer said. "It has strange powers."

Not believing him, the man put it into his rucksack, slung it over his shoulders then got on his bike and peddled away. When he reached the first set of traffic lights he noticed that a rat had started following him. He started to peddle faster to try and lose it but next time he looked round there were ten rats following him. He began to ride even harder but next time he looked there were at least 100 rats chasing after him. This time he really began to put it in, but there was no escaping the rats. When he reached the bridge crossing the river there were at least 3000 behind him. He decided the brass rat was too much trouble so took it out of his bag and flung it into the river. Much to his relief every single rat jumped in after it.

The man then went back to the antiques shop.

"Ah, now I tried to warn you about that rat...," said the dealer.

"Sod the rat! How much for the brass Man United fan?"

University of Common Sense

Examination

Department of Biology

Transport regulation and control

Time allowed: 3 hours



Explain, using your own words, the term inconsistency.

Um, Liverpool.

Okay, so it wasn't really a question on my exam paper but if it had been I would have got top marks. Anyone who's been to more than one game at Anfield this year will know what I mean. I've only been to three due to a cash flow problem (i.e. it doesn't) and we've lost two of them. The games? Leicester, Derby and Barnsley. Anyone who can lose to Leicester and Barnsley can be accused of being shit and don't really have a chance of winning anything. But if you look at some of the games I haven't been to (Arsenal, Chelsea) that we've won then we could be accused of being excellent and capable of substantial silverware. Okay, spot the difference between the two. Excellent, shit. Excellent, erm, the worrying thing is it's been the same for about three seasons. We threw away so many chances to win the title last year that I began to wonder if Howard Kendall had been drugging the squad.* Inconsistency is a major problem at Anfield and it doesn't appear that there's an immediate answer to the problem. A little more commitment certainly wouldn't hurt and neither would a little team spirit (and not of the alcoholic variety). Christmas has been and gone lads, and we still don't have anything to really celebrate!

*We lose to the lowest of the low but beat teams who are high-flyers.

Macca



The Liverpool back four show that they can't sing and dance in harmony either

That was 1997

As the year of elections, crap weather and 3-0 away defeats in France bites the dust, AVLP looks back at the stars of 97.

The AVLP awards 1997 were voted for by the our readership despite the fact that we never asked them to vote and never gave them any categories to vote on.

Best player:

Liverpool Bjørn Tore Kvarme - picked up for nowt but proved that he is worth twice as much as most players. Robbie too had a good year despite sendings off.

Rest A hard choice indeed. The shortlist was Sol Campbell, Gianfranco Zola, Denis Bergkamp and Mitch Ward (!). And the winner is the classy Dutchman. Some of his goals have been breathtaking and his mastery of a leather ball is unsurpassed.

Worst player:

Liverpool That honour was shared between Neil Ruddock and Mark Kennedy. Kennedy would have cleaned up, but most fans haven't seen too much of him due to shit performances in the reserves.

Rest No matter what anybody tells you and how carried away the Manc loving media get, never be lulled into thinking Andy Cole is anything better than the worst footballer to get away with being paid for kicking a ball craply.

Best goal:

Liverpool Unbelievably it has to be McManaman after a few beauties this year. His run and sublime finish against Celtic will live long in the memory and takes the solid gold

trophy.

Rest Kevin Davies of Southampton has scored some special goals, but the goal of the year according to AVLP readers was the headed own goal by Iain Dowie for West Ham in the CCC. You couldn't wish to see a better header.

Best game:

Liverpool The 2-0 win against PSG was great and had a wonderful atmosphere but the memory of the first leg means that the award goes to the 4-3 win against Newcastle.

Rest The 4-3 game between Leeds and Blackburn was pretty good and Derby are usually good for entertainment in games, but because it involves Newcastle the 4-3 game at Anfield takes a dual award.

Worst game:

Liverpool Where to begin? A home loss to Barnsley, two home losses to the Mancs, the 3-0 at PSG, losing a 2 goal lead at Chelsea, losing a lead to Coventry, the terrible display in the CCC at Boro. The award though goes to the 3-0 away defeat in Strasbourg for a lack of heart and general defensive incompetence.

Rest Any game involving Everton is pretty dire. So I'll have to give the award to Everton 97.

Best dressed player:

Liverpool Has to be David James. He fills a suit well and has us captivated by his hair, or lack of it. Put this golden tin of hair spray in your trophy cabinet Jamo, but don't drop it.

Rest This award must be shared between all of the Italian imports that are sprinkled around the Premiership. They are all pretty snazzy dressers.

“Call the fashion police” award:

Liverpool The award could only go to Michael Thomas. JB is ineligible since his departure and Thomo’s multi-coloured boots managed to take our minds off some dire performances.

Rest Ron Atkinson struts around like Del Boy as if he is on the beach at Marbella with a tequila or two. His jewellery is legendary but that doesn’t make it good.

“Twat the bastard” award:

Liverpool The best foul by a Liverpool player this year was in the reserves but I’m sure it’s an award Razor will be proud of. He managed to break Andy Cole’s legs twice in one tackle. Sheer genius.

Rest For comedy value this award goes to the player who, while playing in the FA Cup second round, scored a penalty, went to kick the ball into the net for a second time, kicked the keeper by accident and duly got sent off. Congratulations mate if you’re out there.

Best dive:

Liverpool Robbie Fowler gets the award for his dive over David Seaman despite angering Liverpool fans everywhere for telling the ref. that it was a dive.

Rest Take any of Danny Cadamarteri’s against Leicester. It was a display that would have pleased anyone at the West End, but failed to impress the referee very often.

“The kid’s a bit special” award:

Liverpool There could only be one recipient of this award after a superb first year at the tender age of 17. Owen will become a huge star and he may even force himself a place in the World Cup.

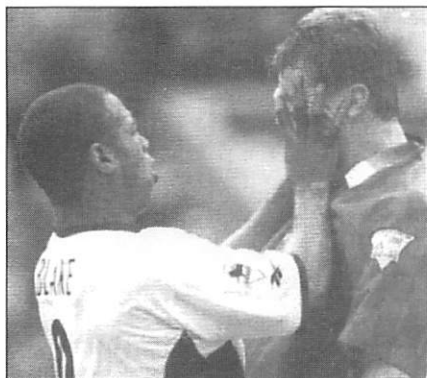
Jamie Carragher deserves a mention too.

Rest Emile Heskey had a good start to life in the Premiership and scared defences with his power and raw talent. Take the golden dummy and cherish it.

The “Good riddance” award:

Liverpool It has to go to Stan Collymore. A man who has such ability in his possession but like the spoilt brat he is, won’t share them with anyone else. I hope he looks back on his time at Liverpool with enormous regret. He left us shortchanged too often.

Rest Au revoir Cantona. His influence on the Manc team was fading but I was still glad to see the last of his ugly mug. No more will we have to listen to the diarrhoea that passes for philosophy that emanates from his lips.



Hey! That permanently knackered look IS his real face

Goodison blues



I leave it in your capable hands Howard. I'm off on holiday!

I still want someone to buy me a laptop computer after Santa unforgivably let me down, but I still had a good Christmas week. 3-1 against Leeds on Boxing Day was more than I had hoped for after the dysentery that was the 1-0 win over Coventry the weekend earlier (of course I was happy with the win, but when you want to make an impression, bowel problems don't help!). What pleased me further though was the Kop in reaction to the Man U/Everton scoreline. All Evertonians seem to think we're obsessed with Man U these days, that we'd happily bare our naked bodies on national television and do dirty things to sheep just to see them lose. They think that we're jealous of the Mancs' success because we can't get any ourselves. In reality this is nothing but the product of overworked, bitter and twisted bluenose minds, as this result showed. Normally you hear a groan when the Mancs win, but this time all you heard was laughter. Everton had lost, they were next to bottom and in deeper trouble than Danger Mouse in that episode where Baron Greenback writes off his car, and everyone thought it was

pretty funny. Never mind that the Mancs had pulled out a six point gap at the top of the league and our fiercest rivals were marching seemingly unstopably to a fifth title in six years. Are we really that bothered about the Mancs? Arrogant cunts they might be, but why give them more attention than they deserve. The only jealous ones are the Bluenoses and they know it. They won't admit it though.

They're the ones obsessed with Manchester United. They know they're the best side in the country and they're happy with that as long as it's not us. They want the Mancs to win everything just so we can't. They're determined that we won't win anything and the Mancs will stop us at all costs because they're incapable of doing it themselves. Every time they play us they sing Manc songs to try and piss us off. They stay behind after home games because they think they can force their chairman to resign but spend part of the time telling the board that 'Kopites are gobshites.' A few years ago the situation might have been different, but as we know, fans everywhere have changed. Even Geordies boo their own side these days. Football's stronger profile has seen fans everywhere become more fickle. Four years of bargain basement football in the face of relative success across the park has seen Evertonians intensify their dislike of us far beyond the old 'friendly rivalry' cliché. Whilst the rise of the Mancs has seen us relegate Mersey derby defeats to nothing more than an

WANTED



MITCH WARD
FOR BREAKING THE BANK
Can't afford any reward though

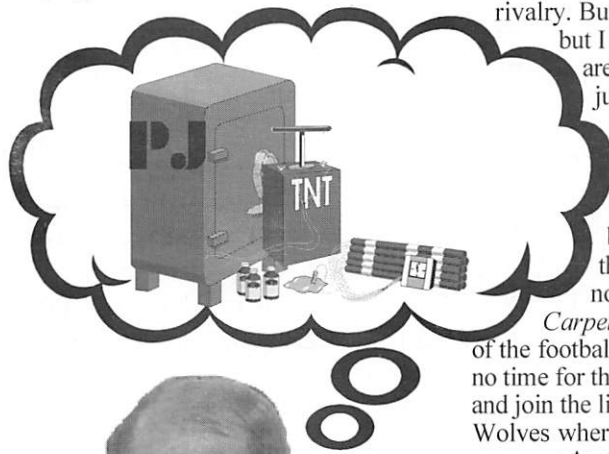
irritation in the context of our seasons, Everton's demise has seen their fans elevate the same fixture to a life or death encounter. So much does it mean to them to beat us now that every goal has to be greeted by a pitch invasion. So worked up are they that they goad and jibe us every time they beat us thinking we really care. They get cocky and churn out all this 'dogs of war' crap. Yeh, right. Admirable in Barnsley and Wimbledon maybe, but not in Everton, who, let's not forget, are one of the 'big five.' I just wish we could beat them to bring them down a peg or two.

Every so often they threaten to ruin the Liverpool fanzine writer's favourite mine of jokes by winning a few games, but then they show they're only keeping us on our toes. At the end of '95

they were worse than Ipswich last time they played in the Premiership, but then they signed Nick Barmby and went on an unbeaten streak of all of about five games. The radio guys were calling them the form team and Joe Royle was beaming and harping on about Europe. But then normal service was resumed and our dated fanzine jokes became topical again. This season has seen them hit just about the lowest trough in the last five years and the players who joined them recently saying they wanted to be part of their glorious revival are rumoured to want out. Turning back to Howard Kendall would be like Labour going back to Neil Kinnock. Hardly progress for a supposedly ambitious big-time-slumbering-giant club. There was a time when I used to enjoy their rivalry. But not now. I don't hate them,

but I can't be doing with 'Kopites are gobshites' Bluenose fans. I just like to laugh at their continuing state of hopelessness. Their ground is crap, so why some of them are campaigning to save it is beyond me. They think they're bigshots but they're nothing more than the *What Carpet!* magazine on the newstand of the football world. Few care for it. I've no time for them at all anymore. Go down and join the likes of Birmingham City and Wolves where you belong.

As for the Mancs, we're miles behind them and there's nothing much we as fans can do about it. As much as we can't stand their smarmy smiling faces looking down us, I think the constant deficiencies in our own side have deflected some of the hurt this causes, rather than magnifying it as people seem to think. We've grown used to Manc success, but we know we should be competing with them. It is this that hurts the most.



ROB JONES NOT SCORING TOON

©MOB

ED. SO NO TOON TODAY ?

MO. NO. OBVIOUSLY AT THE END OF THE DAY IM AS KED UP AS YOU ARE NOT TO GET SOMETHING FUNNY IN THE BOX, BUT, AS PART OF A TEAM AS LONG AS SOMEONES CRACKING IN THE GAGS IM HAPPY. JUST SO LONG AS THE 'ZINE KEEPS GETTING PUBLISHED. ALL I CAN DO IS TO KEEP GETTING INTO FUNNY POSITIONS AND HOPEFULLY A FUNNY THING WILL HAPPEN SOONER OR LATER. ID BE MORE WORRIED IF I WASNT GETTING THE CHANCES TO BE FUNNY BUT I AM SO IM NOT TO WORRIED. I TAKE A BIT OF STICK OFF THE PENCILS BUT THE SPIRIT AT THIS DESK IS FIRST CLASS (LIKE MY STAMPS) AND ITS ALL MEANT IN THE RIGHT WAY - IM PART OF A GREAT BUNCH OF DRAWING TOOLS WHO ALL CARE DEEPLY HOW THE TOONS TURN OUT - DESPITE WHAT THE PUNTERS THINK WE ALL CARE VERY MUCH ABOUT WHAT WERE DOING ALL THIS "SPACE-PEN" STUFF IS JUST LAZY JOURNALISM - MY OTHER TOON JOBS HAVE NO BEARING ON MY FOOTBALL JOKES... IM JUST ENJOYING LIFE LIKE ANYBODY ELSE O.K....

ED. THANK YOU

MO. MY PLEASURE - DO I GET PAID NOW ?



Defender did not fit 'Personality of Year' title

BBC rob Jones of top sports award

THE BBC has caused a storm of controversy after admitting that the rightful winner of the Sports Personality of the Year was Rob Jones.



EXCLUSIVE

By R. Slicker

Unscrupulous Journalist of the Year

The shocking development was revealed after Des Lynam happened upon the real results while enjoying after-show hospitality with Sue Barker.

The Liverpool full back polled a record amount of votes but the BBC decided that Jones was ineligible as he has no personality.

Jones, who had a storming 1997 season clocking up a handful of appearances, spoke out against the decision saying: "I'm absolutely appalled. This is meant to be a democratic country, and the public voted for me to win, so the award should be mine."

The 1997 award went instead to Canadian tennis player Greg Rusedski who dispelled the myth that no one who plays tennis regularly in this country can be any good at it.

Rusedski said: "If someone else deserved the award more than me, I want them to have it. Rob is famous in

Canada and a legend over here, so I don't want to upset anyone by taking his trophy.

A BBC spokesman, T.V. Dinners, said: "We weren't going to tell anyone. After last year when Justin Fashanu remarkably received most votes we didn't want anyone to make a mockery of this most prestigious award."

He added: "The panel and I thought that someone with the intelligence and charisma of a used tissue was not the sort that should be receiving such a revered prize."

Jones replied: "They gave it to Damon Hill last year for heaven's sake! And he's not even a sportsman either."



Jones caught rehearsing his charismatic first goal celebration

Another wasted corner!

The question most Reds are considering now is not whether we will win anything in 1997-98, but whether we will win something again at all! The mood of depression and pessimism that has settled round Anfield is incredible, fuelled by the endless nonsense that comes out of the club: no matter what the defeat, or how bad the performance, 'hard work and a bit of luck' seems to be the recipe to reverse it. No mention of looking at why the players seem so hard to motivate, no question of looking at training methods that I am reliably informed do not include practising corners (it bloody shows!), no question of asking whether the current coaches are doing ANYTHING right (step forward, defendant Lee...).

A good example of the inept thinking going on inside Anfield concerns David James, who must be wondering what the hell is going on. Last season, from about March onwards, he was poor, cost us a sackful of goals (but not the title, as some people have suggested), and yet Evans defended him to the hilt. There was no threat to his place, and he was publicly defended. Fine. He started this season OK, not in brilliant form, but costing us few goals, and doing a solid job. Maybe Nielsen was putting pressure on him? Then comes the horror of Strasbourg. James seemed slightly at fault for the third goal, maybe he was out of position, but let's be honest, there was nothing he could have done about the first two, and the whole team played utter shite that evening. That performance shook the club: I have never known the sheer disbelief and

disgust at a performance as this game created, and there was serious talk of a complete overhaul of the squad. And what does Evans try and do?? He tries to buy Brad bloody Freidel! Well, that makes a great deal of sense!!! The team gets trawled 3-0 by average European opposition (though they did play very well on the night), James is one of the few players who comes off the pitch with any credit, and we try and sign an American replacement??? What is the world coming to? And then it happens again, after the 3-1 defeat to United (how did Nicky Butt avoid a red card??! Does ANYONE know?). James again is not to blame for any of the goals, and does OK overall, and we not only try and resurrect the deal for Freidel after the Department of Employment had done us a favour by throwing it out, but we also seem interested in Ipswich's keeper! What is this obsession with getting a new goalkeeper? It hardly seems the first answer most Reds would come up with if asked what needs to be sorted at Anfield. And what does that say to Jorgen Nielsen? More to the point what does it say about the man who signed him, and then refuses to give the lad a chance!!! If James really isn't up to the job, why not give Nielsen a go? The lad came highly recommended, and if he is good enough to come off the bench if needed, he should be good enough to start. But more importantly, replacing James would have made no difference to the vast majority of our defeats this season in any case, so what are we thinking of?

It's not as if we can even trust Evans on transfers: not one of his

"JOHN HARKES GOING TO SHEFFIELD, WEDNESDAY."

New York Post

signings has worked out: McAteer? I think not! Babb? OK if he plays 4-4-2, otherwise definitely not. Scales? Sold. Collymore? Sold. Berger? Not played enough games in his proper position. Murphy, Ince, Riedle and Leonhardsen? Too early to say. Neilsen? Never played. I don't think it matters how much money we have or how much money other clubs have (like Mark Lawrenson suggested). Our problem is not that other people have money, it's that we don't know how to spend it. People accuse David

Moore's of running this club down: we may not like him, but he has stumped up all the money asked for by Souness and Evans, and if things have declined, it's their fault. I would not trust Evans to sign a decent cleaner. I am not surprised the players do not seem to play for Evans, even when they play well, their position comes under threat! Give Roy as much money and time as you like, it won't make any difference. And that is a very sad thing to say.

Simon the Electric Elk

No turning back

April 30th 1994 - Whatever happened to 'We'll be standing on the seats next year'? Attempts to do that this season are guaranteed to be greeted with a less than approving response, not just from the excessively zealous stewards but from those around you. Anfield has changed, but certainly not for the better. We, the fans, have dwindled into the conformist sit-down-and-shut-the-fuck-up consumers that modern football wants us to be, and anyone who says that the atmosphere has not suffered since seating is quite obviously talking through their arse. There is no passion in football anymore; commercialism is manifest in football in so many ways - excessive wages/ ticket prices/ merchandise/ sponsorship/ player's egos - that the Sky soundbite 'There's no turning back' has an eerie resonance to it. Money has drained the passion out of the game, and the rise to pop culture status of the beautiful game shows no sign of abating. We are no longer able to distinguish the working class origins of football from its new prominence. Even When Saturday Comes, surely the most sickly incarnation of what football has become, claims it is

the true voice of the average football fan (oh how ethnic of them), but can only support this claim by linking the game to a quasi-exclusive lifestyle clique, asserting that football is somehow a statement of style, and a way of defining cultural background. They sell merchandise such as videos and T-shirts which all have some degree of trendiness attached to them, but all are intimated to be characteristic of the common/ ethnic/ real voice of football; A magazine which purports to be the view of the average fan is nothing more than some people who can articulate their ill-conceived ideas coherently in order to make money from the game, just like everyone else. At least the likes of FourFourTwo have no such pretensions.

The advent of the Liverworld plastic bag brigade is symptomatic of the decay of modern football. God bless the day when football is no longer attractive to the bourgeois converts, and Sky gives us our religion back. Oh, sorry, went dizzy for a minute then - Sky know how we feel apparently. The endemic corruption of football is characterised by the

atmosphere at the match. Anfield has lost its appeal; it is no longer an intimidating arena for the opposition, and part of the blame has to lie with us, the fans, and the fact that we just don't sing any more. Only a few seasons ago, especially during flag days, the vocal support given by the Kop was enough to transform a boring match into an occasion. Remember the 6-2 v. Tottenham? Despite the goal tally, a piss-poor match between 2 piss-poor teams was livened up by the sheer ferocity of the crowd. And what about the 3-3 against the Manics? Would a seated Kop give as much support? Of course not. Seating the Kop has destroyed atmosphere by simply separating the singers from one great heaving mass into pockets around the ground. And invariably you're stuck with people who, no matter how rousing support elsewhere is, refuse to sing. They'll cheer when we score and are more than willing to shout abuse when mistakes are made but will not, ever, sing. These are exactly the sort of people Sky are geared to please - no faith in the side, no encouragement yet consummate spouters of illinformed shite, one and all. This may be a blatant stereotype, but you know what I mean.

Personally, when the crowd around me is predominantly made up of the above, I find it hard to summon up the courage to sing, not wanting to stand out; when I do sing, I feel like a prick, and if I stand up someone will always come out with the immortal, 'Sit down I can't see' - Well go and watch it on the fucking telly then! Surely the point of going to the match is to lose yourself in the atmosphere and give the side as much vocal support as it needs (and the current lot needs it in spades - I mean,

Barnsley!?) Just sitting and watching is the forte of Utd. fans, isn't it?

I'm not trying to imply that non-singers are somehow lesser fans than the singers, of course everyone has the right to be there, but it must be obvious by now that our players will respond to support but falter when criticised. Then average play becomes worse and the vicious circle goes on. Call this support? They used to say that support generated by the Kop was worth a goal head start. I'm not so sure now.

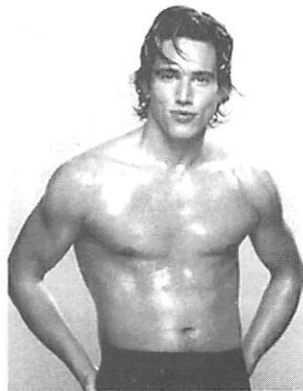
On the day most sports headlines read, 'Players Bet On Their Team To Lose', Danny Cadamateri put a deposit on a huge plush house in Formby. True story that is.

Paddy Walsh

**Dean Holdsworth is still
struggling to score**

CHECK IN FOR MEN!

Talk live and uncensored



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Deja Vu?



Tuesday 4th November, 6.45pm.

“Booze?”

“Check.”

“Food?”

“Check.”

“Remote?”

“Check.”

“Bundle!”

This is mine and Dave’s pre-televvised-match ritual. I have two good reasons for not actually going to the game. 1) What happened versus Paris St. Germain and 2) A cash flow problem. Dave, on the other hand, is just a lazy sod who doesn’t want to drive to Liverpool in his precious Fiesta (which I personally don’t think would make it out of East Anglia anyway). So we found ourselves sitting on Dave’s knackered sofa having a go at the team line-up.

“Rob Jones? Three good games all season, that’s it!”

“He’s only played about three games this season!”

“McManaman. Yes! He’s on fire at the moment!”

“Riedle only a sub? You must be joking!” Etc.

After thoroughly slagging off the team we waited for the kick-off. Five minutes into the game we were still waiting for the kick-off. It was only when Macca ran at the goal that we realised the game had started.

“Come on, come on... shit!”
Sound familiar?

The whole of the first half was more or less the same. More penetration than the proverbial Essex girl but when it came to the climax we were firing blanks (ahem). The two teams matched each other and man-on-man marking seemed to halt the Liverpool game. We passed too much and one-touch football

left us stranded.

During half time we amused ourselves by throwing popcorn at Des Lynam’s head and the goalmouth behind them (yes, we did finish primary school). We were fully prepared to do this all through the second half (well something had to go in the net that night) when boom! Liverpool found a life. The game stepped up a gear, the passing sharper, the movements more powerful. Strasbourg began to look worried! Macca found his feet and Evans found his inspiration. Our normal formation was changed to something like a two back line and we were playing with five front players (including subs). And then Fowler scored.

YES!!

We totally knackered the sofa (don’t jump on a sofa, it hurts) and spilt various substances all over the floor. When we finally came down again we noticed Macca was playing at right-back. Good joke. Truth is he did it well and we played better with two at the back than five. It’s weird how a penalty can turn a game but that really did the job. It looked like we could win. The chances game thick and fast but even with six up front we just couldn’t stick them away. Owen, as always, tried his best and it was better than many normally give, but yet again it was just beyond our reach. A replica of the Paris St. Germain game. The French teams (away) must be Liverpool’s bogey sides. It’s weird how a night like that can remind you that it’s not just a game, it is life or death. It’s the first time in years that I’ve cried at a result. Liverpool have got the potential, they have got the team and they have got the skill. They’ve just got to get it together.

Macca

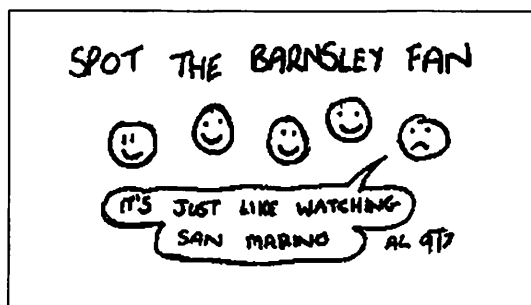
Don't believe the papers

The recent decision by some people somewhere at LFC to allow our once decent matchday read, *Anfield Review*, to be degraded even further by taking advertising from a too-powerful Aussie tycoon-owned 'newspaper' seems, unsurprisingly, to have pissed one or two people off. Some Reds have been refusing to buy it because the rag in question, *News of the World*, is from the same fold as another popular national tabloid named after the largest star in our galaxy. This is understandable. Certain comments made by the paper indirectly referred to above (Section 4 of the AVLP constitution/founding document* forbids me to mention its name, but I'm sure you can work it out!) about Liverpool and Liverpool fans in the past were an absolute disgrace. As I'm confident I'm preaching to the converted here I don't feel I need to elaborate on this, but just to make it absolutely clear where I stand, I wouldn't even wipe my arse with the 28p tits-a-plenty family daily. Apart from the fact my fingers would probably go through the newspaper and leave me with a nasty smelly mess under my nails, the content of the paper doesn't even deserve such treatment. Taking a dump on some people may be just what they need, but that'd be far too good for this newspaper because it'd

mean I'd have to go near a copy first. Please, everyone, just leave it on the newstand!

However, I have to say I believe the *News of the World* is a slightly different kettle of fish. Although I don't buy it myself because I don't like to read about the kinky sex dens of MPs over my orange juice and toast on Sunday mornings, I feel a boycott of it should be up to the conscience of each individual. *News of the World* is editorially independent, although similar in content, from the paper I won't even crap on even though they both come under the Murdoch News International umbrella. The decision to run 'The Truth' in the not-fit-for-bogroll paper in 1989 was taken by its editor at the time, Kelvin MacKenzie. It wasn't Murdoch's decision, although his involvement in the affair was far from exemplary (I don't like him anyway). 'The Truth' was the biggest cock-up of MacKenzie's career. You only have to look at what he's doing now. L!ve TV for goodness sake! Anyone who's ever watched the piss-poor, Mickey Mouse, naked woman reading the business news channel will surely have to agree the guy's hardly rocketed up in the world.

If we were to boycott *News of the World* simply because of Murdoch's involvement it couldn't be done in half measures. We'd have to avoid *The Times*, *Sunday Times*, Sky TV and all of his Chinese titles too (not that I'm a regular subscriber to them anyway). I'm not going to say don't boycott them, but I think it can get a bit silly. We have to get our news from somewhere and unfortunately, despite the fact I think it's



the best paper on the market, *The Guardian* isn't everyone's cup of tea and *The Express* is a pile of tosh. I hear a few fans have been calling for a boycott of *The Mirror* too because of its ridiculous over-sensationalisation of some pillock throwing a brick at the Barnsley team coach as it left Liverpool scandalously with three points. Again, it's your choice, but remember *The Star* has been somewhat economical with the truth in the past too and deserves to be given a wide berth, so think where you're going to get your news from. As for the matchday programme, I've personally

been boycotting it for the last season and a half on the grounds that it's crap anyway. Two quid for a load of glossy adverts, flowery interviews and a few clichés from the manager! No thanks. I can think of something better to spend my money on and it comes in pint glasses from behind a bar.

Andy

*Although it is written on a baked-bean-and-coffee-stained piece of shorthand notepaper, copies of the AVLPC constitution/founding document are available for public inspection.



MUSIC ZONE



10 songs that sum up Liverpools 96/97 season

- 1.Trash-Suede (we asked for that one)
- 2.Open Goals-Lightning Seeds (dedicated to David James)
- 3.I'm so lonely-Cast (we *did* walk alone)
- 4.Oh What a Night-The Clock (LFC V Paris SG at home)
- 5.Ironic-Alanis Morissette (well it was, wasn't it?)
- 6.Virtual Insanity-Jamiroquai (choose your event, really)
- 7.Don't Dream It's Over-Crowded House (pretty obvious, really)
- 8.Beautiful Ones-Suede (Spice boys they're not)
- 9.Everybody Hurts-REM (we did!)
- 10.Sale Of The Century-Sleeper (goodbye, Stan-no-man)

10 songs we hope sum up this season

- 1.We Are The Champions-Queen (please!)
- 2.Rocking All Over The World-Status Quo (3rd time lucky)
- 3.We Might Be Stars-The Wannadies (please!)
- 4.Something Changed-Pulp (here's hoping)
- 5.Flying-Cast (McManaman)
- 6.Getting Better-Shed 7 (please!)
- 7.Good Enough-Dodgy (we will be!)
- 8.Can I Kick It?-A tribe called Quest (...YES WE CAN!)
- 9.Speechless-Hanson (Man Utd will be)
- 10.What If God Was One Of Us-Joan Osbourne (he is!)

And the rest of the league...

- 1.Mission: Impossible-Moby (sums up Barnsley's season)
- 2.The Drugs Don't Work-The Verve (Arsenal)
- 3.Walk Away-Cast (Hey Everton! Joe Royle says, 'Hi!')
- 4.Nancy Boy-Placebo (Vinnie Jones)
- 5.Better Watch Out-Ant & Dec (hello Coventry!)
- 6.One More Try-911 (Oi! Ron Atkinson! No!)
- 7.Something For The Pain-Bon Jovi (goodbye Bolton)
- 8.Weird-Hanson (How *did* Barnsley get promoted?)
- 9.Creep-TLC (calling Nick Barmby)
- 10.Kick Your Game-TLC (Everton are shit anyway)

Just a ball and a yard of grass

Michael Owen, Jody Morris, Daniel Cadamarteri... at first glance they have nothing in common but scrape below the surface (as their tackles often do) and you find the answer. Age. All of them, according to some, 'should still be at school.' They are, apparently 'too young to be footballers.' Okay, so they lack a little experience but they more than make up for it in commitment. The age at which players are breaking through is getting lower and the age at which they stop is getting higher. Many clubs in the first division rely on younger players to survive and when their players mature they are sold for vast amounts of money which is then spent on the youth system. So, unlike other bigger clubs (mentioning no names, Man Utd) who run a poaching system, the first division is showing the way. A way which, it seems, Liverpool are beginning to follow.

We have Crewe as a feeder club and they're providing us with some amazing talent like Danny Murphy. I was dead against feeder clubs for a long time but now I've seen what it's done for Crewe and for us maybe it isn't such a bad idea after all. You have to find the talent but there just isn't the room for all the talented youngsters at the club so handing them out to other clubs who may need them is a pretty good move. And after all the fuss over feeder clubs we now have the news of the closure of Lilleshall and the planned opening of the Liverpool Football School. Similar to the phenomenal set-up at Ajax, not only are they thought to play the highest standard of football but are also given a top class education. Look at how many Lilleshall graduates/current students we have, how many U21/ex U21s we have from various countries and the number

of our players who are under 23. With all this we have a pretty good future I'd say. No one can doubt it, Liverpool's youth system is improving, we just have to keep it one step ahead of the rest of the league.

Macca

The emergence of Owen this season has been phenomenal. The attack now looks weak without him. I was dying to see him play for virtually all of last season, so excited was I his potential. He's turned defences inside out this season and I reckon over the next five seasons he'll get better with every game and develop considerably. His potential is awesome. There'll never be a universal way to deal with him. He'll have so many tricks up his sleeve by the time he's 25 that he'll never be sussed. He is fast making his mark as the latest Liverpool superstar, but thankfully he's kept well clear of all this Spice Boys nonsense, which shows he's a pretty smart lad too.

I wish I could say the same of Jason McAteer. Is money that important that he had to make himself look like a complete puff in that shampoo advert? Maybe he felt a bit left out as McManaman and Redknapp have been letting their feet do the talking this season (apart from that dreadful column of Macca's in The Times. Mr State the Obvious or what?). I reckon Jase's mum probably told him to do the ad because, let's be honest, he's been getting scruffier with every game. The producer's decision not to show him in his Liverpool shirt was very wise one though. His recent performances would hardly do the image any good would they?

Andy

England's number 9?

The Mancs have a few good strikers at the moment. It's just that Andy Cole isn't one of them. So don't think by devoting a few pages to his 'talents' we think he's any better than Tony Cottee.

It is a rare occasion when I find Andy Cole the focus of my attention enough to warrant a whole fanzine article, but the general reaction to his "resurgence" has really been quite extraordinary and a bit concerning.

Barndoor's career has been one of swings and roundabouts, ups and downs. His ups all came at Newcastle and his downs came everywhere else. So does that make his time at Newcastle the exception or the rule? I'll be the first to admit that his goalscoring record at the Geordies was very impressive, but that doesn't make him a good player.

His career at the Mancs has so far been a resounding flop. Purchased for £7million, Fergie probably realised as soon as he saw him close up that he had bought a dud. His talents were few and his weaknesses would take too long to work on.

The only assets I can honestly see that he has are pace and the ability to get himself into goalscoring positions. Now, here come his weaknesses.

Firstly he was never taught how to control a ball. This is a skill that a lot of young lads, and a few girls, have drummed into them at a very early age. I was told that the ball should be your friend. If you treat it right it will stay with you. Judging by that analogy, Andy Cole has never met a ball, and has probably just signed a war treaty with it. He stumbles along with the ball not knowing quite what he wants to do or how to do it. The irony is, this often works to his advantage. Let's face it, when was the last time you saw Cole take the ball past an opponent when he

actually meant it? I've never seen it.

Secondly he's about as intelligent as a bouncer who has had his brain sucked out through his ears. Have you ever heard interviewed? He can't string two words together. I heard that his mum still has to tie his laces for him. He is so thick that he swaps witty retorts with Ryan Giggs. I know that footballers are renowned for their lack of prowess in the field of intelligence, but Cole is taking the piss. He better hope that his footballing career lasts a long time, because I can't see him making much money in any job where he has to have possession of a fully functional brain. Can you imagine him as a commentator? "Well what did you think of that Andy?" "Well John...errr Brian sorry...wot do I fink about wot?...oh, the goal...errrr...well, obviously it was a good errr...goal...errrr..fingie crossed it in...and all credit to the lads...no, I was counting my fingers so I didn't see the errr... goal John."

The main thing that Cole lacks though is the fundamental ability that a striker must have. That being the ability to finish. Now Cole has been lucky enough to play for two very attacking teams in the Geordies and the Mancs. Every game he plays he has chances served up to him on a plate. All he has to do is apply the finishing touches. It's not so hard. You could do it, I could do it, Barbara Cartland could do it. Unfortunately Andy Cole rarely can. He couldn't hit a cow's arse with a cricket bat and some of his misses are pure comical genius. Cole is single-handedly responsible for the funniest moments I

have ever seen at football matches. Even last year when the Mancs beat us at Anfield and Cole got a goal, via a Jamo mistake, Cole momentarily lifted the morbid atmosphere on at least two occasions. One was an open goal, but the fact that he couldn't use his left foot accounted for a horrendous miss. That is another thing. How is it possible that someone earning as much money as he is can't kick the ball with his left foot? It is truly just a swinger, but a funny one.

The other miss was just as bad. I also remember several occasions in the dreaded FA Cup final when he could have scored. However, when presented with one-on-one situations against James he seemed to suffer a mental block and was possessed by the overwhelming urge to kick the ball as hard as he could towards an elderly gentleman in row 47 above the right hand corner flag.

So why has there been so much hype about him recently (I write this after his three goals against Feyenoord)? Well he scored three goals against Barnsley, he got one (and not 2 because own goals don't count) against Sheff Wednesday and three against Feyenoord. This seems to have been enough to elevate him from bum, waste-of-money status to superstar. Why?

To be honest I can't remember his goals against Barnsley. I will take a wild stab at the fact that one was a good goal and the other two were either flukes or they were, erm, flukes. Barnsley are hardly the sternest test any striker is likely to face anyway. My nan could score past them (even if the entire Liverpool team can't), even if she had her hands full with bags of shopping.

Then there was the victory over Sheffield Wednesday. At the time of writing Wednesday have a defence to rival ours, and as I stated earlier Cole only got one and not the two that the

media were desperate for him to get.

The Mirror made his hat-trick against Feyenoord a "great" hat-trick. Well, credit where credit is due. Three in a Champions' League game is good, but a great hat-trick it certainly was not. The first was predictably a fluke. A defender kicking the ball against him, which ricocheted over the keeper. It was truly time for Cole to go out and purchase a lottery ticket or two. His next two were unmissable, and for once I include Cole in that.

So he has scored 7 goals in three games and all that has gone before has been forgiven. How fickle the public are. Just make sure you are not taken in by it. One man that was, was Glenda Hoddle. A man whose judgement I once respected lost it all by giving Cole the opportunity to join the England squad. Was he really taken in by all this media hype? It appears so. When explaining the inclusion of Cole, Hoddle didn't look convinced that he rated Cole. He just said that he is picking him on current form. Bloody hell! I could get in the England squad at this rate. Even worse, Andy Hinchcliffe could make the England squad. What? He already has?! It's a mad, mad world.

The whole idea of Barndoor being an international for a country with so much attacking talent is ridiculous really. This is why I am so concerned. While I have stated before in AVLP that England is nowhere near as important to me as Liverpool, I still want England to do well. Can you imagine that England are losing 1-0 in the World Cup final. You hear that an England striker is through on the keeper, then you hear it is Andy Cole and your heart sinks. Andy picks out the same old man above the corner flag.

As I wind this piece up, I hope that Cole doesn't prove me wrong by scoring a sensational hat-trick against

us. I have been pretty scathing on him in this piece, but I don't believe I have been too unfair. Cole was not put on this earth to be a footballer. His real role in life was to be one of those clumsy dancers you see in Carry On films who has two left feet and stutters whenever he tries to speak.

We are in a sad state in this country when we are appreciating a player who is as articulate as a dyslexic narrator and has the co-ordination of a giraffe on ecstasy.

Roy

It has come to my attention in recent months, and it can't have escaped yours either, that Andy Cole has apparently become the best striker in the country again. Believe everything you read or hear and he's the man to play alongside Shearer in France this summer. Comparisons with Ronaldo are probably only just around the corner. The former Newcastle marksman has been banging them in left, right and centre for the Mancs this year and apparently re-established his place at the pinnacle of the British game. Excuse me while I cover my mouth and try to disguise a snigger with a cough.

I'm afraid I must beg to differ with the guys in the media and those from Manchester who hold this opinion. I have a slightly different criteria when I judge strikers. Unlike them I tend not to conveniently ignore deflections, own goals and scores of missed chances that an arthritic goat called Nigel with a broken leg and a plastic hip could have put away when I judge the class of forwards. Nor do I consider two months with only one goal to mean a rival striker is past it when he's scored 179 in six years for one club when comparing him to a player who's had three years of the kind of 'bad luck' that the rest of us call sheer crapness. Nor do I believe that

pouncing on the fumbled crosses of error-prone Scouse defences and sticking them in the net a couple of times means that a player is close to being the finished article.

Now don't get me wrong here, I'm not saying Andy Cole is a bad player, I'm saying he's crap. That is my honest opinion. He may prove me wrong in the World Cup, but if it's taken him three years to get used to playing with new players and against defences that have wised up to him, I can't imagine the likes of Sammer, Maldini and Desailly filling their shorts in anticipation of him lining up against them.

I bring this up mainly because I'm still in shock that someone of my own flesh and blood could actually say that Cole is better than Robbie. Needless to say, my dad did not get the tie or the aftershave he wanted for Christmas. What I'd like to know is just how many people have been taken in by this bull that Goal King Cole is a world beater. Let's look at the evidence. A failure at Arsenal and hardly any reputation to speak of before joining Bristol City, where he had a good season. Kev then snapped him up for the Geordies for who he couldn't stop banging them in for. Peter Bearsdsley had something to do with that though, and when the partnership was broken things started to go a tad wrong. Cantona just did not do it for him and Mark Hughes preferred to decline the option to pass to him and shoot himself. This caused his confidence to crash and made him miss a sitter that would have clinched a third Manc title on the row. It's taken him more than two years to get over it and that is not the hallmark of class strikers. Had Martin Edwards not parted with six million quid and Alex Ferguson with one of his up-and-coming wingers in order to acquire his services, then he may have long been forgotten about and sold to Ever-

ton. Other forwards come into the Manc side, quite good ones actually - Scholes and Solskjaer - play well, show their class and score goals but then get dropped for a player who couldn't hit an Eddie Stobart lorry stuck on the hard shoulder of the M6 in a contra-flow tailback from the nice grassy bank at the side. It puzzled me for a long time, but I guess even a club/plc as rich as Man U doesn't want to be seen to be throwing money around too liberally.

Of course he's now started scoring again, which proves that one goal and a subsequent rave review really can inspire confidence. Confidence then brings goals and together they breed more confidence and more goals. (I'm now considering paying an unscrupulous tabloid journalist to write in continuous glowing terms about Stig's crossing in the hope that it might inspire him to deliver more than one good one a month. Somehow I don't think the AVLP profits from the financial year ending this April are going to cover it though). But a few years ago, this happened to a bloke called Dean Saunders (remember him?). Well I certainly don't consider Cole any better than him.

What worries me though is how someone with the recent track record of Cole can hit a good patch and suddenly be talked of ahead of players like Fowler and Wright. Robbie Earle had a sensational 96-97 in Wimbledon's midfield but didn't get a look in for England and Matt Elliot could be forgiven for thinking he'd been pissing into the wind for a season without even being called up to the squad before Scotland poached him. The problem is people believe those who shout the loudest off the pitch. I'm not doubting how good Cole was at Newcastle or how good he should be now based on those past performances, but I think we're going way over the top.

Cole is certainly not better than Robbie Fowler, despite his recent bad patch. Robbie is a hero and has done so much for Liverpool in recent seasons that we have to allow time to be normal for once. After all, Cole got away with it for nearly three years! The trouble is we now expect him to deliver. We used to be just excited at the prospect of his talents being unleashed on unexpected defences, much the same as we are with Owen now. But Owen is the future, Robbie is the present. I really wish I was as good a footballer as some of the fickle fans on the Kop the day we played Coventry in the league, who berated everything he did that afternoon. Surely he's allowed a bad spell after all the goals he's banged away, much the same as Wright is at Arsenal. Kopites really bring out the gamekeeper in my some-times, well more often than not these days. I just want to pick up a gun and shoot them all. Just what's the matter with everyone that we can't get behind the team any more and try to lift them to kill off poor opposition like Barnsley and Coventry. We've got to be careful here, too much slagging off of Robbie and when it comes to signing new contracts he'll be off, even if they do offer him 50k. Now we really wouldn't like that would we? Our best goalscorer and midfielder gone. Well I certainly wouldn't. Robbie's had a frustrating time and he knows he was out of order flattening Per Frandsen at the Reebok, great shot though it was, and he'll come out of it. We'll perhaps be justified in slagging him off when it takes him as long as it took Cole to come good again. But if Cole can do it, Robbie can. He's going to be a true great one day I'm sure, but we could do with letting him know that we think he's pretty damn hot right now. When he's down, as all the lads do, he needs picking up, not left down there.

Andy

A look at the news

Oct 25

L 4 Derby 0

A win that gave Roy a bit of breathing space. A couple of weird events took place as well. Firstly Robbie missed a penalty, but more surprisingly we got our third penalty of the season. We will be getting free-kicks on the edge of the area next.

The result was rather flattering but we have been due a slice of luck. Let's hope that this really is the springboard we have been looking for to boost our season.

Barca are supposedly still interested in Macca. I am a Keep Macca campaigner and I hate to hear of people saying we should sell him - but I'm sure I'll explore this somewhere in #8.

Evans seems to have decided that he is not happy with any of the keepers at the club and is trying to buy Brad Friedel. Warner and Nielsen must be pretty crap if they can't challenge James, but the introduction of Friedel will mean he has to play most of the games to keep his work permit.

Oct 26

Dalglish was proposed in the Sunday rags as a possible successor to Evans. They just can't wait until he is shown the door. Dalglish is a nice target, but the return of a legend often backfires. Let's hope Evo can ride out the storm.

Oct 27

We have had scouts at an Ipswich match supposedly watching England U21 defender - Kieron Dyer. He is quick and has an eye for goal which makes him a perfect candidate to provide competition down our left hand side.

Robbie Fowler is set to pick up yet another accolade - the ECHO Merseyside Footballer of the Year trophy. God only knows what will happen when he puts some proper studs in his boots and learns to control the ball. Come to think of it, he is God.

Oct 28

The reserves drew with the Manics 2-2 in a game they really should have won. David Thompson scored as well as Dalglish.

Oct 31

King Kenny turned down the opportunity to go to Rangers, probably because he fancies a challenge still. Good old Kenny is not ready to reach for the pipe and slippers yet.

Jamie Carragher signed a new lucrative contract, and Babb has pledged his future to the club.

Nov 1

Bolton 1 Liv 1.

Fowler was hero and villain, but more of a villain I fear. He definitely cost us a couple of points here. Bolton didn't look like they had the belief to take us on when we had 11 men, but the sending off gave them a lift and Robbie has to take the blame. The psychopathic Pollock should have walked as well though. It looked like he had found out that our midfielders had been giving his wife a seeing to, so he was on a revenge mission.



Now stop all those you bastard!

Nov 4

Liv 2 Strasbourg 0.

A very good performance, so why the hell didn't they play like that in the first leg. Being a reds fan is so frustrating when they put on these Jekyll and Hyde performances. Evans went very bold reverting to an untried two at the back system, and the boys did very well to keep up the tempo throughout the game.

Fowler admitted that he has to clean up his act. No kidding. Opposition defenders are going to know that if they have a go at him they can get him sent off through retaliation. Wise up Robbie.

Nov 5

Ince has announced that he intends to play in the Champions league next year, and amazingly he thinks he can do that with this Liverpool team. Seriously though, a consistent run can put us back in the frame, before the Manes widen the gap at the top.

Nov 6

The incredible threat of Matt Elliott was linked with us. That is a move I would definitely be in favour of. He's tough, solid and scores so many goals from a defensive position. Unfortunately Martin O'Neill isn't in the habit of getting rid of his better players.

Ince declared that he is being picked on by referees because of his reputation and it is hard to disagree. He has not deserved a suspension so early in the season. He certainly hasn't been dirty this year. Hard but fair I'd say.

Nov 8

Liv 4 Spurs 0.

A comfortable win on paper but the first half was a bit ragged. The impressive aspect is that we are getting goals from midfield now - an area that has let us down in the past. Robbie tried his best to score before his suspension, but he played OK anyway.

Nov 9

Juve were said to be showing interest in Macca for around £11 million. However after asking a club official it was discovered that Macca is nowhere near the top of their target list. So, is this just media speculation to upset Macca and the supporters, or am I just worrying about nothing?

Nov 10

The reserves put in another pathetic performance losing 3-0 at Deepdale against a struggling Preston side. With players like Danny Murphy, Neil Ruddock and Steve Harkness in the team, we should expect and demand better.

Nov 11

Roy Evans has spotted a Dynamo Kiev defender that interests him, namely Olexandr Golovko.

Stig was chosen in a Europe team to play the Rest of the World by Michel Platini. Makes you wonder who they had to choose from really. He is amongst 6 Premiership players to be picked.



Martin Edwards admits he likes the new 'Droppapenny' turnstiles at OT

Nov 12

Razor can see the final curtain coming down on his Liverpool career. We'll be lucky to get £2 million for him now though when we could have sold him to Rangers last year for more than double that. I love his strength of character and his threat from corners, but if you can be outpaced by a milkfloat with a low battery what can you expect?

Nov 14

The Mirror came out with the "exclusive" that Liverpool had put together a £10 million package to get Sol Campbell. That is a player I would like to see in a red shirt. Apparently he is worth Razor, McAteer and Kennedy plus £2 million. That's a bit steep I feel, but it would cut our wage bill by a significant amount.

Nov 19

Liv 3 Grimsby 0.

A comfortable victory against quite an impressive Grimsby side. They brought a good following as well that embarrassed us for most of the night with their vocal support. Proof if it were needed that it is not only the seats that make crowds less vocal.

A trip to Geordieland in the next round which means we are playing them three times in a short space of time around Christmas.

Nov 21

Paul Dalglish was captured by his father who obviously can't be arsed to travel to Anfield any more to watch reserve matches. I reckon there is more than a hint of nepotism in there. Paul is a very good player, but he needs to put a lot more weight on before he will be good enough for the Premiership. Anyway, Kenny immediately shipped him off to Bury for an extended loan which will probably benefit him enormously.

On the same day David Thompson was sent on loan to Swindon. Again, I imagine that will do him the world of good.

Nov 22

Liv 0 Bamsley 1.

It pains me to type such an embarrassing scoreline, but they should really be ashamed of themselves. Berger was unlucky, I'm sure he meant to clear the

ball a tad more effectively than he did but this was absolutely dire. True, we had chances and we could have run up a decent scoreline had Riedle presumably not had a curry last night (well there must a reason for him miss so many chances), but that doesn't mean we played well. Barnsley deserved to win, and when you have to say that, things are wrong somewhere.

We pulled out of a deal to sign Winston Bogarde allowing him to go to Barcelona. We had it signed and sealed but the club doubted his temperament. Understandable after Collymore.

Nov 24

It was reported that a brick was thrown at the Barnsley coach at Anfield on Saturday. The brick should have been directed at our lads after losing that game. Another case of a few idiot "fans" spoiling the image of a whole club.

Nov 25

We were inundated today with messages from friends in Preston saying they'd seen a few of the lads getting VIP treatment in a nightclub last night after a visit to the UK Snooker Championships. Ince, Robbie and Macca were all there as well as McAteer or Matteo, depending on who you listen to. A mate working there told us a few things that one or two of them mightn't be too proud about, although we were suitably impressed. We're not interested in student slappers though (well, ahem...), what we really want to get to the bottom of is how the hell they've got the bottle to sip champagne just a couple of days after Barnsley. Maybe they're not the gutless souls Kopites accuse them of being because I know I wouldn't be seen for weeks after a defeat like that. Call me a moody bastard but I guess it is just another case of it meaning more to the fans than the players. I notice they weren't out in Liverpool though.

Nov 26

Our result against Strasbourg was put in perspective by their 2-0 victory over Inter Milan - curently on top of Serie A. I still think we should have beaten them but it should get a few people off our backs.

We were issued a "hands off" warning by Swindon Chairman Rikki Hunt about

"I'D RATHER HAVE BRUCE GROBBELAAR TRYING TO LOSE THAN DAVE BEASANT TRYING TO WIN."

Anonymous Southampton fan after the match-rigging allegations

Steve McMahon. I wouldn't object to Macca's arrival. He'd add much needed steel.

Nov 30

Arsenal 0 Liv 1.

A great win away to Arsenal which showed an incredible amount of fighting spirit and workrate for a Liverpool team. The goal by Macca was an absolute peach too. I never thought I'd ever say that Macca would give David Seaman no chance with one of his shots, but that was how it was.

Dec 4

The Shanks statue was unveiled at long last. It a further fitting tribute to a legend, but more should be done to remember Bob Paisley's achievements.

The World Cup draw was made in France. Not a bad draw for England, but the Scots face a right stinker, opening against Brazil.

Rumours that Michael Thomas is interesting Coventry. His days at Liverpool appear numbered.

The youth team won 3-2 at Leicester to progress to the next round of the cup.

Dec 5

Liv 1 Mancs 3.

Another example of why they are probably going to end up champions and we will be left wondering how to catch up.

The mosaic idea wasn't a bad one but on a day when the crowd was probably the most subdued it has ever been for a Manc fixture, not everyone could be arsed to hold up their cards and it flopped a little. Let's hope we are closer to them when we play them at OT.

Dec 7

The latest club to be linked with Thomas is QPR. I don't expect him to go there.

I saw the McAteer shampoo advert for the first time today and I have to wonder why. He must take an awful ribbing for that in the dressing room, but I'm sure a wodge of notes cushions the blow. The thought of Smithy doing an advert like that, running his fingers through his hair in the coolest way possible, is unimaginable.

Dec 8

The FA cup draw brought us a home tie with Coventry. No easy first tie here, but at home, if

we're up for it, we should win.

We were linked with Ipswich and a typical show of defiance by Ince as he told United that we're not out of the title race. I definitely want some of what he is drinking because I can't see us living with United at the moment. If all of our side adopted his attitude though, we'd be in with a shout.

Dec 10

Liv ladies 0 Everton ladies 2. Looks like Everton put a few first teamers in the side.

The Liverpool legal team launched an appeal against the Friedel decision. I hope he's worth it.

Dec 11

The reserves lost 4-1 away to Villa. You have to wonder just why the reserves are so shit when we have a squad rich with international players.

Dec 12

Lazio coach Sven Goran Eriksson was linked with the post as Liverpool manager even though the job isn't available yet. He has a great reputation and is similar to Roy Hodgson, so it wouldn't be a bad appointment.

Dec 13

Palace 0 Liv 3.

A good win away with an important clean sheet but Steve Coppell wasn't impressed and doesn't rate us alongside the Mancs. Nevertheless we are starting to get goals from areas other than Robbie Fowler which is pleasing.

Dec 15

Scary link no.1. I have no idea whether the link was justified, but Robbie Fowler has been touted in a transfer to Arsenal. I'm afraid they would have to remortgage Highbury and sell their whole team before they could raise enough money to prise Robbie from Anfield.

Dec 16

Scary link no.2. The covetous eyes of Barcelona are once again looking at Macca. Barca need another kick-start and with Macca nearing the end of his contract he is seen as an ideal target. Macca still hasn't signed a new contract with us and his ambition will tempt him into a move if it's on the table. This move looks more likely to me.

Everton

Dec 17

Michael Owen scored in England U21s' 4-2 win over Greece. He formed an interesting and effective partnership with Emile Heskey.

Dec 18

Brad Friedel got his work permit after all. Let's hope he lives up to expectation and that the competition drives James to perform better.

Dec 20

Liv 1 Coventry 0.

Not exactly comfortable but the three points are all important. Michael Owen was superb and capped off a great move to score.

We started strongly but took our feet off the gas again. A lot of the crowd had a go at Robbie and there were calls to substitute him. It is comforting to know though that there are 16,000 people in the Kop who can play a lot better than him. Shut it you part-time Kopites!

Dec 26

Liv 3 Leeds 1.

Ah! Well that's much better. Good to see Robbie on the scoresheet again, even if he didn't play too well. Owen was outstanding and easily man of the match. He gave Molenaar a five yard head start at one point and still breezed past him like Ferrari passing a Morris Minor on the M6. James had little to do on a day when he would have been keen to impress.

Dec 28

Newcastle 1 Liv 2.

Well it's been a merry Christmas indeed. Excellent win. Nice one Macca, two beauts, the first a scorcher. Good to see James hailed again as a hero too. Didn't enjoy the last 10 angina inducing minutes though and Digger is still the master. People are saying we're in tremendous form now with four straight wins, but don't buy it, that defence is still very dodgy. Get Babb back in!

Jan 3

Liv 1 Coventry 3.

Oh shit! New year, same old story. Our dream of the Treble is over. Defence an absolute shambles today. Let's face it, Roy is not a Mr. Motivator. Robbie possibly getting a bit disillusioned with constant defensive frailties too. Doesn't seem the same these days. James shaky today too. Now if Friedel has to play 75% of games, he's going to

have to play soon. I don't know how it works, but by my reckoning, if he doesn't play by the end of January he's off! Was it really worth going to the high court to get him?

Well, we're now out of a cup competition that Everton are still in and that's a tad worrying.

Jan 4

Actually scrap that last comment. Everton are now out too. Good old Rushie, and Digger's still a star. The San Francisco 49ers recently retired number 16 in honour of former quarterback Joe Montana. I reckon we write to LFC asking them to do the same with no. 10.

Jan 5

Evans said today he will pick the team for tomorrow's CCC quarter final on merit, so not disclosing whether changes (namely Friedel) will be made in the defence or not. Change the record Roy.

Jan 7

Newcastle 0 Liv 2

A scrappy fair settled by Owen and Robbie in extra-time. It's so frustrating to see a side with so much ability perform like shit. I almost know how matches are going to unfold and the result, even when it shouldn't be, is always in the balance. At least we won this one and there's now a possible Wembley date on the horizon. It worries me that Owen seems to be carrying the team at times. All credit to him, but it says bugger all for the rest of the team. He's supposed to be learning from them, not them from him. Feel sorry for Kenny. I still think he's a class manager. Well, only another fortnight then they can win as many matches as they like. Middlesbrough in the semis will be tough, but it was the kindest draw.

Jan 10

Liv 2 Wimbledon 0

Would Friedel play? Would he hell. Time running out for guy, but I heard something interesting today. Apparently if he marries his English fiance Roy can sleep easy knowing he hasn't just blown a million on someone he's never going to use. More Macca/Barca rumours. There must be something in it or else they wouldn't keep coming back. At least we've got Wimbledon out of the way for another year. Four points this time. Well played Jamie, I've never said a bad word about you!

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