

THE BEST OF THE FOOTBALL FANZINES

As SAM GOLDWYN might have said:- "Whisper it loudly,
football fans are revolting!"

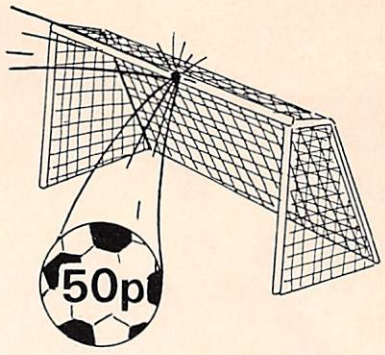
Football Fanzines ... FUNNY, IRREVERENT and
INNOVATIVE are THE voice of the fans.

A selection of the current best.

£1.50



HIT THE BAR



AN ALTERNATIVE FOOTBALL MAGAZINE

DECEMBER ISSUE 10





EDITORIAL

Welcome to the sometimes zany, sometimes campaigning world of the Football Fanzines!

We've compiled an excellent cross-section of articles for your enjoyment and hope that you think that we've chosen well.

Drop us a line if you want to see further issues, but, if you want a reply, please send a stamped-addressed envelope.

John Robinson

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Distributed by:
 SM Magazine Distribution Ltd.
 6 Leigham Court Road, Streatham
 London SW16 2PG

Printed by:
 St. Ives Group (Web Division)
 P.O. Box 3, St. Austell, Cornwall

Published by
FANZINE PUBLISHING LIMITED
 72 ST. PETERS AVENUE
 CLEETHORPES, DN35 8HU
 Phone 0472-696226 : FAX 0472-698546

About Fanzines...

AS Sam Goldwyn might have said: Whisper it loudly, football fans are revolting.

Football fanzines have been described as funny, irreverent and innovative. And in a game which often appears to be run by jackasses, menaced by vultures, and pursued by hounds, their wise-owl, commonsense approach to the problems affecting football comes as a breath of fresh air. And while they may not have shaken the very foundations of football's ruling hierarchy, their emergence has created sizeable ripples in an otherwise still, and some would say, stagnant pond.

Without exception they are borne from a genuine love for the game and are fiercely loyal to it. Their concern lies not with their own individual interests but for the game as a whole. Collectively, they have become a movement, campaigning for a better deal for football fans, attempting to redress the overwhelming negative image in which both football and football fans are too often portrayed, while at the same time injecting their own brand of humour into the game — ranging from the gently mocking through to the bitingly cruel, and yet merely proving the old adage that it is only possible to effectively parody that which you hold in great affection.

Often scathing, disdainful and contemptuous towards those they see as exploiting football in a variety of ways, and dismissive, intolerant and sceptical of those they see as interfering in, and with, the game for a variety of reasons, their criticisms are almost always constructive, reasoned and articulate. Their existence puts paid to the stereo-typed image of the average football fan as being a moronic thug who can barely grunt, let alone put more than three words together. And their popularity is such that in only two seasons the number of titles available has leapt from less than a dozen to over two hundred.

To discover the roots of the football fanzine 'movement' it is necessary to go back to 1972. Disillusioned with the growing cynicism that was affecting football, both on and off the field, a group of then Cambridge students put together FOUL — the world's first alternative football paper. For four years FOUL punctured pomposity and deflated egos. Whether it was Billy Bremner's disciplinary record or Alf Ramsey's clipped and uncomfortable relationship with the press, FOUL mercilessly lampooned its' targets, always with humour, sometimes with venom.

FOUL finally folded after being sued for libel, a fate which has so far eluded any of its' descendants. Interestingly, the likes of Steve Tongue, Peter Ball and Eamonn Dunphy, one time contributors to FOUL and later to move into professional journalism, have themselves been victims in the latter day alternatives. A classic case of the biter bitten.

A lesser influence in their development, but nevertheless an important one, were the music fanzines whose popularity — in terms of numbers produced as opposed to numbers sold — peaked in the early eighties. Compared to many of the present day football fanzines they were often sporadically produced, messy and short-lived. Unlike football fanzines, too, their market was inclined to be less interested, less fanatical, and sales were poor in many cases.

However, along with the style and influence of FOUL, the method and presentation of the music fanzine is still very much in evidence in many of today's crop of football alternatives.

By the end of the 1986/87 season there was still only a handful of football fanzines in existence. Of the club-based ones, most were ostensibly supporters club magazines, albeit taking the first tentative steps away from the safe, staid, sterile type of offering normally associated with such sources into an altogether harder-hitting, more critical, and most importantly, a more humorous realm. Honest views and opinions of the type heard on the terraces were actually being aired for the first time. These included THE WEB (Queens Park), WANDERERS WORLDWIDE (Bolton), HEARTBEAT and HEARTS REVIEW (Hearts — believe it or not), VALIANTS VIEWPOINT (Charlton), THE HIBERNIAN (Hibs) and FINGERPOST (West Brom). Two independent travel clubs, the 'York Nomads Society' and Bradford City's City Travel Club '73' had produced their own independent publications in TERRACE TALK and CITY GENT, while at Orient there was ORIENTEAR, later to become the LEYTON ORIENTEAR.

On the general scene, OFF THE BALL and WHEN SATURDAY COMES, both having resurrected the spirit of FOUL, had been joined by THE ABSOLUTE GAME, and it was these three which were to prove the most influential in inspiring the wide range of contemporaries now available in a way that FOUL, for all its' relative success, strangely, never did.

During the following season the number of titles began to grow at an astonishing rate. By Christmas 1987 THE ARSENAL ECHO ECHO, OUT OF COURT (Bournemouth), EAGLE EYE (Crystal Palace), NOT THE VIEW (Celtic), THE ELMSLIE ENDER (Wealdstone) and A KICK UP THE R's (QPR) were amongst a dozen new titles swelling the ranks of the club-based fanzines, while the outrageous FIVE TO THREE had added to the total of the general ones. The trickle had turned into a flow.

By Christmas 1988, one year on, this flow had become a flood as the number of fanzines being produced soared over the ninety mark. From STORMING WITH MENACE (General) in the south-west to THE NORTHERN LIGHT (Aberdeen) in the far north, every area, if not yet every team, was being covered.

And then, incredibly, the flood became a torrent as the number of fanzines being produced virtually doubled yet again, this time in only five months. By the start of the 1989/90 season nearly every club in the top three divisions of the Football League, many in the Fourth, G.M. Vauxhall Conference and feeder leagues, and well over half of Scotland's thirty eight senior clubs can boast of having at least one fanzine. The clubs most conspicuous by their absence from the listing elsewhere in this magazine include Derby, Luton, Oldham, Barnsley, Hamilton and Motherwell. However, it should be pointed out that some fanzines declined to be listed which explains any discrepancies between our directory and the list which regularly appears in WHEN SATURDAY COMES. Hopefully, the supporters of the six clubs mentioned, as well as supporters of other clubs without their own fanzine, will not be long in 'getting their pens out for the lads', thus covering every major team in Britain a good ten years before the date predicted by WHEN SATURDAY COMES only two years ago!

It would be unwise to point the finger at any one reason for the rise in popularity of the football fanzine. The sugges-

tion that football is going through its 'angry young man' phase can be dismissed as being too glib. Indeed, studies carried out at the Sir Norman Chester Centre for Football Research at Leicester University show that around half of all those involved in producing fanzines are at least twenty six years old. In the same way, anyone who has stood outside a ground selling their fanzine will confirm that it is by no means only the young who buy them.

It has also been suggested that the football fanzine is the written equivalent of the after match conversation in the pub, which is probably closer to the truth and a big clue in discovering the reasons behind their popularity.

Despite what some newspapers and magazines which run football cartoon strips may think, fans at a game don't say things like: "Crikey, their centre-forward's beaten our off-side trap, he's only to round the Goalie and that's us out the cup." It is much more likely that the impending departure will be accompanied by much fist-shaking, anglo-saxon utterances, and in many cases, soliloquies to the effect that what has just been witnessed is not an altogether uncommon occurrence! And that, of course, is the way that it will be dealt with in the fanzine. On the other hand, the club programme will probably describe it as 'bad luck'. The fact that the reader can relate more to what is being said within the fanzine provides for more enjoyment and is contributory to the often expressed opinion that "it's better than the programme."

However, while THE OATCAKE (Stoke) and FLY ME TO THE MOON (Middlesbrough) are two examples of fanzines which are ambitiously, yet excellently, produced for nearly every one of their club's home games, neither they nor any other fanzine see themselves as rivals to the official programme and competing for its' sales. And despite widespread dissatisfaction at the standard of matchday programmes, most fanzines encourage fans to buy both. This has not, though, prevented Bishop Stortford, for precisely those reasons, from unjustly banning not only CROSS RHODES but its' editors as well.

Another important reason for the popularity of fanzines is that they provide a forum for the views and opinions of football fans who hitherto had had no other outlet to air those views. This particularly applies to the 'political' issues, especially those that apply to an individual club and which are almost always suppressed within its' official publications.

Political intrigues at many clubs provide the impetus for starting a fanzine and this is often reflected in the title. THE NORMID NOMAD (Bolton) owes its' name to a supermarket which now hideously occupies half the away end, and which has been subject of much contention. More obvious is Charlton's VOICE OF THE VALLEY whose title succinctly stated its' original objective, namely, to campaign for the return of Charlton Athletic to their old ground, a campaign echoed by the GLENMALURE GAZETTE (Shamrock Rovers) which continues its' fight to return their club to the old Milltown ground.

Other fanzines which evolved out of concern for boardroom machinations include THE CHELSEA INDEPENDENT and the aptly named TIRED AND WEARY (Birmingham) which have both kept their readers informed of behind the scene manoeuvres at their respective clubs.

Investigative journalism at its' best is a feature of Tottenham's THE SPUR which has kept Spurs' fans fully informed of the events surrounding the redevelopment of 'The Shelf' terracing at White Hart Lane. Also by providing the leadership and co-ordination that all such protests need, the campaign to save the area was greatly

strengthened.

Had TAKING THE BISCUIT and ELM PARK DISEASE (both Reading), RAGING BULL (Oxford), EAGLE EYE (Crystal Palace), YIDAHO and GRAPEVINE (both Wimbledon), IN THE LOFT and A KICK UP THE R's (both QPR) and THERE'S ONLY ONE F IN FULHAM all been in existence at around the time that their respective clubs were the subject of planned mergers, then they too would have provided a focal point for the protestations, as well as an outlet for the anger that such plans create.

If nothing else, fanzines have made football fans more aware.

But it's not just the 'issues' which are openly debated within fanzines. Criticism and praise of the managers, players and playing styles are also aired. The fanzine which expressed the view that should a certain not so good striker of theirs be knocked down by a car, then most of their supporters would be concerned as to the extent of the damage ... to the car, had better, for the confidence of the player at least, remain nameless. But imagine reading something like that in a programme. You wouldn't, of course, nor should you. The two provide a different perspective and the game is all the better for it.

Collectively, fanzines tread pretty much the same path, airing the same grievances, challenging the same issues, but at the same time they establish their own individual characteristics and style. Some opt for out and out humour, THE GOONER (Arsenal), IN DEFENCE (Enfield), MO MO SUPER MO (Montrose), THE BOLYEN SCORCHER (West Ham), LIGHT AT THE END OF THE TUNNEL (Dartford), and THE LAD DONE BRILLIANT (General) amongst them. Some like JUST ANOTHER WEDNESDAY (Sheffield Wednesday) and THE VOICE OF THE BEEHIVE (Brentford) have adopted deliberate non-critical policies, while the Football Supporters Association (the F.S.A.) produce RECLAIM THE GAME which, by its' campaigning nature, tends toward the critical.

Some people within fanzine circles believe that, as with the music fanzines, their very essence is that they can be typed-up, photo-copied, and stapled together for very little outlay, and a move towards the use of type-setting, computer graphics and professional printing, as many now do, goes against the spirit of the fanzine ideal. However, whereas titles such as ONE TEAM IN DUNDEE (Dundee United), ADDICKTED (Charlton), and WHERE'S THE NUMBER ON YOUR BACK (Barnet) remain true to that philosophy, others such as THE MAG (Newcastle) and FORTUNE'S ALWAYS HIDING (West Ham) prove that being professional does not have to compromise the content. Whatever the form of presentation, the message is crystal clear — The Fanzine Movement is up and running: healthy and virile.

Anybody who decides to attack the game we love has got a fight on their hands!

QUENTIN PERCIVAL ROGERS

Editor's note:

*Dear Mr. Moynihan,
No threat to yourself or Hilda was intended or implied in the final paragraph of Quentin's article. You can recall the SAS to barracks!*

COMPETITION

Fanzines are not in the business of competing with one another, but we have been urged to run a Reader competition to select the 3 most popular articles from the 25 selected by Dave Thomas.

The list of Articles is as follows:-

Page 6	Suffer the Little Children — from Brian Moores' Head Looks Uncannily Like London Planetarium. — No.3
Page 7	The Unluckiest Man in the Entire World — from The Soup — No.2
Pages 8 & 9	How T' Cup Were Won — Part I — from Bernard of the Bantams — No.1
Page 10	The Loony in the Seats — from Tired & Weary — No.5
Page 11	Pre-Match Entertainment — from The Crooked Spireite — No.13
Page 12	A Trip Through Metroland — from Chairboys Gas — No.7
Page 13	Football, Bloody Football — from The Absolute Game — No.13
Pages 14 & 15	Radio Radio — from The Absolute Game — No.3
Page 16	Dial-a-Cliche — from Hit The Bar — No.11
Page 17	Blundell Blunders — No.3 — from Sing When We're Fishing — No.3
Page 18	And Here's One I Made Earlier — from Wise Men Say — No.9
Page 19	West Ham Let in Five Again — from Hit The Bar — No.11
Page 20	Les Bence — Manager's Notes — from Les Bence's Manager's Notes
Page 21	Hubby Hits Back — from The Soup — No.3
Page 22	Gone West — from Off The Ball — No.15
Page 23	Cinders in Boots — from A Kick Up The R's — Xmas Not-So-Special
Pages 24 & 25	A Modest Proposal — from When Saturday Comes — No.13
Page 26	Autobiography — Soccer Balls? — from City Gent — No.22
Page 27	Really Annoying People — from Brian — No.8
Pages 28-30	Battle for the Valley — from Voice Of The Valley — No.11
Page 31	Bill of Wrongs — from Wise Men Say — No.8
Page 32	Highgate Cup Horror — from Light At The End Of The Tunnel — No.2
Page 33	Memories of Milburn — from The Wee Red Vol.2 — No.4
Pages 34-37	Surveying the Damage — from When Saturday Comes — No.28
Pages 40 & 41	ID Cards — from Off The Ball — No.15

Readers who complete the entry form below and send it to us together with a stamped addressed envelope will receive a gift voucher to the value of £1.00 which can be redeemed against any order worth £5 or more from The Soccer Bookshelf (see page 48).

----- CUT HERE -----

TO: **THE BEST OF THE FOOTBALL
 FANZINES**
 72 ST. PETERS AVENUE
 CLEETHORPES, DN35 8HU

FROM:

.....

.....

.....

My favourite 3 articles were:-

1st CHOICE

2nd CHOICE

3rd CHOICE

THE SELECTION

'What we want you to do' said the voice on the other end of the phone, 'is to select twenty-five or so articles which you consider would best represent the type of material to be found in football fanzines.'

'Fine', I replied, 'but why me'.

'Well you are the Dave Thomas who's responsible for "A Kick Up The R's", aren't you?'

More like irresponsible, I thought. 'Yes, that's me,' I replied, and at the same time gave a silent prayer of thanks that the question had not been his opening line, as such inquiries are usually greeted with a guarded admission, at best, and a flat denial at worse, especially if the voice sounds official. I mean, this man sounded like a lawyer.

I'd like to be able to report that he went on to congratulate me on "A Kick Up The R's", and praise its intelligent comment, biting satire, and rapier-like wit. But he didn't. The truth is they couldn't get hold of anybody else so I got the job.

What follows is not necessarily the very best articles from the best fanzines. Rather, they are articles chosen without fear or favour (I did try touting for bribes, though, but without success), which in my opinion provides for a good cross-section of what football fanzines are all about. The emphasis is very much on the humorous, but at the same time I hope a few will make you think and one or two will bring a lump to your throat.

If you enjoy these pieces and would like to see this magazine appear on a regular basis, for goodness sake write in to Fanzine Publishing and tell them so. And if you want to add a few words to say how impressed you were with my selections, don't let me stop you. Happy reading!

DAVE THOMAS

Suffer The Little Children ...?

Brian Moore's Head Looks Uncannily like London Planetarium — No.3

I REMEMBER watching a Jasper Carrott programme on the T.V. one night and he posed the question "Why does the loony on the bus always come and sit next to me?"

I could pose the same question in a different context. Why do all the loonies at Priestfield come and stand round me ... and bring their bloody kids with them!

And, more to the point, why do people bring their kids to football at all?

I don't mean kids who are old enough to stand in one spot and watch the game ... I mean kids aged about five.

I have news for people ... kids aged from 0-8 are not really interested in watching football!

Kids aged from 0-8 are interested in running up and down the terraces, falling down the terraces, playing football immediately behind you with used plastic cups, climbing up on and swinging about on the wire fence, playing "he" and fighting and wrestling, eating vast amounts of sweets, crisps, chocolate etc., scattering the wrappers from vast amounts of sweets, crisps, chocolate etc., throwing up from eating vast amounts of sweets, crisps, chocolate etc. and last, but by no means least, taking bloody hours at the front of the long queue at the tea hut making up their mind whether they want eight raspberry chews and a coke, or if the vast amount of small change dolloped out to them by their over-indulgent parent at any price parent will stretch to a hot-dog and a pint of ketchup.

So why then do people bring them?

Admittedly they don't cause much aggravation to their parent (have you noticed there's only ever one of them?) since the parent usually encourages them to sod off to another part of the ground and annoy everybody else.

I believe that the problem has its roots in two main causes which I shall now illustrate. The first I shall call the

punishment syndrome, it runs roughly as follows:

(HUSBAND) ... "Er ... I thought I might nip down to the football this afternoon darling ...?"

(WIFE) ... "If you think you're going to clear off to football all afternoon and leave that little sod with me, you've got another think coming ... you want to clear off to football, you take him with you!"

The second, I shall call the "escape" syndrome, it is invariably spoken by the husband only:

"Look Sharon Pet ... I'd really love to paint the ceiling for you, honest, but Shane wants me to take him to football, don't you son ... DON'T YOU SON ...!"

I accept, of course, that there are people who probably enjoy taking their children to a game. There is for example a prat who wanders around the Gillingham end sporting an ill-fitting woolly hat complete with bobble knitted by someone with a warped sense of humour who insists on explaining the finer points of the game to his offspring (aged about 6) in a loud voice.

Imagine for example that following a brilliant run down the wing by Irvin Gernon, Gills have won a corner (yes, I know it's difficult to imagine, but try ...).

Gavin Peacock places the ball carefully in position, straightens up and proceeds to flap his arms about which the crowd take to mean that he is either trying to fly, or is demonstrating the new carefully worked out signals to be used this season for corners, free kicks etc.

Woolly hat addresses his boy. "See now son ... that signal Gavin's just made means he's going to try an in-swing".

This is news, not only to the kid, (who incidentally, is on all fours seeing how many fag-ends he can get into his hat),

but to Gavin Peacock who is taking the corner, and the rest of the team who merely suppose that Gavin has been taking tic-tac lessons from a man who has St. Vitus dance.

Naturally, the ball swings outwards and is eventually booted in the general direction of the Strand by Gernon.

"Close one Irvin" balls woolly hat, and shunts the kid (who has now placed the hatful of fag-ends on his head) towards the tea hut, it being at least seven minutes since he last ate or drank anything.

Now I'm not trying to restrict anyone from attending football, far from it. I am merely going to suggest that a few changes should be made for the benefit of all.

First, clubs should be required to provide an area solely for parents and young children. This would not necessarily provide a view of the game, but would be equipped with a large steel mesh fence for climbing, a tea hut well stocked with sweets at piddling little prices, plus an unlimited supply of hot-dogs and ketchup. Before the start of the match the floor could be liberally sprinkled with semi-crushed plastic cups and fag-ends, and in the interests of safety padded boxing gloves would be available for a small deposit for those children who wish to fight and push each other about etc.

Police and stewards would direct all parents with young children to this enclosure and lock them in.

Parents attempting to smuggle children into an ordinary enclosure by concealing them under their coats, or pencilling moustaches on them, and bringing them in wearing trilby hats, long rain coats and stilts, would be banned from the ground for the foreseeable future.

In the case of grounds who could not afford to provide the above mentioned facilities, all parents would be issued upon entrance at a special turnstile with two lengths of strong rope each one not longer than two metres. The first one would be used to link parent and child together and the other to secure the parent to a control barrier.

Further to this, any child found wandering within 25 feet of a tea hut, would have a hot dog liberally filled with ketchup placed under his hat and squashed.

The rest of us could then get on with watching the game in peace —

PENPUSHER

WE'VE heard of some non-league nutters in our time, but we think the determination of Tony Lister from Leicester deserves a wider audience.

To mark the first anniversary of perhaps the greatest piece of "the-game's-never-over-until-the-final-whistle" stupidity we've ever heard of, we recount the tale of what happened to Tony on January 23 last year.

There was snow in most of the country north of London, so Tony decided to head south and find a game to watch ... in Sussex.

So off he set by coach from Leicester to London. On arrival in our glorious capital, he rang the secretaries of Chichester and Portfield, who were both at home that day. The good news for him was that both games were on.

He decided to give Chichester a visit, so off he went on the 11.20 a.m. train from Victoria, which got him to Chichester station at 1.20 p.m. He

The unluckiest man in the entire world ...

The Soup — No.2

walked to the ground, bought himself a programme, and settled down to a bevy and a bap.

At 2.10 p.m., with all the players at the ground and it pissing down with rain, the ref called the match off. Bad luck Tone.

But not to be outdone, our hero jumped into a taxi and told the driver: "Take me to Portfield".

They were due to kick off at 3 p.m. so he had enough time ... except that when he got there he found the ref had called it off at 2.25 p.m. Definitely not your day, Tone.

In panic, he took a last-gasp look at the fixtures to find that Littlehampton were at home. A quick phone call revealed the match was still on, so he haggled with the taxi driver, settled on a tenner, and they raced off to the match. He arrived in the nick of time at 2.50 p.m. ... to find people coming out of the ground as the game was called off at 2.45 p.m.

In all, he spent £25 on fares ... and got to see absolutely nothing. To really rub it in, he passed Horsham's ground on the train back to London. They, of course, were playing ...

Tough luck, Tone.



SHORT STORY

HOW T' CUP WERE WON!!!

PART I

Bernard of the Bantams — No.1

AUTUMN, 1910. The summer had been and gone and Enoch Sharples, unemployed mill worker, had for the umpteenth time given up hope of ever seeing his team, Manningham Rovers, win the Football Association cup.

"Bah", he had wittered at the end of last season, "if our lot win owt afore I'm six foot under I'll bare me arse on t' town 'all steps!"

"But you do that anyway, dad" retorted his 12 year old son, Amos.

"Shut up, son."

"... But that's why that policeman came round last week intit?"

"I said shut up ..."

"... But ..."

"... Look if you don't shut up I shall hit you wi' me new shovel!" said Enoch being derivative.

Matchday and 3 hours later as Enoch and son wended their weary way home from a three nil drubbing at the hands of Barnsley dad gave offspring some fatherly advice.

"By 'eck, Amos, us back four's crap! If we dunt get a new sweeper afore t' first round o't FA Cup next Sat'dy we're buggered."

On and on they trudged, rattles in hand, through the dark satanic mills and cobbled streets of that grim industrial landscape. Smoke billowed from endless lines of soot stained terraced houses and trams clang clanged alongside ragamuffins. Ragamuffins who didn't know where their next slice of bread dipped in black treacle was coming from.

"Who do we play, dad?" enquired young Amos.

"It's a tough un, lad, we've got Wolverhampton Wanderers away!"

"Are we off?"

Enoch's heart dropped. Times were hard, harder than they had ever been before, and the bit of money that the Sharples family had was needed for essentials like tripe, hairnets and beer.

"Am sorry, son", began Enoch, a tear hanging perilously from his moustache, "we've no brass. Since ah lost me job at t' mill yer mam an' me 'ave struggled just ter keep t' black puddin' in us mouths. Dunt worry, ah'll get us some currency from somewhere, just see if ah dunt!"

"Ah know you will, dad", said Amos reassuringly, "if anybody can get us to t' Midlands for t' first round you can!"

And so on they walked pausing only for 15 minutes whilst Enoch nipped into a local urinal on a business trip.

Manningham Rovers were probably the best side in West Yorkshire, but seeing as how the other three teams were useless that wasn't saying much. Their manager, Mr. Arnold Jowett, had assembled the oddest bunch of footballers you could ever imagine. Wearing an unusual strip of claret and amber stripes they regularly terrorised their own supporters with a brand of reliably awful football never seen before and, indeed, never seen again. (Although the present Halifax Town team isn't that far off!).

Well, anyway, the big day had arrived and in the Rovers' dressing room tensions were mounting. Fatty Foulds, the Rovers' extremely plump goalie busied himself with some rectal development exercises and Jackie Whitburn, the genial geordie centre forward, carefully removed the empty bottle of "Hey's Gold Cup Ale" that had been lodged in

his skull the previous evening during a drinking spree with centre half, Robert O'Campbell.

"Now listen, lads", began Arnold Jowett, his usual pre-match bark elevated to a nervous falsetto, "we know what we've got to do — let's go out there and do it! Wolverhampton Wanderers are a first division team extremely skillful in all departments and so we must close the buggers down. Don't give them any room to play. Remember if we get through to the second round there'll be a three day mini break for us all in Scarborough.

Slightly put off by that final remark the brave eleven pulled on their Bermudas, fastened up their hob nailed wellies and walked (at 1½ times normal speed) down the Molineux tunnel towards the first leg of their historic destiny. In black and white, of course.

Outside, a 75,000 crowd rattled their implements and roared their approval as the two teams waddled out onto a sundrenched pitch and took to their separate halves of the field.

Hidden amongst a sea of orange and black scarves and flat caps, Enoch and Amos Sharples had indeed managed to make the long journey south.

"'Ey, dad, this is great, but 'ow did yer get t'brass necessary for such an outing?"

"Niver you mind", said Enoch. "Many's the crab on a well scrubbed crotch!"

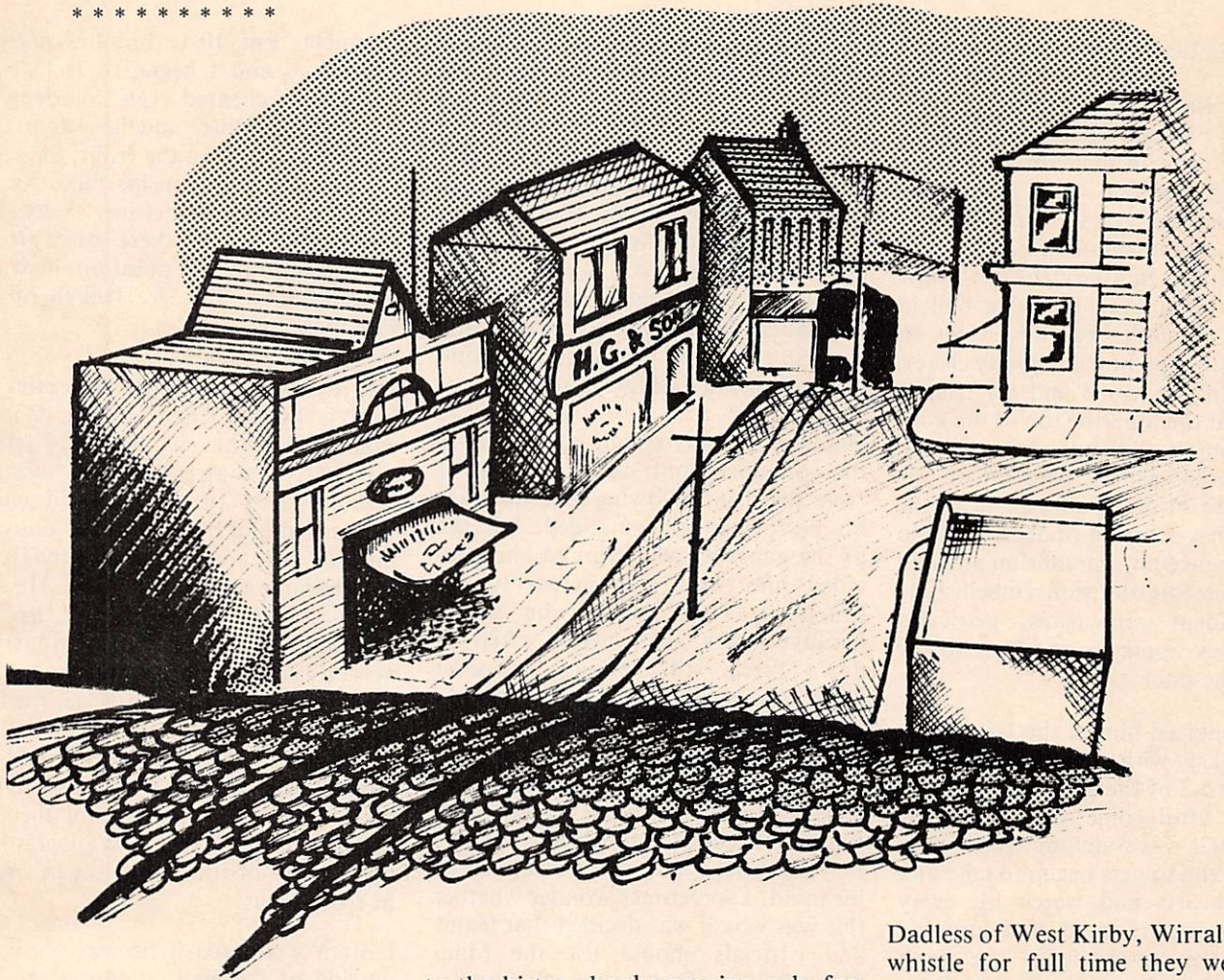
Amos didn't understand that but he let his father continue.

"What d'yer reckon then, our lad, are t'Rovers gonna do it or what?"

"Course they are, dad, Wolves are crap!"

A rather violent looking burly gentleman standing directly behind them overheard this remark and laughed amicably. No segregation in those days and no soccer violence either.

Unfortunately, however, this man was ahead of his time and he punched Enoch squarely on the nose.



Meanwhile down on the playing area, referee Clive Dadless put a whistle to his lips and blew. Nothing happened. So he turned it around and blew in the other end an action which resulted in a high pitched trilling sound that, within seconds, was in turn drowned out by a roar reminiscent of a Maxwellian bout of flatulence. Manningham captain, Smith Jackson, kicked off for Rovers and the most exciting football match ever played in Wolverhampton was underway. Right from the off Rovers were put under the sort of pressure normally associated with the back of a toilet after a Bradford curry. The Manningham goal was under constant threat and only the individual brilliance of Fatty Foulds kept the Rovers' goal intact. For a man of 32

stones Fatty Foulds was an incredible athlete, diving this way and that, finger-tipping 45 yard volleys over the crossbar, gathering crosses in just one of his mighty buttocks. Fatty was at worst breathtaking and this was one of his better days!

Time after time the crowd gasped in awe as the obese one hurled himself in-

to the history books pausing only for the half time interval.

The onslaught continued unabated until the Wolverhampton Wanderers team, understandably knackered, started to drop faster than Huddersfield Town's attendance figures. The sole exception being the Wanderers' goalkeeper who due to his extended period of inactivity had sunk into a deep coma.

It was in the 89th minute of the game, with only 30 seconds left on the clock, when Fatty, noting the rather lifeless state of the opposition, punted the by now battered and bruised ball upfield whence it fell at the feet of Rovers' underworked centre forward. With only the softly slumbering Wolverhampton Wanderers goalie to beat wor

Jackie planted a close range toe poke into the back of the net. The crowd fell silent — Manningham Rovers for the first time in the match were in front.

Actually, to say that the crowd fell silent isn't strictly true. Enoch and Amos Sharples for example weren't very silent at all, in fact they were distinctly unsilent, and when Mr Clive

Dadless of West Kirby, Wirral blew his whistle for full time they were both positively rapturous.

"We've done it, dad, we've done it! Rovers are through to t'second round!" said Amos.

And the large burly man standing directly behind them punched Enoch on the nose again!

Monday morning and the Sharples family sat, in eager anticipation, around the scullery table.

"I wish somebody'd invent Radio Two then we could listen to t'second round draw" said Enoch.

THE LOONY IN THE SEATS

Tired and Weary — No.5

IT'S SAID that the characters are going out of football. Gone are the Marsh's, Best's and Worthington's, the crowd pleasers — players the public would turn out in their droves to see. We've had our fair share at St. Andrews over the years — Bert Murray, Trev, the aforementioned Frank, even Steve Whitton. But the character I miss the most never even kicked a ball in anger for the club — never even got on the pitch (though he came pretty close). He was known to me and my friends standing at the top, (the top of the kop) as the loony in the seats. A man in his fifties, maybe sixties, who sat on the Tilton side of the Paddock near the dug out, never afraid (indeed only too eager) to voice his opinions on any and every refereeing decision embellishing each incident with leaps, gesticulations, mock applause and runs to the edge of the pitch.

I'd first spotted him in the late seventies when I sat with my father in Row C Seats 1 and 2 of the Railway End. But it wasn't until some years later, by which time I was watching from Spion Kop, that the singers began to take him to their hearts and watch his every move. They christened him grandad (though I persisted with the term loony) and took up the chant 'Grandad, grandad, give us a wave' (which to my knowledge, he never did).

I've rarely seen a man put so much into a game. He never gave less than 110% (Saunders would have been pleased). Even meaningless, end of season matches, (on the rare occasions we weren't involved in relegation/promotion battles), wet Tuesdays at home to Southampton or friendlies were treated with the same intensity. There can't have been an official on the League list who didn't dread a visit to St. Andrews for fear of incurring his wrath. And he was no respecter of reputations; from best to worst; from Jack Taylor to Clive Thomas, all felt the sharp end of his tongue.

Now, we're all prejudiced in favour of

our team, but this man was in a league of his own. Every ref or linesman was biased or one-eyed — to him we ALWAYS got a bad ref (though unfortunately, I don't recall him ever producing a pair of spectacles with which to taunt the officials). He'd contest even the most blatant ruling if it was against the Blues. An opponent's leg might have snapped off or Joe Gallagher blasted the ball into the Bull Ring and he'd still be claiming no foul, our ball or mitigating circumstances.

He'd strategically bought a seat next to the corridor about six or seven rows from the front, allowing him the space his performances demanded. His use of the gangway was inspired and provided him with easy access to the touchline from where he could harangue with gusto. He'd often be down there, still making his point about an earlier tackle when another incident would take place and he'd fair explode. I soon began to pray for decisions to go against us just to see his ire rise. Half and full times would often find him up at the tunnel (only a short journey) giving all concerned a piece of his mind. I sometimes wonder whether this was why it was decided that teams and officials should use the Main Stand Railway End corner exit where it looks as if they're walking off into the city.

Eventually, I decided I had to go and watch him in action close up. I had a season ticket and so, not wishing to waste it, waited until a Milk Cup Second Round First leg tie against Nottingham Forest (on the day Anwar Sadat of Egypt was murdered coincidentally). I took my seat at the rear of the Paddock and sat back. Five minutes before kick-off he arrived. Short and balding, even a little chubby, he brought with him a lady of similar age and build — his wife I assumed, though it could have been his bit on the side I suppose. They took their seats, a row or two in front of me surrounded by a fair contingent of Forest fans and everyone prepared to enjoy the enter-

tainment. For 10-15 minutes nothing happened, and I began to feel disappointed — cheated even. Suddenly, a foul against Blues and he was off — up, up and away to the front, the sense of injustice etched in his face. As the match got dirty he became shirty. His dander was up and there was a fire in his belly. From that point on, he was a changed man, the Dr. Jeckyll of the Paddock.

The Forest fans loved him, cries of 'who is this guy?' and 'aye up, he's off again' filled the air. His lady friend just sat, embarrassed. She was, I assume, used to all this and either stomached him because of her undying love or perhaps secretly found it as entertaining as the rest of us. He sat, legs crossed, agitated, forever fidgeting, ready to rise, obviously a nervous and irritable man, always anticipating the foul, the offside, the bad decision. We lost the game 3-2, but the result was of little significance and I'd imagine that next day in a few offices and factories in Nottingham the talk was not so much of Ian Wallace's hat-trick, more of 'this fruitcake in't seats in front of us'.

I often wondered if he was the same outside of football, running into the kitchen if the tea was late or arguing with shopkeepers if his till receipts didn't add up. I hope he didn't drive — goodness knows how many accidents he would've had. I think he was still a regular until the Leeds game, but I don't recall seeing him since. Perhaps he felt there was no point any more. After all, that day, thousands did what he never had the courage to do — run onto the pitch and try to stop the game. Indeed, I've always maintained that the real reason that both the Leeds and, earlier, West Ham fans poured from the Tilton into the Paddock was, not to fight, but to get nearer 'the loony in the seats'. And frankly, I don't blame them. For he was a very great man indeed.

Steve Beauchampe

PRE-MATCH ENTERTAINMENT

The Crooked Spireite – No.13

IN the first of a new monthly series "CS" attempts to perform a service for you, the fan, by attending to your needs with some traditional pre-match entertainment. To-day, the Police Dog Handlers' display team have agreed to come along.

Firstly, make your dog. Cut out the one below and fold him in half along his back.

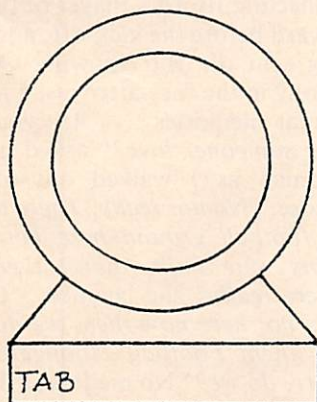
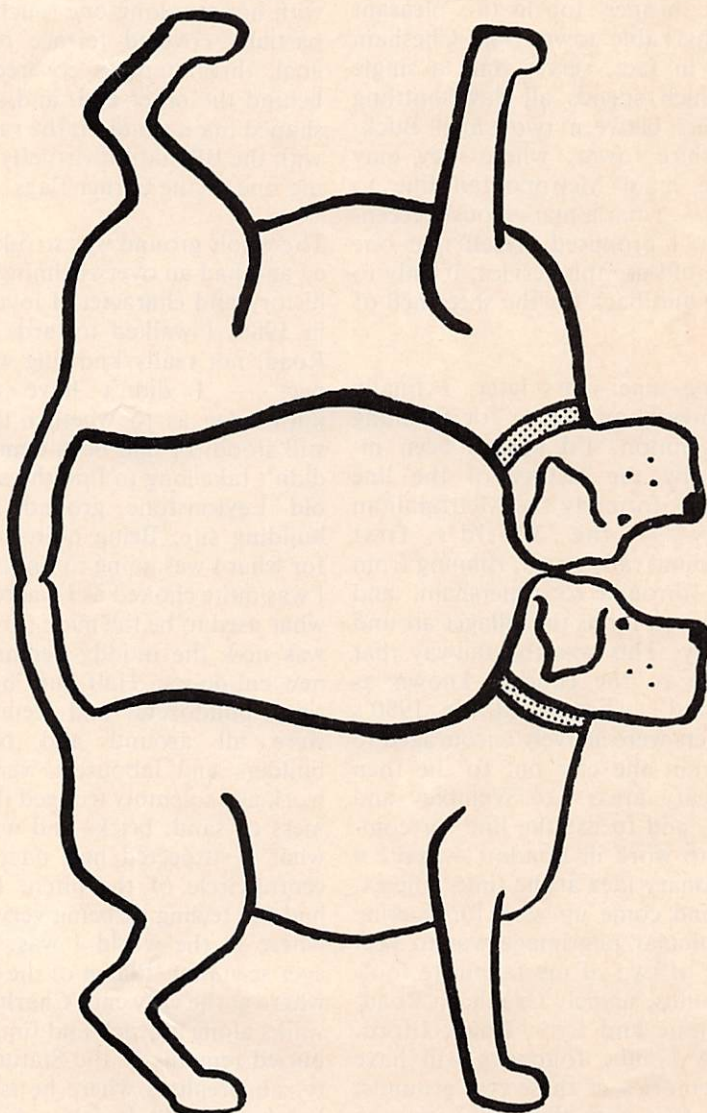
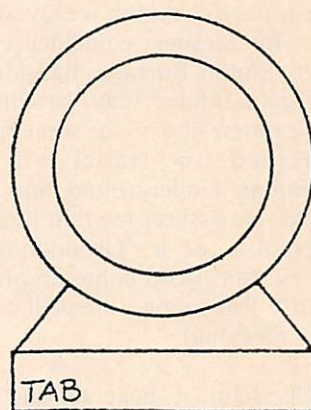
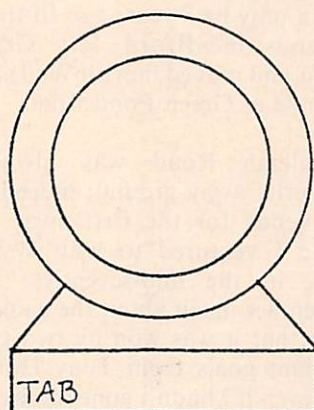
Next, cut out the hoops opposite. Cut the small rings in the middle out of them and bend over the tabs, so they stand up. Douse them with petrol and set fire to them, then lob your dog through!!

For your second display, rip out a page of this magazine and roll it into a tube, place it in front of your dog and coax him through!

Next, stand this magazine on its edge so as to form an inverted "V", in front of your dog, then chuck him over it!!

For your last display exercise, open this magazine out to A4 size, then wrap it around your wrist. With your other hand, hold the dog up to your covered wrist and run about!!!

Next month: the R.A.F. skydivers deliver the match ball!



A TRIP THROUGH METROLAND

... to the Twilight Zones of Ilford and Leytonstone.

Chairboys Gas — No.7

LEADING on from Pete Oxbrow's article in last month's issue about the demise of the grounds of Ilford and Leytonstone, this month we investigate deeper. By strange coincidence CG reporter, Simon Burrage, had already spent a cold January day travelling to these forgotten sites — for some reason he decided to travel via the Metropolitan Underground line from Chesham. He assures me that he is not a trainspotter or a "Groundhopper" (when will that word come up on Call My Bluff? I'm sure no-one will believe it's true meaning).

Why Chesham, I hear no-one ask? Well, apart from living nearby, the reason really dates back to when I had my first 'proper' job in this pleasant and remarkable town. The Chesham station, in fact, serves only a single train which spends all day shuttling passengers between two small Buckinghamshire towns, where they may join the main Metropolitan line to London — what a marvellously eccentric idea. I promised myself that one day I would use this service, if only to go there and back for the sheer hell of it.

So, some nine years later, I finally found myself an excuse for fulfilling that resolution. I'd always been interested by the history of the line anyway — formerly the Metropolitan Railway — the World's first underground rail system, running from London through to Amersham, and originally, as far as the villages around Aylesbury. This was the railway that gave rise to the concept known as 'Metroland', whereby in the 1930's Londoners were actively encouraged to move from the city out to the then quiet, leafy areas like Wembley and Harrow, and to use the line for commuting to work in London — quite a revolutionary idea at the time. The excuse I had come up with for making this particular pilgrimage was to visit the sites of two of my favourite football grounds, namely Granleigh Road, Leytonstone and Lynn Road, Ilford. Many Wycombe followers will have vivid memories of these two grounds; after all, it is only about 10 years ago that Ilford F.C. sold their ground when

the plans for their new stadium fell through — leading to the eventual amalgamation with Leytonstone. And it can only be 5 years ago (if that) that Leytonstone/Ilford left Granleigh Road and moved in with Walthamstow Avenue at Green Pond Road.

Granleigh Road was always my favourite away ground; indeed, it was the venue for the first away League game I ventured to with Wycombe, back in the mid-seventies. I can't remember much about the game, other than that it was won by two typically brilliant goals from Tony Horseman. But even if I hadn't gone there a half-dozen times since, I'd never have forgotten the ground — three sided with houses along one touchline, a big partially covered terrace behind one goal, three steps of covered terracing behind the other end, and a curiously shaped main stand on the railway side, with the BR station virtually overhanging one of the corner flags.

The whole ground was so oddly designed and had an overwhelming feeling of history and character; I loved it. Now in 1988, I walked towards Granleigh Road, not really knowing what to expect — I didn't have any prior knowledge as to whether the ground still stood, or had been demolished. It didn't take long to find the answer; the old Leytonstone ground is now a building site. Being quite unprepared for what I was going to find, I must say I was quite choked as I walked through what used to be the main turnstiles and was now the muddy beginnings of a new cul-de-sac. Half-built houses, lorries, bulldozers and cement-mixers were all around and bricklayers, builders and labourers were hard at work as I solemnly trudged through the mess of sand, bricks and mud, across what I suspected had once been the centre-circle of the pitch. I suddenly had the feeling of being very unsure of where in the world I was. Have you ever seen that 'Planet of the Apes' film where at the very end, Charlton Heston walks along a beach and finds the half-buried remains of the Statue of Liberty, and realises where he is and what has happened? It felt a bit like that when, towards the back of the building

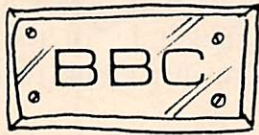
site, I spotted an old corrugated-iron fence, surely left over from the old ground, and, I suspect, all that remains of it.

By now the builders were beginning to give me a few funny looks. Why is that civvy standing in the middle of our site — why does he look as though he's about to burst into tears?! I turned around and walked back, pausing briefly at the edge of the site to ask a builder mixing some cement "*Do you know what used to be here?*". I couldn't understand the reply, growled in a strong Irish accent, but the gist of it seemed to be that he didn't, and couldn't give a toss anyway. Heading back to the tube station, it occurred to me that less than 20 years earlier, thousands of fans had met at the ground for the journey to Wembley to see Leytonstone win the 1968 Amateur Cup — my memories of matches there were of attendances less than 150 — and there lies, I suppose, part of the reason why Granleigh Road will soon be full of 'Yuppies' in semi-detached houses rather than football fans 'freezing to death' and drinking Bovril.

And so on to Newbury Park station, 4 stops away on the Central Line, and a walk around what used to be Ilford F.C. Not the slightest trace of the site's former glories now — the blocks of flats went up years ago, around a new road named Dellow Close. I'm not sure what exactly I was looking for as I wandered around the new flats and garages — an old floodlight pylon or a goalpost lying on the ground, perhaps? Hardly likely. Ilford ... I could only remember a couple of games I'd seen Wycombe play there, one being when we went there with Ilford rooted at the bottom of the Isthmian League table and yet to win a game. We managed to present them with a point in a 1-1 draw (our equaliser went in off Micky Holifield's knee!). The other occasion, however, was a classic when we won 3-1 on the last Saturday of a season, on a blazing hot day. Who can forget John Still (now injecting his own brand of discipline with Maidstone United) collecting Ilford's Player of the Season award before the kick-off, and then being sent off for elbowing Geoff Anthony in the face after just 5 minutes?! Great memories ... "*Are you looking for someone, love?*" asked an elderly woman as I walked out of Dellow Close. "*No not really. There used to be a football ground here before these flats were built, didn't there?*" "*Did there really?*" she laughed, "*Good job it's not here now then, we don't want all them Football Hooligans around here, do we?*" No madam, I don't suppose you do.

Simon Burrage

FOOTBALL, BLOODY FOOTBALL



The Absolute Game No.13



IT WAS Saturday, February 13th 1988 and it was raining. It had been raining goals for my beloved Ayr United all season in fact and today it was off to play Berwick Rangers as they continued their seemingly annual joust with the mighty Stranraer not only to assume the mantle of Scotland's worst side but also to prove to be the most awkward bloody place in the league to get to.

The true masochist revels in such challenges, of course, but even he makes concessions to common sense now and again. Hence a precautionary phone call to sunny Shielfield.

"On? Of course it's on; the pitch was passed playable this morning. Oh and by the way, your lot have no chance today."

Tempting though it was to ask this nice, considerate gentleman if he'd care to review his assessment in the light of the league tables, we took pity on him and set off. It was still raining.

The journey was predictably unevent-

ful—until 2 p.m. that is. That was when the desire to find out if Derek Rae's voice had broken yet and the lure of another perceptive pre-match analysis from John Greig became just too much to resist. We tuned in to Radio Scotland; it was to be a prophetic decision. Tom Ferrie was busy reeling off the matches postponed when we very nearly put the car into a ditch. The game was off after all. Had he really said that? It seemed he had.

So there we were. Twelve miles north of Berwick: half-an-hour until kick-off and the game was off. A quick scan of the other fixtures revealed that Hearts were entertaining (sic) Aberdeen and so, the air no longer thick—but positively polluted—with obscenities about officials showing the usual contempt for fans by calling off games ludicrously close to kick-off, a U-turn was swiftly executed. It was still raining.

This was a bad move; a whistle happy Alan Ferguson ruined the match. This only strengthened our desire to get back to Berwick mid-week and it was

only as we were discussing the feasibility of this in the car on the Glasgow Road that we remembered that football had taken place elsewhere and that we wanted to know what had happened. One of the things that had happened was that Ayr had beaten Berwick 1-0.

The air was blue. We nearly took the ears off the nice lady on the BBC Scotland switchboard once we'd located a phone box, we wrote at length to complain to the producer because of his incompetence, we drove out of Edinburgh because we didn't live there and we blamed Derek Rae because ... well because he's Derek Rae.

Not even a humdinger of a curry from the local Ashoka or the news that the game had been crap anyway could rescue these sick parrots. We wanted to fire-bomb Queen Margaret Drive but we abandoned the idea—it was still raining.

Danny McCall

RADIO, RADIO!!

The Absolute Game — No.3

A **MUTTON** pie, a cup of Bovril, a few goals, and a couple of controversial incidents—perfect bliss. Yet for certain individuals this vision of heaven is somehow incomplete. They often take the form of rather forlorn, solitary figures who spend an entire game watching the action with their heads tilted at an unusual angle (useful at Easter Road and Starks Park, sure), shoulders hunched, and a hand to their lug-hole. Despite initial impressions they are not, as far as we can be sure, suffering from some form of physiological disorder. They are, of course ... the Tranny Men!

Courageous, fearsomely singleminded, prepared to risk longterm hearing disabilities or even deafness, this elite group surely provides the most important social service in the country outside of the NHS. Full-time scores, orderings off at Ibrox, postponements at Cliftonhill, mysterious substitutions—all can be relayed instantly by these unsung heroes, whose collective efforts create a truly global terrace. The Tranny Men are everywhere. At Parkhead for instance it's rumoured that in the Jungle is a loony but highly athletic Tranny Man, decked out in the full Celtic kit, who runs up and down the gangways howling out the scores to the expectant thousands.

Carrying the Olympic torch must be a fairly demeaning experience in comparison. And while the pre-1900 PA system crackles and

farts on in its usual incomprehensible way, how else can you learn the name of the bloke with the funny Steve Nicol lookalike haircut who's just come on as substitute for the opposition, and who you're just dying to hurl abuse at?

Of course, our tuned-in friends do occasionally get their facts wrong don't they? Curiously, their fallability shows a direct correlation with commentaries on games involving the Old Firm or their local rivals. Odd, for example, the number of times that Celtic are reported as being 1-0 down when, in fact, that cad Johnston has just scored another last minute goal to seal the points. And how many times have you been cruelly deflated after learning, contrary to what you were reliably informed by 'Jimmy', that your relegation foes have won that difficult away game after all? What makes such failures in communication all the harder to comprehend is the fact that the eardrum of the listener concerned is perhaps only millimetres from the transistor's loudspeaker. Medical researchers have wilfully ignored this phenomenon, despite the acute distress it causes to thousands of innocent supporters each year. I remember being taught at school something about sound wave refraction, but hell, this is no time to get technical. We need answers—and fast.

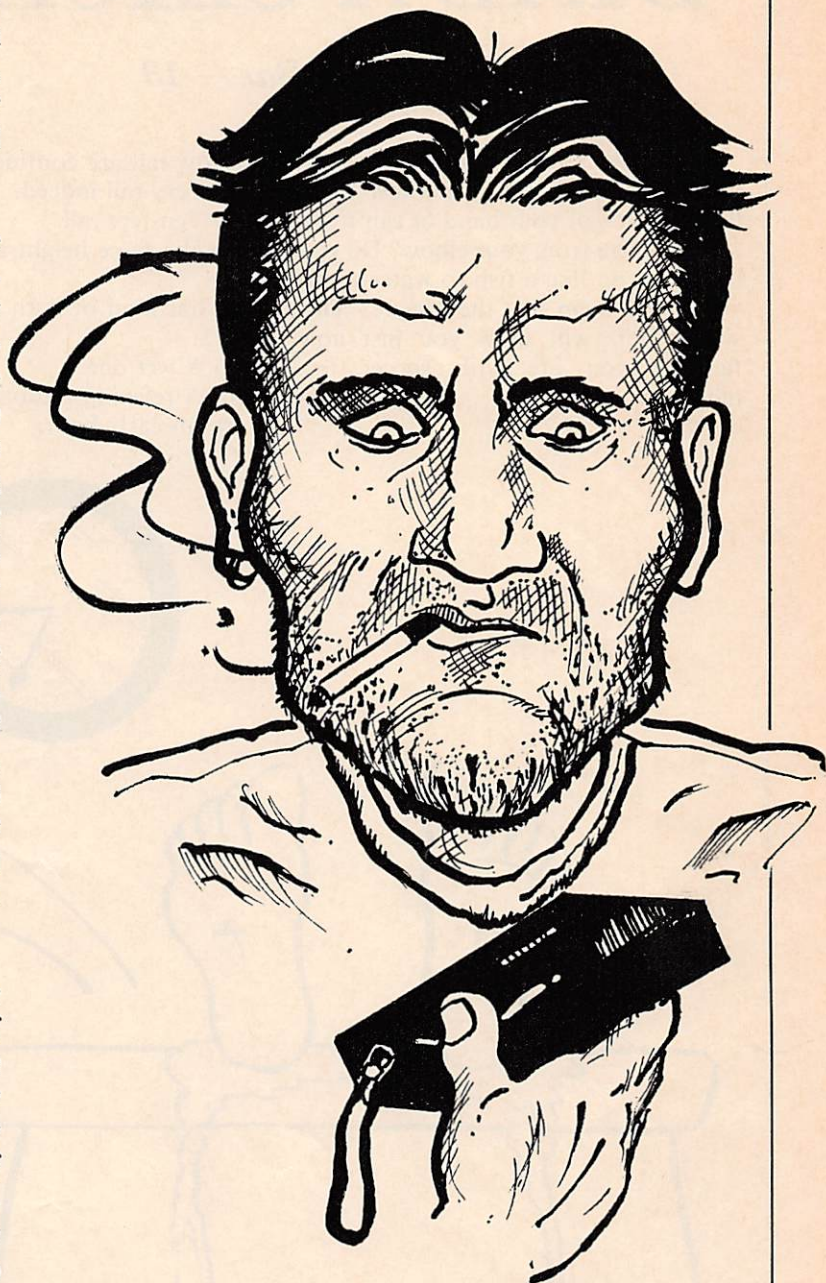
The great necessity for a careful study of this problem is underlined when you consider that the 1985-6 Premier League Championship was decided by transistor communication cock-ups. There is no denying that the Tranny Men of Dens Park got it horribly and tragically wrong at that fateful game between Dundee and Hearts. Word got round that Motherwell had equalised against Rangers, thus inspiring the Dark Blues with the belief that European football and possibly a lucrative opening tie against Dinamo Tirana was beckoning. Albert Kidd, a gullible fool and clearly fancying a night on the tiles in some continental disco, took it all as gospel, and scored twice. The reality, of course, was that he was consigning himself to living in a concrete bunker and making the odd furtive appearance for Falkirk reserves as distraught Hearts fans scoured the country intent on revenge (compounded by the recent 'John Robertson ballerina' incident). To add a twist to this tale of woe, technical hitches also abounded at Ibrox, where it was announced that Walter Kidd had scored at Dens.

The loudest roar of the season went up—surely this meant the championship was safe from a resting place at Celtic Park for another year. Grown men wept and shamefaced transistor owners agonised over the merits of Duracell and Ever Ready.

It must be said that not all tranny men are altruistic about providing a public news service. Indeed, there are some who jealously guard their privilege to hear the latest wild exclamations of David Francie, warding off the inquisitive hanger-on with a curling of the lip or a 180 degree swivel away. More subtle operators deftly lower the volume, causing much gnashing of teeth: a sort of airwave equivalent to the offside trap. I also recall leaving Parkhead after a game and listening intently to the scores courtesy of a westwards-strolling Tranny Man. Unfortunately he detected my little ploy, gave a fearful, hateful look and started to quicken his pace. Not to be shrugged off, I began to move briskly myself, only to see him lengthen his stride again. This miniature farce escalated until by the time we were at the end of London Road it had broken into a full-blooded sprint. I never did find out the second division results that day ...

The packaging and design of the transistor radio has been subject to the usual whims of post-modernist marketing hype, but the stolidity of character which is the Tranny Man's hallmark has enabled him to display commendable resistance to the vagaries of fashion. The standard radio for the fitba remains a small, flimsy plastic box with a few loose wires sticking out here and there. Ghetto blasters are probably in danger of being confiscated by the police, while sets with headphones are regarded—with disdain (poofy student syndrome). A sturdy resistance to the Scottish climate is essential, and an ability to survive being thrown on concrete is something which all you aspiring Hitachi sales reps should be aiming for.

Reassuringly, the future of the terracing tranny seems secure in the wake of the demise of the half-time scoreboard. Ostensibly an unsophisticated medium, the scoreboard was always, in fact, shrowded in confusion, with the letters in the match programme never matching those in the board: 'A' would turn up at 'J', and 'J' at 'F' as the wee kiddies in charge were more interested in fighting over a



Macaroon bar. Unscrambling the ensuing chaos was like sitting a Mensa test paper. Regarded in this light the hiccups which afflict the Tranny Men from time to time seem relatively trivial, almost forgivable. And remember, the next time you're sitting through yet another tedious, 'crucial' Premier League match you can always pretend you are enjoying yourself by tuning in to the match commentary by Richard Park and Co., who will point out all the incidents and excitement to which you in your ignorance have been totally oblivious. Televised 'live' games will never seem the same afterwards.

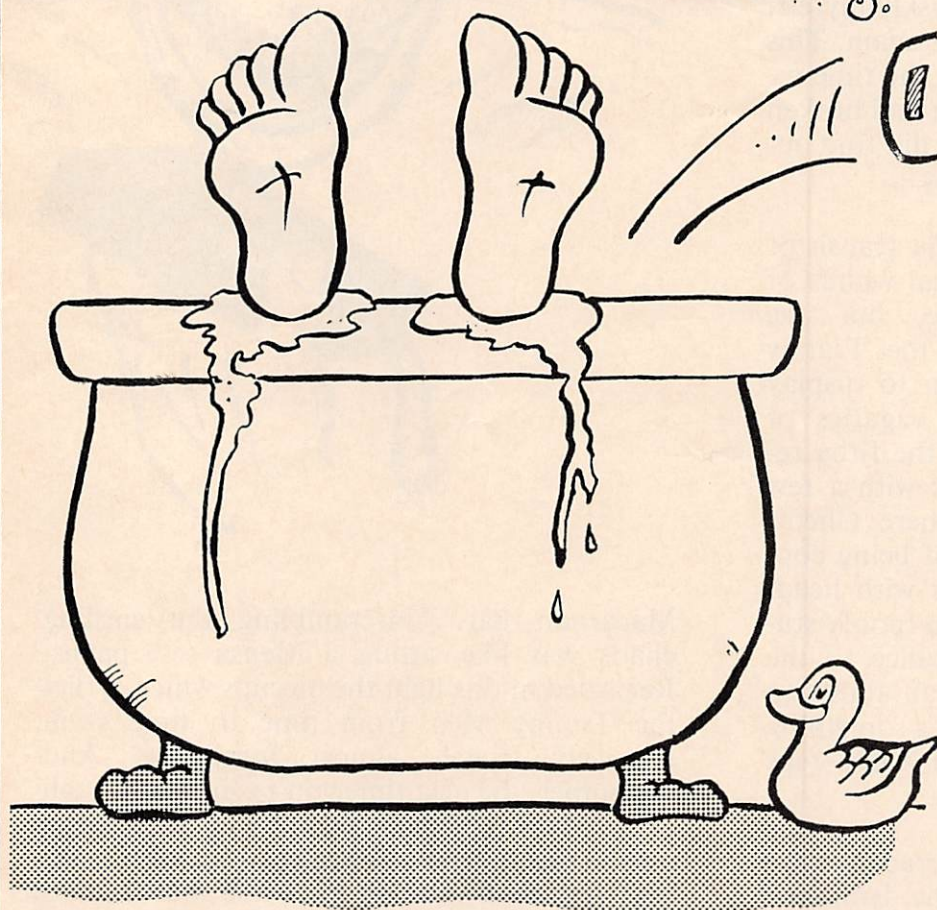
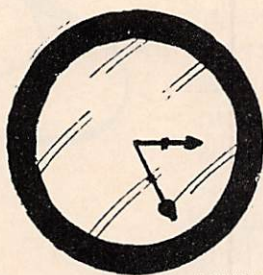
Midfield Utility Man

DIAL-A-CLICHÉ

Hit the Bar — 13

HOW WELL do you know your football clichés? Do you know them like the back of your hand or can't you tell your arse from your elbow? Do you take to them like a fish to water or do you avoid them like the plague? This simple quiz will show you just how familiar you are with soccer terminology.

1. How tall are confident footballers?
 - a) Very tall indeed.
 - b) Ten feet tall.
 - c) The same height as normal.
2. What kind of bath do dirty players take?
 - a) A wet one.
 - b) A relaxing Radox bath.
 - c) An early bath.



3. What does it indicate when Liverpool give the ball away?
 - a) That they are human after all.
 - b) That they are shit.
 - c) That it is a funny old world.
4. What does confidence do?
 - a) It oozes.
 - b) Wonders.
 - c) Show that you are wearing deoderant.
5. What type of game is football?
 - a) A mans game.
 - b) A funny old one.
 - c) A game of two halves.
6. What are thuds?
 - a) Sickening.
 - b) The type of supporter that we have no wish to see at our football grounds.
 - c) Painful.
7. What is the atmosphere?
 - a) Highly charged.
 - b) Worth a goals head start.
 - c) Electric.
8. What type of balls do quality players deliver?
 - a) Inch-perfect balls (Arf, arf)
 - b) A ball with 'class' written all over it.
 - c) A ball with 'Adidas' written all over it.
9. What have the lads done?
 - a) Magnificent.
 - b) Nothing for the image of the game.
 - c) Whatever they could get their hands on.
10. What do footballers always give?
 - a) The other team hell.
 - b) 110%
 - c) Lousy interviews filled with mindless clichés.

Scoring:

1 - a1,b3,c0 2 - a0,b1,c3 3 - a3,b0,c1 4 - a3,b1,c0 5 - a3,b3,c3 6 - a3,b1,c0 7 - a1,b3,c0 8 - a3,b1,c0 9 - a3,b1,c0 10 - a1,b3,c5

How did you do?

Score	Rating
0- 9	Shit. You know even less about football than the Minature for Sport, Colin Monyhan.
10-20	Not too bad. Try watching The Big Match more often.
21-31	Well done! There is no pulling the wool over your eyes is there?
32	Brian Moore

Blundell Blunders — No. 3 Gordon Walker

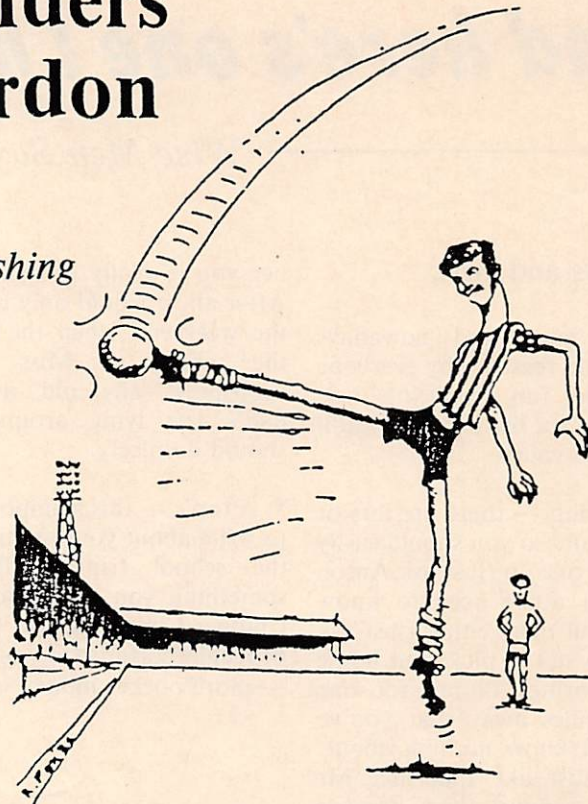
Sing When We're Fishing
— No.3

GRIMSBY once bought a player from the local Sheffield leagues called Gordon Walker. He arrived at the club in 1969 and as I recall, did not stay too long. Presumably his friends were not too surprised to see him return to the Sheffield fold after a few undistinguished months. But the Grimsby fans could hardly fail to notice him since he stood some six feet five inches in his stocking feet, making him the tallest player at that time in the Football League. It was rumoured that he was only bought because this handed Grimsby the dubious distinction of having in their ranks the smallest and tallest in the whole league. Dave Boylen, a canny midfielder player, rose to the startling height of five feet four inches, yet was rather a superior footballer.

Not to be too hard on the fellow but Walker himself must have been pretty surprised when Grimsby moved in for him. To gain a physical impression of the man one need go no further than mention the appearance and gait of a basketball player. In fact, he had surely missed his way and had he not made a living playing the above game he would surely have made an excellent circus giant, equipped with stilts et al. That is probably what he is doing right now.

His style was quite bizarre. As often happens with brief careers, their dawns break auspiciously and in his home debut, Walker scored twice in a victory against Port Vale. The town was buzzing that night and the post-match pub analyses were optimistic. However, the more sceptically perceptive of the pub aficionados retained a cynical distance from the sensationalists. They had seen it all before, albeit in a different guise. When a player does little that is tactically or rationally recognisable, the opposing defence may be momentarily flummoxed and thrown out of all pre-existent strategies. This was undoubtedly the case with the poor chaps sporting Port Vale shirts that day.

One incident remains vivid in the



memory. Walker had strayed out onto the right during the opening stages, following some whim or other of his own making and a Grimsby player hit a highish ball in his direction. The crowd bayed in their customary Shakespearian crowd scene manner as the ball sailed ignominiously in front of Walker for a throw-in. The Vale defence relaxed understandably, that is until the aforementioned threw out a large gawky leg in the manner of John Cleese 'silly walk', bringing the ball down in an almost paranormal fashion.

Obviously, the Port Vale coach had never described on his blackboard contingency plans for how to deal with an oversized freak. They watched in bemused fascination (and some terror) as Walker rampaged towards the penalty area like a bull on amphetamines, no doubt as surprised as the defence by his own progress. This, however, rather tends to proscribe thought patterns that were probably not present in the chap's head at the time. Without further ado he fairly walloped the ball into the net before the keeper had time to whimper and Blundell Park hailed a possible new hero.

In fact the crowd was sure of the new lads standing when in the second half he nodded in a second goal. The goal was reminiscent of one of those games of basketball at school, forced upon unwilling midgets by some ebullient

games master who only seemed interested in the game because there happened to be one oversized gook in the year who could stand at the net and drop the ball in for the duration of the lesson whilst the rest of the little weeds could only stand around feeling as ineffectual as Ayatollahs at a Bar-Mitzvah. It said little for the rest of the Grimsby players since all they needed to do was plonk the ball on his head and there was a fair chance that the ball might thence travel in the right direction.

He was the sort of player who made you feel uncomfortable at away games. As Grimsby took the field you were acutely aware that only your side seemed able to produce such ridiculous looking individuals and that the opposition all looked comparatively like real footballers. It did not take long for the auspicious dawn to turn into a grey morning of drizzle. The old adage that it is basically necessary to possess the capacity to control the ball rang true as ever. Clearly, in the standards of football to which he had been hitherto accustomed, his rampant stride had been parting the seas. But rather like those unhappy wanderers, the land of milk and honey turned out to be a less inviting reality than had been promised. The big man returned to who knows where.

PHIL BALL

And here's one I made earlier....

Wise Men Say — No.9

HELLO boys and girls,

Fanzines are great and nowadays there's simply no reason why everyone can't have super fun producing their very own! Here's a list of what you'll need to produce yours:

1: A football club — there are lots of these lying around so you should easily be able to pick one up (just ask Anton Johnson). You don't need to know very much about them either (just ask Ken Bates). Try not to pick your home town team. Boring! Plump for one hundreds of miles away that you've never seen and know nothing about. That's right, just like that nice Mr Maxwell! You support them because they win lots of super things which that useless lot in your town never do.

2: Paper, glue, crayons, scissors, sticky-backed plastic, empty washing-up liquid bottles, not forgetting double-sided sellotape. You'll need the glue to sniff for some inspiration to get you started but scissors can be sharp so make sure there's a grown-up around before you start. (Of course, you don't really need the washing-up bottles, the sticky-backed plastic or the double-sided sellotape but this is Blue Peter and, as you know, everything on this bloody programme seems to involve them).

3: Lots of money — you'll need this to give to Mr Printer Man but you'll get most of it back when all your school chums rush to buy Issue One at playtime. Make sure the tuck shop agrees to stock it and, don't forget, bugger anyone with one of our badges getting a copy half-price.

To get started, just use some money Mummy's carelessly left lying around in her purse or, if you're especially good at drawing, have a go at forging her signature on a cheque. This is super fun!

4: A word processor — just ask Miss if you can take the school one home for the week-end to do a project! She'll be impressed and, even better, you can tell

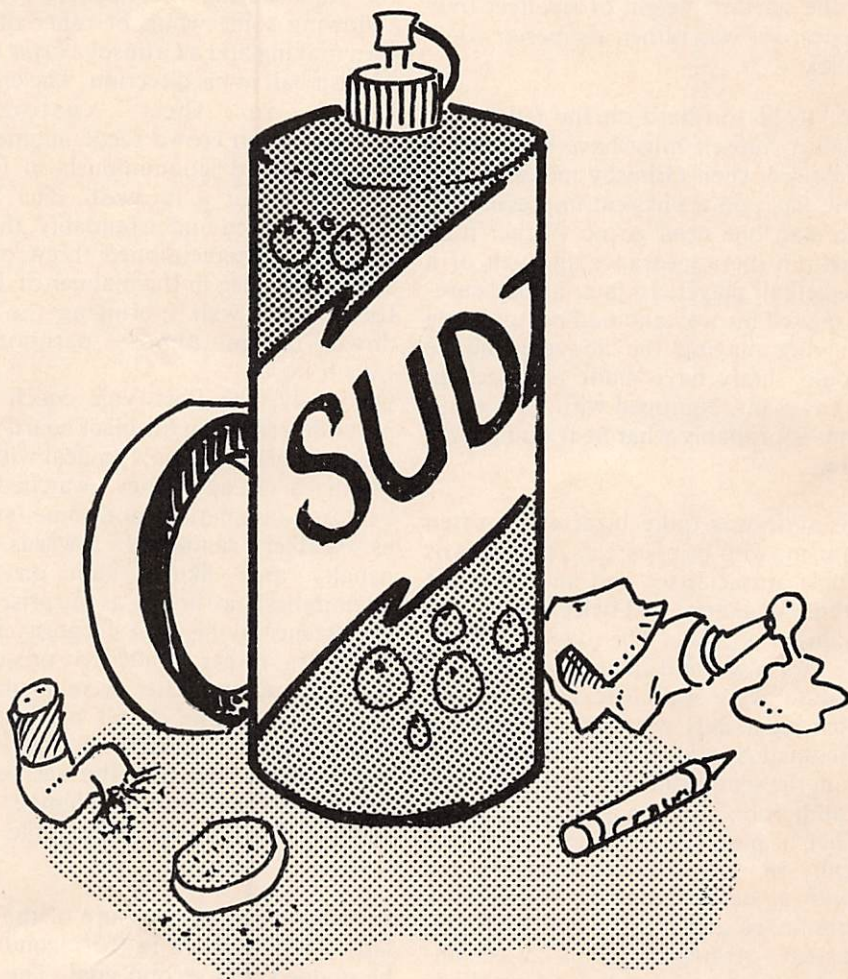
her you're really doing her a favour. After all, it would only get stolen over the week-end when the burglars raid the school. If Miss is a rotten spoilsport, any old microcomputer dad's left lying around the house should do nicely.

5: A topic — this is important. Try not to write about your auntie's new baby, the school trip to Bamburgh or something you meant to send to the Chipper Club page. Go for something of real importance to your schoolmates — more pocket money so you can use

service trains instead of the Travel Club to get to the away games!

OK, now you've got everything you should need to have lots of fun with "desktop publishing". Sometimes other things come in handy — daddy's lawyer, having the school bully in your sales team if sales start to slump — but this is how we started. Now, just to show everyone how it should look, here's one I made earlier.

Nigel Green



'WEST HAM LET IN FIVE AGAIN'

Hit the Bar — No.11

YOU'VE seen that headline before — and you'll see it again. But wait. Hold hard. This comes from a newspaper headline of the early seventeenth century. How can this possibly be?

It can be because this is a theatrical headline concerning the latest in Shakespearean tragedies, namely the play **HAMLET**.

So soccer did exist in Shakespeare's time? A careful study reveals this to be so. Just look at the list of plays.

LOVE'S LEICESTER'S LOST AGAIN, more tragedy for the Filberts of Wimpole St and what of **THE MERRY WIVES OF WIMBLEDON**, they cannot get over the mooning ... More teams appear in such diverse attractions as **MUCH ADO ABOUT ALDERSHOT** and **TIGHT AS DARLINGTON'S DEFENCE**. The European scene is not bereft either, there is always a chance of a visit from **TWO GENTLEMEN OF VERONA** if you fail to throw the away leg, and talking of away, there is **PANATHINAIKOS OF ATHENS** and that violent affair **ROMEO BENETTI AND JULIAN DICKS**. Just as long as they don't play in that tragic away strip of **MUSTARD AND CRESSIDA**.

Back home in England we find **ROCHDALE THE SECOND**, **ROCHDALE THE THIRD**, they never seem to finish first and it's always a case of life or death for them. Up in Scotland they have the bizarre goings on called **SOME ABERDEEN** and the dour tragedy in which Dundee get murdered called **MACLEAN**.

On a lighter note we have **A COMEDY OF ERRORS** concerning the English National Side and **TWO NOBLE LINESMEN** (how is this possible?). **DALE TEMPEST** appears in a monologue as **12th MAN** and as far as **SIMON OF STAINROD** goes, it's a case of **AS YOU STRIKE IT**. We find **A WINTER'S TALE** (postponed

again) and **PERRY GROVES**, a singular play indeed, but not able to match the convoluted plot of **ONE TOE KNEE ANKLE POTTERER** in which the Stoke City physio falls for an Egyptian in the **Queen Of The South** side.

Old glory beckons with **A MIDSUMMER KNIGHT'S TEAM** a story of old England in 1966. **KING HENRY IV** bookable offence is followed by **KING HENRY V** bookable offence and astonishingly **KING HENRY VI** bookable offence. How this royal personage escaped being sent off, only makes me think of the unbelievable tale of **THE RAPE OF LOU'S CRECHE** in which child molesting in Swindon is taken to new depths.

Individuals emerge again as **THE MARKER OF VINCE** in which the Earl of Gascoigny meets his match and **TESTICLE CAESAR** in which **VINCE** makes a special appearance.

O FELLOW seems to be a five replay affair between Leyton Orient and Walsall in which the famous writer's son Craig gets a walk on part. A Crystal Palace lament is performed in **THE TAMING OF SHREWSBURY** for this one always brings out the lowest crowd of the season, and surely a parody of our times is here as I end my research into Shakespearean Soccer with **ALL'S WELL THAT'S MAXWELL**.

Steve Spartak



EXTRACTS FROM
Les Bences'
**MANAGER'S
NOTES
MAY 1988**

Les Bences' Managers Notes

WHAT a week! I have always said football is a game of unpredictability unless you know what is going to happen. Last weekend we were caught in a fierce struggle with Felton. A minute to go 1-1—Wade netting for us in the first half—an open goal staring Darren Twink in the face and his shot hits the corner flag, rebounds onto the cross-bar and 'Twinky' is there to smash it home with his tummy! This made the final score, ATHLETICO WHADDON 2 FELTON 1. Following Botham Wanderers defeat we now move off the bottom for the first time in four months. Our Felton victory should have given the team a 'buzz' for Tuesday evenings clash at REDLAND PARK AVENUE, but sadly we failed to respond to their 5-0 half-time lead.

We should, therefore, be going into today's game with BOWDEN PARK KNOWING THAT ONLY VICTORY WILL KEEP US IN THE LEAGUE BUT THIS IS NOT SO. I can now reveal that providing we remain second from bottom we will not be relegated! This is due to the fact that Sidcombe have resigned from the league. We do not wish to gloat, having come close to liquidation ourselves but it has to be said, WELL DONE SIDCOMBE! ...

As you are no doubt aware the League has a rule whereby for every inelligible player a club fields, then a point is deducted. Not wishing to take any chances, this means that to today's match we are playing safe and have dropped four of our regulars. To add to selection problems club coach Reg Pybus has been sacked.



Reg, of course, has given his life soul and 110% every day to Athletico over twenty-eight remarkable years. Although employed as club coach, he has often been called upon to be groundsman, ticket seller and caretaker manager, (70/71, 74/75, 79/80, 1981, 84/85) social club barman and usually at his own expense, taxi driver for players and officials. However, Athletico Whaddon is a forward looking club and sadly there is no longer room for narrow minded traditionalists who think football is about twenty-two players kicking a ball and attempting to score goals. Though we all owe Reg a debt, I am sure you will join with me in saying:

GET LOST REG!

Les Bence

The moving story of the woman who became a widow to the Harriers touched your hearts. But now ...

The Soup — No.3

HUBBY HITS BACK

THE weeks leading up to the Bank Holiday weekend are fraught with difficulties.

One moment my spirits are high as I anticipate two important Harriers matches on Saturday and Monday; the next I am plunged into gloom as I wonder how I am going to clear it with my wife.

It starts in January when, suddenly catching me unawares, she says brightly: "Let's go up to Scotland for the Easter Bank Holiday ... we haven't been anywhere for ages!"

I look at her suspiciously, trying to assess whether she realises the significance of that remark. I decide it was made in all innocence and mumble something non-committal.

This close shave prompts me to take the initiative and I begin a campaign designed to soften the blow.

I adopt the subtle approach. For instance, over breakfast in early February while reading the paper: "Oh look, we've got Kettering on March 25th. That could be the championship decider. I'll have to go to that one."

She looks up pityingly, goes "Mmmm-mmmm", and carries on with whatever she was doing.

"You don't mind?" I say. "I suppose not", she replies. One-nil!

I'm five-nil up by the time she realises the exact date of this year's Bank Holiday weekend. Then the fightback begins.

"Are we going to Scotland then?" she inquires one evening. I pretend I'm asleep, a tactic which, as we're in the middle of making love, I feel has a

reasonable chance of success. She isn't fooled though. I think I overdid it with the snoring.

"Well?"

"Look", I pant. "Can't this wait until the morning?"

The next day, inevitably, the subject is resurrected. I go into my carefully worked out routine.

"Yes, that's a lovely idea", I enthuse. "Just a minute though, hold your horses. Isn't Bank Holiday weekend March 25th? Oh no! I've already arranged to go up to Kettering on that day. What a shame! Never mind, we'll go to Scotland another time."

She throws me a look which would freeze the blood of a Gestapo interrogation officer.

"What are you talking about?", she spits. "Do you mean our entire weekend is going to revolve around a bloody football match?"

"But I told you about the Kettering match months ago", I protest, diving for cover. "It's all arranged. I can't let the lads down at this stage."

"The lads!" she explodes. "You can't let the lads down? What about me you selfish bastard?"

The phone rings (thank you God) and I'm there before it's finished the first ring. I manage to keep the conversation going for nearly 15 minutes, despite the fact that it's a wrong number, and by the time I slink back into the sitting room she's calmed down.

She's been thinking. Bad sign. "Right then", she says, "We'll drive up to Scotland after the match."

I stare at her. Is she mad? "That's impossible", I say. "I've got to go to the pub after the match. It's traditional."

But she doesn't give up easily. "Alright then, we'll drive up after the pub's closed. We can drive all night."

"What? Drive up to Scotland after nine pints of Bathams? It's hard enough walking home."

Abandoned every Saturday, her tragic story can't fail to break your heart...

HARRIERS STOLE MY HUSBAND

How the first issue of the Soup revealed the amazing story.

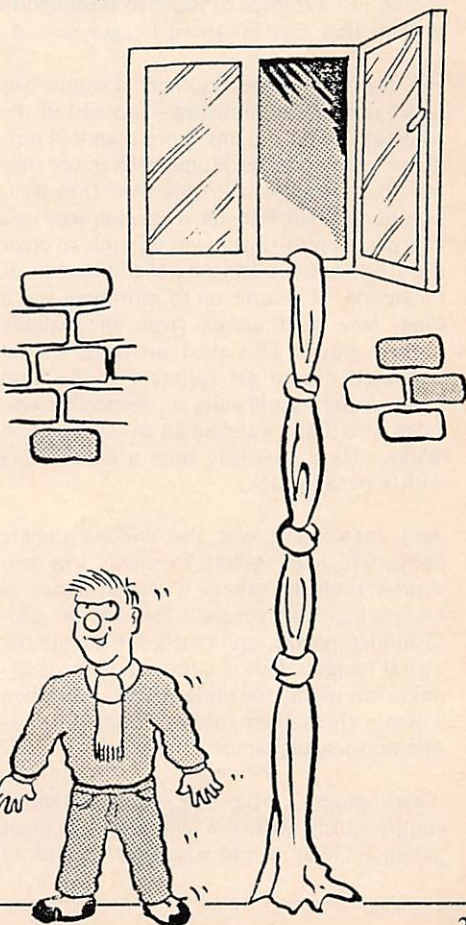
This skirmish marks the end of hostilities for a while, although we enter a particularly menacing Cold War period. The pressure is such that I'm on the verge of surrendering when she floors me by suddenly announcing: "OK, you win. You can go to the match on Saturday but I want to go somewhere on Sunday. Somewhere nice."

As we all know, you're never more vulnerable than when you've just scored (especially against Liverpool), and I almost blow it. "Of course we'll go out on Sunday." I blabber. "I'll take you out somewhere nice on Monday too. How about that?"

She smiles gratefully and opens her mouth to speak when an awful thought hits me. "Aaaah, hang on a sec. I'm afraid Monday's out."

"Why? What's happening?"

"Barnet, at home."



GONE WEST

Off the Ball — No.15

TWO dreadful things happened during the 1964-65 season; my home town team dropped into Division Two and my family moved away from Wolverhampton, off into darkest Herefordshire. My older brother stayed behind to guard the flame but I was too young to have the choice.

My abiding dislike for rugby union dates from this period. Being roughed up every Thursday afternoon by fifteen boys with funny accents who thought I was a Brummie ... well, it did nothing but heighten my sense of loss. At home in the evenings, too scared to venture out where no street lamp shone and where wild beasts roamed the lanes, I sat fingering my Charles Buchan's Football Monthly. A missionary in extremis clutching his prayer book for consolation.

And then I discovered the Southern League or, specifically, Hereford United. It is hard to explain quite how obscure they were in the mid-1960's. For the past sixteen seasons they have been a part of the nation's Saturday tea-time ritual, having blazed the trail from Southern to Football League, a trail followed by Cambridge United, Oxford and Wimbledon.

When I discovered them they had just fought back into the Premier Division after their only season in the deeper obscurity of the First. They scored 124 that season, conceding just 39, three of those to Wimbledon in their first ever Southern League season.

But football in the Southern League was never only about statistics – football in the Midlands never is – any more than it is now about selling Beazer Homes, whatever they may be. I was soon to discover that non-league football had its own characteristic charms. At half-time it was possible to cross the ground to the opposite end in pursuit of the action. If it came on to rain there was a long, low shed across from the equally curious stand. This shed provided shelter and a chance to get splinters in the bum from sitting on old railway sleepers. It was from here that I watched an ex-Arsenal and Wales player narrowly miss a corner flag with a penalty kick.

And then there was the endless debate about which of Albert Derrick's legs was shorter than the other – a crucial factor in his goal-scoring success. He was an old-fashioned player; quite busy but essentially a goal-hanger. This is a term quite possibly unknown to anyone under thirty; even then it was a threatened species, little seen outside non-league games.

'Goal-hangers' often lacked athleticism, compensating with low cunning and great patience. They would sometimes spend all

afternoon loitering just outside the opposition's 18 yard box, waiting for the long through ball or the miscued back-pass. Instinctive opportunism was Albert's speciality. Just before Christmas 1967 Hereford played Margate in a torrential downpour. Ten minutes into the game everyone's strip was identical – mud with mud trim. Albert knew it was only a matter of time. He was right. The centre-half from the seaside slipped him the ball and he scored a neat goal from 15 yards, keeping his head and his feet as all around him slithered vainly to prevent the inevitable. It heralded the day's second deluge, United going on to win 6-2.

Obsession with work-rate and the spread of the off-side game have eradicated these delightful players entirely. Look at the excellent guide to tactics in 'When Saturday Comes' (No. 5) and you'll see that it doesn't need to mention this once vital feature of our national game.

Still, to sentimentalise about the innocent attractions of those days is to tell only half a story. The Southern League could be fiercely competitive. Anyone who saw the traditional Easter fixtures with Worcester City witnessed a terrifying level of commitment, a Merseyside derby on speed. Games against the likes of Barnet, Wimbledon and Cheltenham Town were less frenetic – tough and unremitting struggles rather than Total War. There was also a lot of very good football, often played by famous names serving out their last few seasons before the lure of Ewyas Harold Reserves took them out of the professional game for good. Even though he played for Worcester it could only be counted a privilege to watch Ivor Allchurch turn a defence inside-out.

But best of all was to be able to go, week in and week out, knowing that the other great Welsh international would be there, clocking up the goals with every and any legitimate part of his anatomy. John Charles's prowess with the head and the boot are well documented elsewhere but I saw him score goals with knees, buttocks, wedding tackle (protected by Litesome, of course) and once, a sharp flick of the left pectoral sent the ball into Romford's net with a power Nat Lofthouse would have envied.

That particular incident was in the first match my younger brother attended. It gave him a proper sense of the curiosities that add such an enduring dimension to the game. That and the splinters in the bum.

Another delight was the Edgar Street pitch. Three days after the mud-bath with Margate, United played Nuneaton

Borough. My Boxing Day diary entry announces in the pompous, knowing tone of the young fanatic that this was "probably the most exciting 1-1 draw since the War". Wicked team in those days, Nuneaton. Certainly the pitch was firm and dry, playing well. At the same time Filbert Street and the Baseball Ground were quagmires for the second third of every season and nowadays Old Trafford seems to have the same problem. Hereford's pitch is now the League's widest and, more importantly, the turf is still superb.

In Spring 1968 Europe rioted and Cliff Richard topped the charts with 'Congratulations'. Hereford was not exempt from this spirit of revolution. The widening of the A49 spelled doom for the bizarre grandstand. It was dismantled and sold to a rugby team. We laughed.

For a few matches teams changed over the road in the Public Baths and had to brave the wildest traffic in the city to get to the pitch in time for kick-off. By August this was history; a zippy new cantilever stand had replaced the railway sleepers and the careful process of redeveloping the ground was on its way. This, along with a consistent record of footballing success and better crowds than large numbers of League teams, would eventually help United into the Football League at the expense of Barrow.

The key probably lay in the publicity generated by the F.A. Cup clash with Newcastle United in January 1972. A 2-2 draw at St. James' Park in front of a mere 39,000 set the scene for a Third Round replay at Edgar Street. It was at once a triumph and a disappointment. A triumph because Hereford won after extra time when, notoriously, pace can tell heavily in favour of a First Division side playing lowly opposition. A disappointment because I was two hundred miles away by then.

I sat at my table that night writing my essay on Philosophical Dualism and wondering how the lads were going on. The late sports desk on Radio Two told me; 2-1, the only dualism that counted that night.

There were tremendous excitements after that; election to the League followed by promotion in the first season; Third Division championship three seasons later; all those Dixie McNeil goals. But for all that, when I think of Hereford I remember simpler days, non-league days when joy was a Wednesday evening stroll through the Cattle Market – the air still rich with the day's dung – and on into the Merton Meadow End. I'd open the programme and, sandwiched between the ads for Sid Wright's Snack Bar and the excellent Weston's Cider, there would be the team for the evening; names as famous as John Charles or as unsung as Alan Jones and Peter Timms ... heroes everyone and ready to give Atherstone Town a run for their money. Great days.

PETER WAKEFIELD

A kick up the R's pantomime productions proudly presents ...

CINDERS IN BOOTS

*A Kick Up The R's —
Xmas Not-So-Special*

ONCE upon a time in a land with a Prince, a mystical castle and a nightclub called the 'Flounceydrome' which kept everyone awake at night, there lived a young man called Barton. Barton was an honest and hard-working young lad who had two sisters called Bert and Sid. Bert and Sid were heartless creatures who worked their brother extremely hard, he cooked for them, cleaned for them and even did impressions of Jimmy Tarbuck for them.

One day the Prince sent his messenger out into the streets to let it be known that he had found a sparkling Adidas Football boot and that whoever's foot fitted the boot would become Captain of the Kingdom's first eleven football team. The Captaincy was an extremely prestigious position to hold and the announcement caused a great stir in Barton's village. Several days passed, however, before the Royal tap was finally heard at Barton's door. His sisters being the evil creatures they were, told Barton to go and sweep the yard while they tried on the football boot, so he did what he was told and as he pushed his broom gently back and forth he could hear his sister's cries of anguish as they desperately tried to make the boot fit. Once the house lay silent Barton knew that his sister's efforts had been in vain and he sat down on the floor

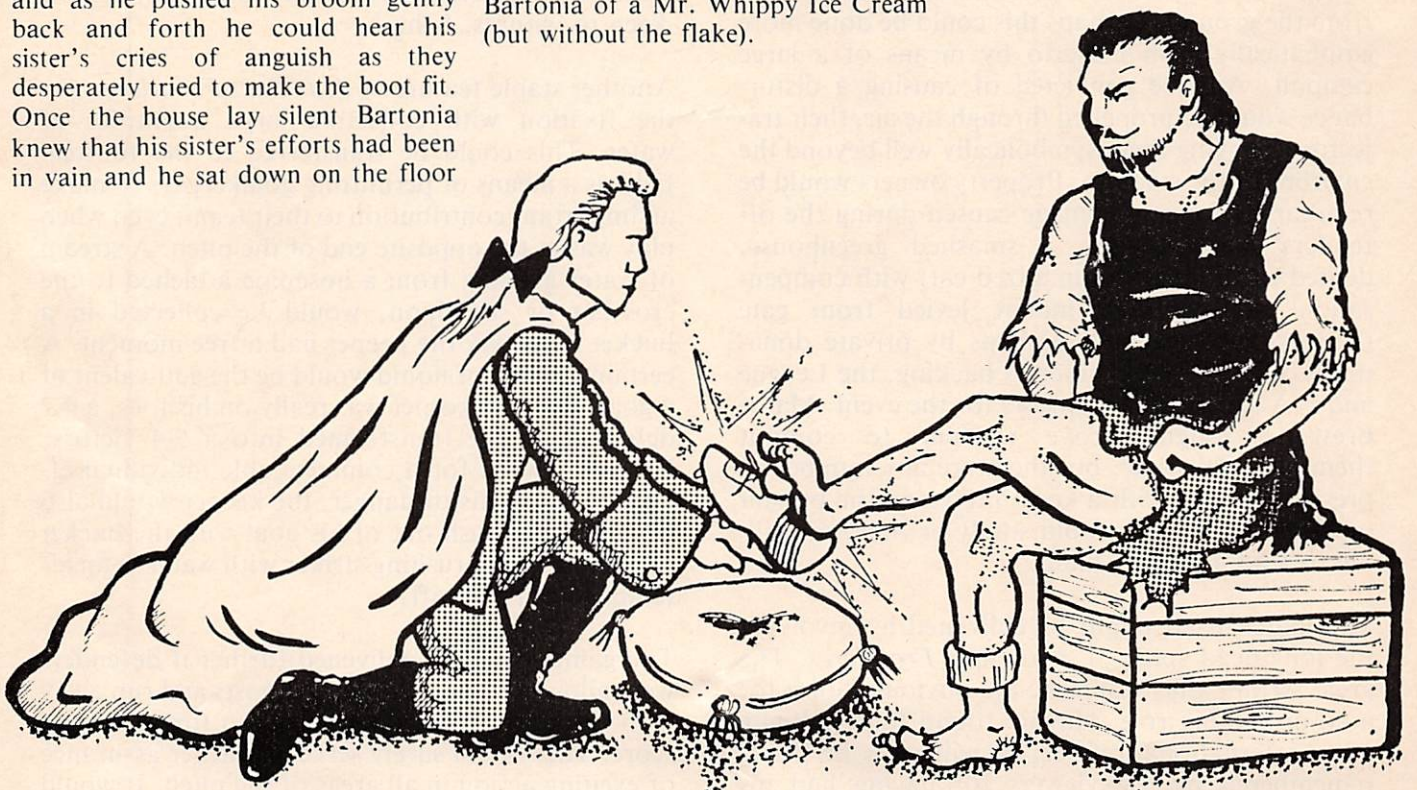
and began to think about the purgatory that they would now put him through. So deep in thought was Barton that he did not notice the Prince pass him on his way out. The Prince, on seeing this pathetic figure staring at the ground and being a rather benevolent chap, decided to let Barton try on the boot as well. So, once he had caught Barton's attention (by doing an extremely lifelike impression of a rutting Rhino, who has just drunk half a reservoir of a particularly potent aphrodisiac) he gestured to him to take the boot. As the boot's weight fell on Barton's hand the sun caught it's full radiance and for a moment it reminded Barton of a Mr. Whippy Ice Cream (but without the flake).

As Barton lowered the boot towards his foot, his hand began to tremble and his breath began to quicken until finally when the boot was actually touching his foot he could scarcely bear to breathe at all. As if the whole village was now watching the proceedings, not a sound could be heard. Then, all at once, the birds began to sing, the clouds began to dance and the river, well, began to act like a river. Barton's eyes betrayed a frenzied excitement and hardly daring to look he slowly lowered them ... and ... the bloody thing didn't fit him either.

★ ★ ★

A CHRISTMAS CRACKER: Now that the latest craze is to take an inflatable banana or a stick of celery to a match I've decided to take my favourite mushroom with me. He's a real fun-gi ...

PAUL RICHARDS



EVEN the most diehard football enthusiasts would concede that the game has become desperately predictable. Today's thrill-seeking audiences require a greater stimulus than can possibly be provided by two teams kicking a ball from one end of a pitch to another. For example, the excitement to be derived from a typical matchday would be heightened immeasurably if the League withheld details of the weekend fixtures until Saturday morning, thereby guaranteeing that a day spent following your team away from home would turn into a fully-fledged adventure. Imagine the fun of harrying around Crewe Station at twenty to three, trying to

welter or ribald remarks concerning the versatility of his dipstick. As in *It's a Knockout*, every league fixture would have a theme, with all the participants being required to dress accordingly. A match based around the works of Richard Wagner, for instance, would see players and officials kitted out as Rhinemaidens and Norsemen, blonde pigtailed flapping in the wind and cloaks trailing weightily behind them as they gamely attempted to keep up with play. Of course, there would be a fair chance of the ball getting speared on a horned helmet, but that would surely only add to the prevailing sense of fun.

A MODEST PROPOSAL

find the right platform for a connecting train or perhaps even hi-jacking aircraft and demanding to be taken to Spotland or the Old Show Ground. All being well, most stadia would be crammed full of sweaty, breathless bodies well in advance of the kick-off—latecomers would curse themselves for having missed the pre-match bear-baiting contests which would provide fans with an opportunity to see their club's YTS trainees in energetic action.

Another form of pre-match entertainment would serve a useful purpose as a deterrent to hooliganism. Press reports of violent incidents at matches often refer to troublemakers being ejected from the ground. Perhaps this could be done more emphatically than hitherto by means of a large catapult. Anyone convicted of causing a disturbance would be propelled through the air, their trajectory carrying them symbolically well beyond the environs of the stadium. Property owners would be reimbursed for any damage caused during the offenders' descent (e.g. a smashed greenhouse, dented car bonnet, traumatized cat) with compensation paid through money levied from gate receipts, supplemented perhaps by private donations. With the government's backing, the League and F.A. might seek sponsors for the event. Major breweries might prove reticent to commit themselves this time, but there are any number of pressure groups with a keen interest in the pursuit of punishment who would surely be only too willing to lend a helping hand.

The match itself might be enlivened by involving the long-dead spirit of *Jeux Sans Frontieres*. The great Arthur Ellis would be the obvious choice for a co-ordinating role. Having found fame initially as an international referee, he will sadly be better remembered by TV viewers for having had his toupee tugged regularly by Stuart Hall amid a

To enhance the entertainment value further, the number of goals scored per game could be dramatically increased if one side in each half were to be issued with extra-large boots. The other team would then be able to rush around the field virtually unhindered while their opponents clumped about distractedly, attempting to retain their balance and some semblance of dignity. Instances of violent play could also be drastically reduced if a player was required to put on an extra item of clothing for every foul committed. In next to no time, Norman Whiteside would be reduced to waddling around like an aged relative of the Michelin Man, a spectacle many of us would be mustard-keen to witness, I think.

Another staple feature of *Jeux Sans Frontieres* was the fixation with collecting large quantities of water. This could be transferred to the football field as a means of permitting goalkeepers to make an important contribution to their team, even when play was at the opposite end of the pitch. A stream of water gushing from a hosepipe attached to the crossbar or stanchion, would be collected in a bucket whenever the keeper had a free moment. A certain volume of liquid would be the equivalent of a goal, so if the keeper was really on his toes, a 4-2 defeat might be transformed into a 5-4 victory, suitable reward for a commendable individual effort. In moments of danger, the keeper would also be entitled to rush out of his goal with the bucket and douse the onrushing striker with water in an attempt to put him off.

The game would be enlivened further if defenders were allowed to pick up the goalposts and run away with them whenever the opposition threatened to score. This would surely serve as further assurance of exciting action in all areas of the pitch. It would also provide a timely image boost for the much-

maligned stopper centre-half, who is often to be seen loping ponderously around the field as if on some half-hearted quest for the secret of fire. He would now have to perfect the technique of nimbly ducking and dodging around whilst running at top speed with a large wooden post jammed under his arm. Obviously, confusion would reign most of the time, especially if two sets of goalposts were in transit simultaneously.

Somme Confusion

On a similar theme, the number of exciting goalmouth incidents would surely multiply if there was only one goal. In fact, there would be very little else, apart from the kick-off. Tempers might become a little frayed however, and there would be a danger of matches disintegrating into small-scale re-enactments of some of the messier encounters of World War One. A trial period under the new rules, perhaps in the GM Vauxhall Conference, would obviously require careful monitoring.

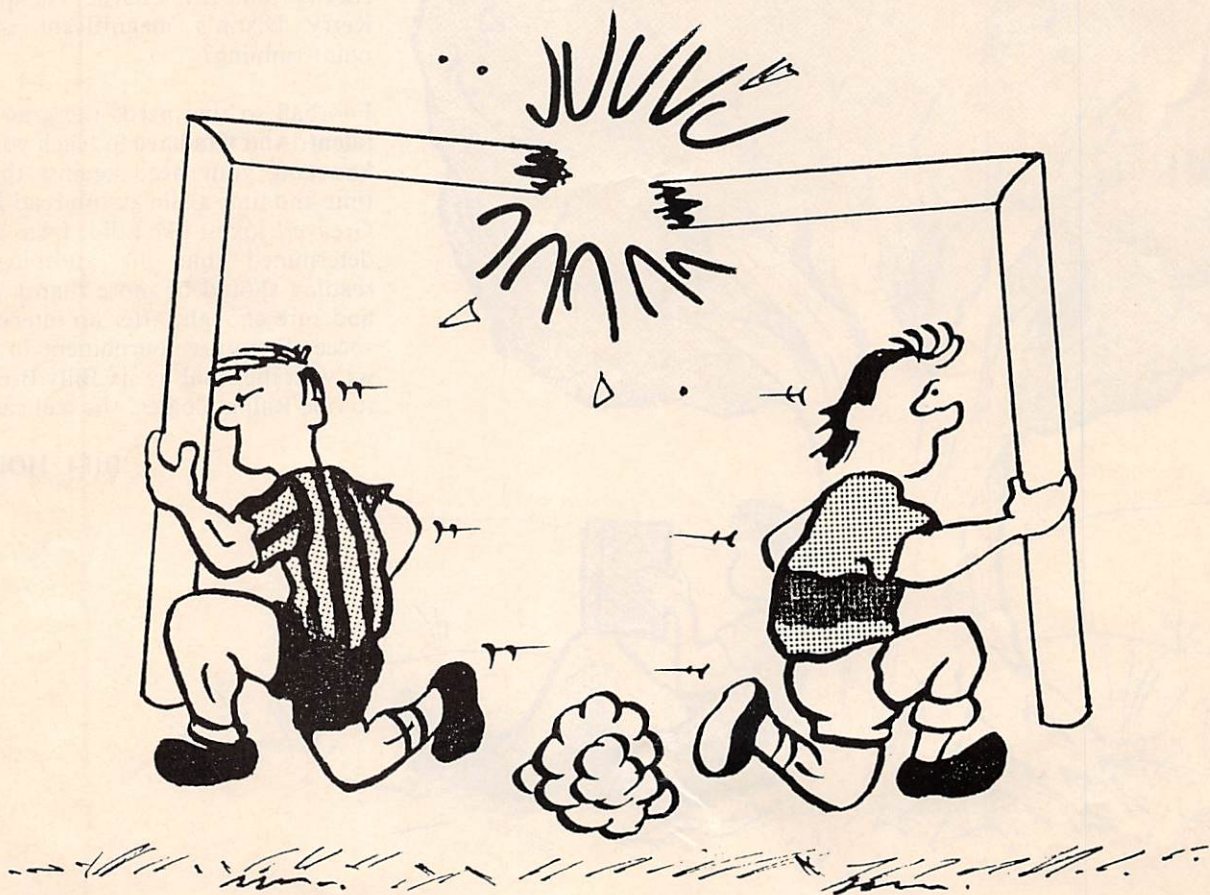
Moving away from consideration of ways in which the rules of football might be gently tinkered with, we ought, lastly, to turn our attention to perhaps the most pressing problem afflicting the game today, i.e. the fact that the referees authority is often scandalously undermined by disrespectful players. A shrill peep on a whistle and a wagging finger are no longer sufficient. The man in black would surely command more respect if he was equipped with a small mobile cannon, which could be fired off whenever an infringement occurred. There are, ad-

mitedly, one or two potential drawbacks which would need to be ironed out. Obviously, the cannonball would land somewhere. Attendances might drop off significantly if spectators deemed it expedient to take out comprehensive life insurance cover before entering a ground. Also, the sport would hardly be well-served by the inevitable trigger-happy ref, triumphally blasting holes in the stadium roof whenever a player stole a yard at a throw-in.

An equally loud, but marginally safer option would be to use an Alpine Horn. A sharp baritone burst on such an instrument in the restricted confines of a football stadium would sound like God coughing, so players could scarcely claim not to have heard it above the noise of the crowd. There would still need to be some new rules drawn up to establish the correct course of action to be taken should a goal-bound shot ricochet off the ref's horn, or, worse still, become lodged inside. It would also be rather cumbersome and unlikely to fit snugly into a breast pocket, although this would at least provide a stiff ingenuity test for the kit manufacturers, who do seem to relish a challenge.

Would any of the, fairly obvious, solutions to football's malaise, outlined above, ever be put in to practice by the eminent administrators who nobly bestride the sport in this country? Possibly not. Yet, on the evidence of recent TV appearances, the evangelistic gleam in Jimmy Hill's eye seems more pronounced than ever before ...

Andy Lyons



AUTOBIOGRAPHY: Soccer Balls?

City Gent — No.22

I CAN'T really remember when I first read a football autobiography. It was just something that came naturally when I was a kid. We all did it: gangs of small boys would cover the back field just reading away until bedtime and our mothers called us in. We didn't have proper books, of course. At home, we could hardly pay the rent, never mind buy books. No, all we had was a few scribbled pages of Bobby Moore's words of wisdom copied from a library book, tied together with string. I'll never forget the day when I did get a real book, though. It was Christmas, and I must have been about eight or nine. Scampering downstairs, I found it under our tiny tree: a paperback copy of Denis Law's life story. I still treasure it. It taught me so much about football autobiographies. The poverty stricken early life, the talent

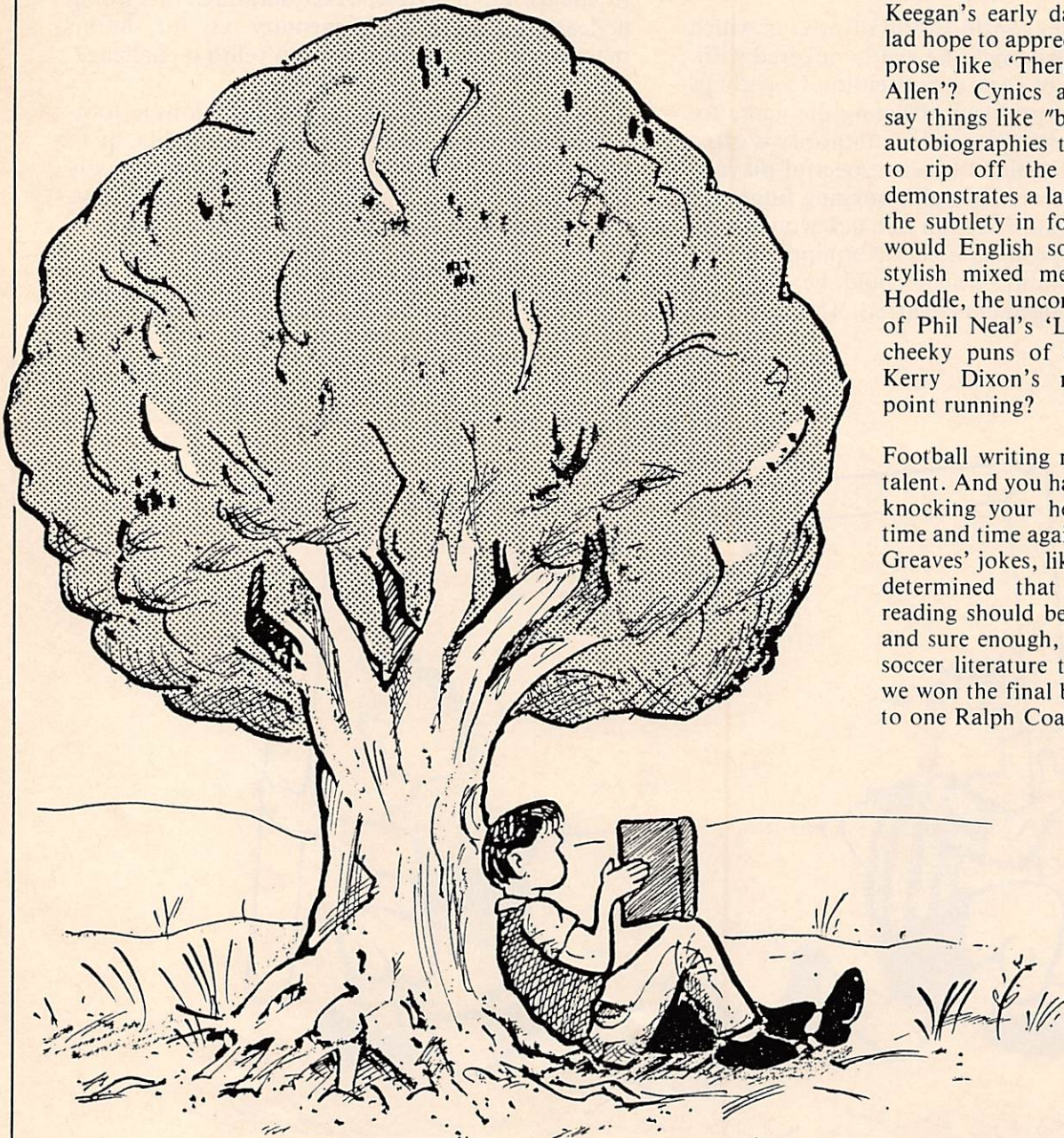
for the game, schoolboy honours, the early signing for a small club, the transfer to the big time, the triumph and heartache of the glory years, retirement, and the comments on the state of the game now (why it's so bad): he had it all.

That was quite some backstreet reading team. Apart from me, two of the gang

now write tabloid football reports and our star speed reader deserted football to write about athletics. We didn't lose a game for three years. But where are those autobiography readers on the backstreets now? The kids have got much more available to them nowadays than we ever had. Lots of them even go off to football matches, instead of learning the basic skills of tackling those chapters of Kevin Keegan's early days. And how can a lad hope to appreciate a masterpiece of prose like 'There's Only One Clive Allen'? Cynics always abound: they say things like "but aren't all football autobiographies the same and written to rip off the fans?". This only demonstrates a lack of appreciation of the subtlety in football today. Where would English soccer be without the stylish mixed metaphor from Glenn Hoddle, the uncompromising grandeur of Phil Neal's 'Life at the Kop', the cheeky puns of Charlie Nicholas or Kerry Dixon's magnificent off-the-point running?

Football writing needs the grass roots talent. And you have to teach yourself, knocking your head against the wall time and time again as you read Jimmy Greaves' jokes, like I did. I was always determined that the autobiography reading should be more than a hobby and sure enough, after an inter-school soccer literature tournament in which we won the final by six Billy Bremners to one Ralph Coates, the call came.

BILL HODSON



REALLY ANNOYING — PEOPLE YOU MEET AT FOOTBALL. No. 2

Brian — No.8

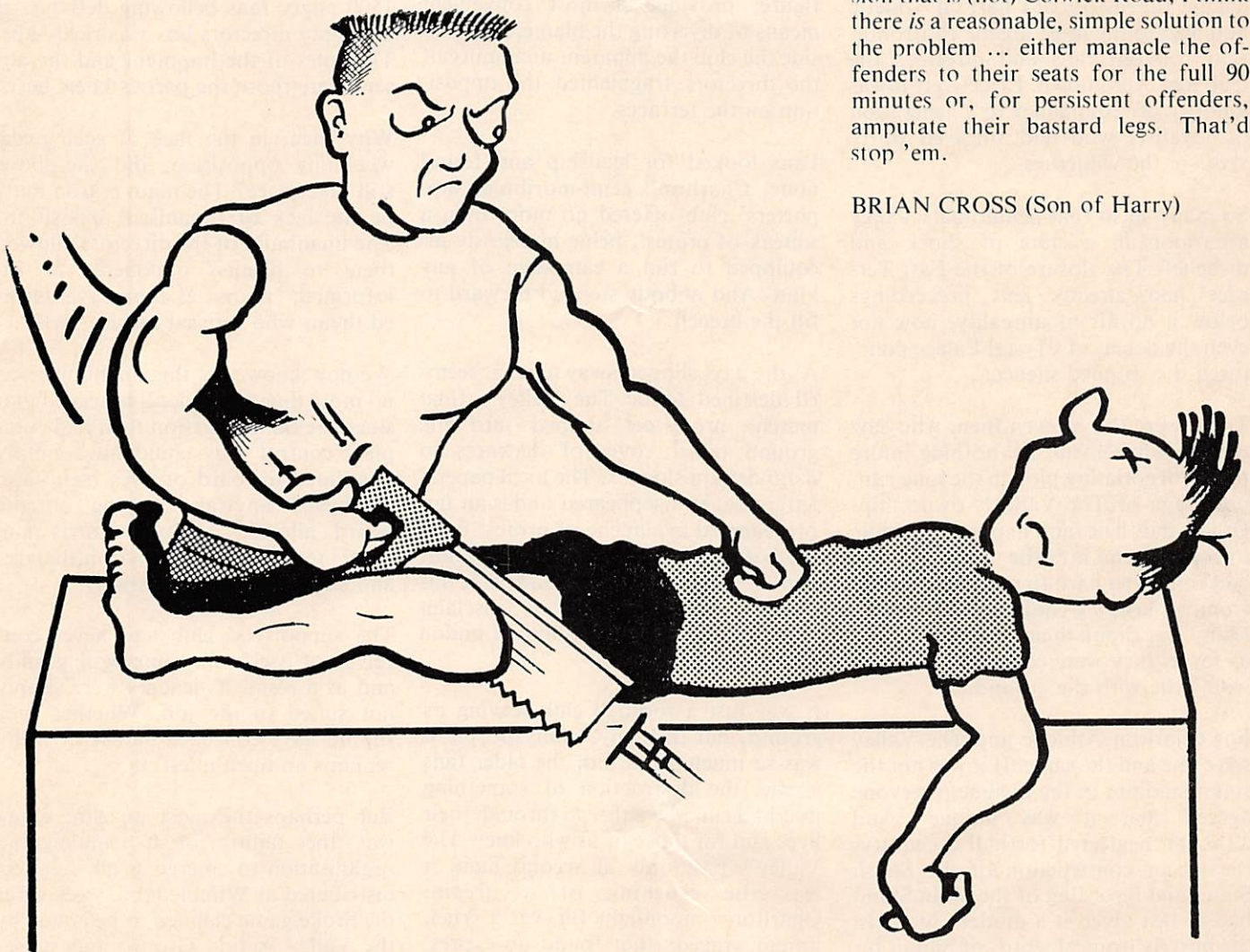
PICTURE the scene ... A finely poised cup game, a local derby, a half-decent attendance and atmosphere, a cracking game with quarter of an hour to go with the real possibility of extra time. You're there? Of course, we're talking about the Leicester replay. Real Roy of the Rovers stuff and the whole crowd is absorbed in the game, standing, nervously hopping from foot to foot, glancing at watches, perched on the edge of seats, nails bitten to a quick, sweaty palms, unable to tear themselves away from the action for a second.

Erm, no actually. The truth of the matter is that with 15 tense minutes left around half the people in the seats decide it's time to go home. Why? How? It's outrageous!! Most of the remaining seaties probably wouldn't give a toss if the early risers slipped out quickly and quietly, but it doesn't work like that. Of course, as either side launches an attack our friends decide to hang on for just a few more seconds and loiter at the front of the stand, enjoying a great view of the action and making sure the full-timers can see sod-all. Next, our chums remember they have to arrange their social diaries for the coming week, remain at the front of the seats, turn to face the throng and yell, "Hey Bob, see you in the Bell Friday night" etc. etc. ad nauseum. Mean-

while, PC Plod watches, smiling, and takes no real interest until he threatens the desperate wretch who's just missed a Tricky moment and screams at matey to f*** off home.

This is a problem in both stands, but is made 100% worse in the Upper Tier of the Exec because all the exits are at the very front, and also have a convenient barrier for this type of part-timer to perch over for a few extra seconds. An old problem, it always seems to have happened at Forest more than at any other ground, and some uncannily tolerant folk will say it's just one of those things and that anyone's got the right to leave when they like. Personally, as an intolerant bastard who expects a decent view on the few occasions I forsake the seething cauldron of passion that is (not) Colwick Road, I think there *is* a reasonable, simple solution to the problem ... either manacle the offenders to their seats for the full 90 minutes or, for persistent offenders, amputate their bastard legs. That'd stop 'em.

BRIAN CROSS (Son of Harry)



Battle For The Valley

Voice of the Valley — No.11

I REMEMBER the afternoon it all began. Walking down the hill from Charlton Park I caught just a snippet of a puzzling conversation:

"How long do you give them? I reckon two years."

It seemed an unduly pessimistic view. Charlton had made the best start to a Second Division campaign in the memory of most supporters, had suddenly acquired a team worthy of the club's traditions and already the whispers were of promotion. Surely I had misunderstood what I had overheard?

I turned down Harvey Gardens, past the bank of mostly closed turnstiles and entered the ground by the main entrance. And then it happened. There I was given the piece of paper that would change the history of Charlton Athletic and lead to the most hostile confrontation between fans and directors the club had ever known. Effectively it was a notice of redundancy to a generation of loyalists who had survived thirty years in the wilderness.

So many spent that penultimate Valley afternoon in a state of shock and disbelief. The closure of the East Terrace had already lent proceedings below it an air of unreality, now not even the defeat of Crystal Palace punctured the stunned silence.

There were those, even then, who saw the announcement as nothing more than a negotiating ploy in the long running saga of The Valley's ownership. Others put their faith in protest, unable to comprehend how the same men who had fought so hard to reprieve the club from bankruptcy could now destroy it. Many just shook their heads in disgust, as far as they were concerned the club would die with the ground.

For Charlton Athletic and The Valley were one and the same. If it was not the finest stadium in the League, everyone agreed that it was unique. And although neglected for half a century, the recent construction of the South Stand and reroofing of the Main Stand had at last given it a modern look. In the bitterly ironical words of Simon In-

glis, written in 1983, it had seemed that "at least The Valley now had a future".

Now that future was thrown into the gravest doubt, in the confusion much venom was thrown at Michael Gliksten, most of it unjustified. For although his family had to shoulder the blame for the inactivity of five decades, it was simply untrue to say that he had forced the club out. Charlton claimed that two acres behind the West Stand reclaimed by the former chairman as part of the deal that saved the club in 1984, combined with the GLC's closure of the East Terrace, made it impossible to continue. But subsequent development plans put forward by the club proved the redundancy of the Gliksten land.

As the arguments raged back and forth Michael Gliksten, never a popular figure, provided a most convenient means of diverting the blame, while inside the club the apparent unanimity of the directors fragmented the opposition on the terraces.

Fans looked for leadership and found none. Charlton's semi-moribund supporters' club offered no more than a squeak of protest, being hopelessly ill-equipped to run a campaign of any kind. And nobody stepped forward to fill the breach.

As the days slipped away to what seemed destined to be The Valley's final match, protestors slipped into the ground under cover of darkness to daub defiant slogans. The local papers' letters pages disappeared under an unprecedented avalanche of protest from the normally complacent Charlton fans and even Michael Gliksten broke his eternal oath of silence to disclaim responsibility in the South London Press.

It was just a football club leaving its ground, but to many, many people it was so much more. For the older fans it was the destruction of something that had run like a thread through their lives and for those of us who knew The Valley's past only at second hand it was the crushing of a dream. Charlton's moonlight flit was a cruel, human tragedy that found no expres-

sion in the accountants' figures.

And that last day all the frustration that had accumulated down the years welled up into a mighty explosion that shook even those who understood the depth of feeling. Pitch invasions at half-time, and before and after the game, were the most obvious demonstration of the passion aroused, but in the stand bitter middle-aged and elderly men and women spat their personal message of contempt at the directors.

The half-time invasion, only half-heartedly repelled by police, brought a standing ovation from people for whom hooliganism was something that happened on television. As fans repeatedly advised John Fryer precisely where he could stick his Selhurst Park, the participants in Charlton's almost incidental 2-0 win played out one of the most nondescript games The Valley had ever known. For on that day even the team knew that the crowd was there to vent their fury rather than cheer them to victory.

The final whistle saw the biggest and longest protest that the ground had ever known. Yet the sight of around 1500 angry fans bellowing defiance at an empty directors box was richly apt. The roles of the impotent and the absent were those the parties knew best.

Why then, in the face of such overwhelming opposition, did the move still take place? The main reason must be the lack of organised opposition. The unanimity of the directors allowed them to dismiss opponents as ill-informed; "idiots" as John Fryer termed them, who refused to face facts.

We now know that this unanimity was no more than a facade. It is argued that since the Sunley faction then had complete control they could have simply appointed a board of "yes men" and proceeded anyway. Staying on the board allowed Michael Norris and others to retain a position of influence, and subsequently take power.

The supporters' club had never conceived of itself as a campaigning body and as a result its leaders were simply not suited to the job. Whether they should have conceded defeat so easily remains an open question.

But perhaps the most puzzling thing was the failure of a campaigning organisation to emerge at all. Leaflets distributed at Wimbledon a week after the Stoke game claimed to be issued by the Valley Action Group, and subse-



Sunday 2nd April 1989 — The Valley Returns to life!
(photograph courtesy of The Valiants Viewpoint No.14)

quently stickers bearing the legend "Our Home is The Valley" appeared locally, but those responsible kept a low profile.

In fact Voice of The Valley made a brief and abortive appearance when Charlton staged their first match at Selhurst Park, as a single photocopied sheet for which this writer reluctantly admits responsibility, but nobody took the initiative to front a public campaign.

The reason was probably a combination of apathy, a belief that nothing could be done anyway, and perhaps also a lingering faith in men who had saved Charlton once and had already invested heavily in players. Certainly it wasn't that people didn't care.

In those first months at Selhurst the weakness of the case for playing there was exposed for all to see. Tiny crowds, some only just passing the 3,000 mark, arrived to see a team which was making a serious challenge for promotion to the First Division.

Promotion bought off the immediate discontent and brought in some of the resisting punters, but from the opening First Division games it was clear that it would not be enough. Only 8,500 saw Charlton's first top flight match in 29 years and many gates failed to reach the 6,000 mark.

So, belatedly, the campaign began, with the Mercury petition and the hijacking of the 1986 CASC AGM by more than 1,000 demonstrators. It was March 1988 by the time it delivered up results, in the shape of the purchase of The Valley, and six months more before the directors met fans at Greenwich at the behest of this magazine.

Another wave of reluctant fans had arrived at Selhurst that spring and somehow we were still in the First Division, but as the public meeting made clear a return to The Valley was still not on the agenda, with a new ground the board's favoured choice.

On the terraces some were prepared to settle for any return to Greenwich and the prospect of a shorter trip to games. But the argument was never really about the journey, horrendous though it was. It was about identity, tradition, familiarity.

Others could see the advantages of a modern, conveniently situated stadium, but the many sites rumoured to be available were each in turn eliminated. Finally, and almost in spite of themselves, the directors have found the means to make it The Valley and whatever the cost there is no doubt this is what most fans want.

In the end it is the protestors who have carried the argument. For although The Valley to which we shall return will require much work, a lot of it would

have been unnecessary in 1985. If the fact that the ground was owned by Michael Gliksten was then an obstacle, it did not, ultimately, prove to be an insuperable one. On the evidence available those who made the near fatal decision to go, stand convicted, at the very least, of a failure of will.

The real damage wrought on our club in these years will take a long while to repair, for we have lost many loyal supporters, some of them to Millwall, others to the game altogether. Many will return, but some will not. Even worse we forfeited the surge that would have accompanied our return to the First Division.

Yet adversity did yield benefits. The passion that the attempt to abandon The Valley brought out is a valuable resource upon which the club should build. And, at last, it seems we have a board of directors led by men who genuinely share the aspirations of the supporters and are prepared to commit the means to achieving them.

There are no certainties in football and certainly none as far as Charlton Athletic are concerned. But surely the future for our club must now be brighter than the past. It is up to us, all of us, to see that this opportunity is not lost.

I began this article by remembering how I heard the news back in 1985

because although we all shared the misery, it has been in many ways a very personal experience. Habits had to be abandoned and formed again. Casual acquaintances that had endured all that the Second Division could throw at them were destroyed forever. We all experienced those private moments of regret.

But just occasionally we came together in expressing our grief. Time and time again my mind goes back to that angry September afternoon at The Valley, when I stood helpless and hopeless among the throng in front of the Main Stand. Now everyone who shared that moment can feel a little proud. It took a long while, but in the end we got the result we wanted.

We won, boys. We bloody won.

RICK EVERITT

HOW THE BATTLE WAS FOUGHT

December 1980: GLC threaten to slash Valley capacity from 67,000 to 13,000. Eventually a limit of 20,000 is agreed after Charlton promise to carry out essential safety work.

June 1982: Mark Hulyer buys the club from Michael Gliksten, but not The Valley. An annual rent of £150,000 is agreed.

February 1984: Charlton are wound up in the High Court after penalty clause in Valley lease for non-payment of rent comes into operation.

March 1984: Sunley Holdings form a new company. Charlton '84, but fail to secure the freehold of The Valley. A rent of £70,000 is agreed with Gliksten.

July 1985: The GLC closes the East Terrace due to flaking concrete and serious defects in the crash barriers. Charlton fail to overturn the ruling in court.

September 3rd 1985: A leak to the South London Press reveals that Gliksten is reclaiming two acres of land behind the main stand for redevelopment.

September 7th 1985: Charlton distribute the notorious "Message To Our Supporters" at the home match with Crystal Palace. A gleeful Ron Noades warns fans not to obstruct the move to Selhurst.

September 21st 1985: Charlton fans protest in vain at The Valley's final game. Wreaths are laid in the centre circle and the second-half is delayed as supporters protest in the middle of the pitch.

May 1986: Charlton are promoted back to the First Division after 29 years and John Fryer insists the club will "never, never return" to The Valley.

October 2nd 1986: Abysmal attendances at Charlton's First Division matches prompt the Mercury to print a back page petition demanding a return home. The paper is besieged.

October 20th 1986: More than a thousand demonstrators take over the CASC AGM to demand a return to The Valley. Peter Cordwell hands over the 15,000 signature petition to Michael Norris, who claims average attendances will rise to 11,000 before end of the season.

November 1986: Charlton fans, directors and Greenwich Council meet at Woolwich. The club say that it was always their intention to return to the borough and promise a further meeting in January to discuss progress.

January 1987: The club decline to meet supporters again as promised on the grounds that there is nothing to report. The long silence begins.

January 1988: Rick Everitt launches Voice of The Valley and calls the boycott. Fans flock to Sportspages bookshop in the West End to buy the first issue, which is reprinted after just ten days on sale.

February 1988: Steve Dixon joins Voice of The Valley and helps found the Valley Supporters' Club.

March 1988: News leaks that two directors, Michael Norris and Roger Alwen, have bought back The Valley. The boycott is called off. Celebrations end in confusion as the club announce that they do not necessarily intend to return there, but to a site at the Blackwall Peninsular.

June 1988: It is announced that Mike Norris and Roger Alwen now own the club. CASC, Voice of The Valley and the directors meet in London and agree that the VSC will be disbanded as a gesture of goodwill. Editors decline request to close Voice of The Valley. Directors agree to public meeting.

September 1988: Public meeting is a major success despite poor publicity and the absence of fresh news. Fans plead for The Valley, but Norris refuses to say whether it is possible to return there. He hopes to report back before Christmas.

November 1988: Richard Collins confirms speculation about the Thames Poly sports ground at Eltham being a possible site and tells the Kentish Times to expect an announcement before Christmas. Then he bans the paper for printing what he told them.

January 1989: Richard Collins is quoted in The Mail On Sunday as saying that the new ground will be a stone's throw from The Valley. An announcement is expected within a fortnight.

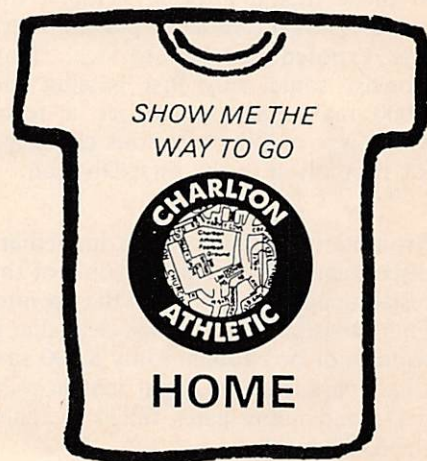
February 1989: An apology about the lack of news finally appears in the programme. It gives no details. Speculation grows about the involvement of ex-boxing promoter Frank Warren and a Morning Star story links Charlton with a crazy move across the Thames to Newham.

March 7th 1989: Roger Alwen unexpectedly succeeds Richard Collins as chairman, instead of Mike Norris as had been anticipated. Alwen is the fifth chairman in seven years. John Sunley is listed in the programme as a director for the first time.

March 16th 1989: Mercury reports that Charlton are set to announce plans to return to The Valley. Club could be back by middle of 1989-90 according to Peter Cordwell's story.

March 23rd 1989: Fans descend on Woolwich Town Hall to hear the news.

April 2nd 1989: Hundreds of fans descend on the Valley to begin the 'clean-up'.



BILL OF WRONGS

Wise Men Say — No.8

NOT that we admit to watching peak-time television, you understand, although the occasional Channel 4 feature on Albanian nose-flutes does keep us out of licensed premises once in a while. When we stayed in for an educationally uplifting evening recently we stumbled across what is purportedly a true-to-life serial about the police force.

SUBTLE

Perhaps the episode of "The Bill" we saw was actually a highly innovative and subtle satire on public perceptions of football supporters ... or perhaps not. Taking it at face value, the script seemed to have been written by Colin Moynihan under the influence of repeated showings of West Side Story. The 'plot' was based on an undercover police officer who had infiltrated a gang of sophisticated football hooligans (you know, the ones you see every Saturday in such vast numbers).

One of these thugs, who had come down from Manchester specially (presumably as part of the plot and not due to the fact he couldn't get a part in Coronation Street) recounted tales of derring-do in the pub: *"Brilliant last time at Old Trafford. We got in amongst them at the Stretford End — beautiful. 3.25 some of our proles started up the diversion. 3.30 absolute mayhem — we done about 20 of them before they realised what was happening, then out and away. Poor old Plod was nowhere to be seen — it was so clinical, so clean — the SAS couldn't have done any better"*. Well, they could probably have pointed out what a load of crap this was, however thousands of parents promptly made a mental note *never* to allow their offspring anywhere near such an obviously dangerous place.

Just in case anyone was in any doubt on this aspect, we then had a conversation between police officers before the game: *"Tragic really innit ... us lot here. Fences, dogs, barbed wire, TSG, all for a football match"*. And guess what's coming next ... yes the Good Old Days!

"Must have been great back in the 50's though. Packed crowds everywhere, people out just to enjoy the game, no aggro. There were two coppers on duty instead of an army ... Do you know what really gets me? That half of them

aren't interested in the game. I mean, I wouldn't mind if they were football fanatics or morons, but they're not. It's just organised violence for fun". Words fail us.

At least it could be argued that this is a realistic presentation of police attitudes, though we aren't too sure about the pre-match briefing "... and we want a proper search of each likely lad — make sure you look down their necks". In case anyone thought that it was now an offence to enter a ground without having washed thoroughly, the point of this instruction was revealed when a 'likely lad' was searched and found to be sporting an enormous Stanley knife on a bit of string round his neck.

GATECRASH

He wasn't even part of the gang of villains, just presented as an 'ordinary' supporter like you or me. The gang itself had by this time had its pre-match briefing, cleverly cut with that of the police, and had heard about the 'battle-plan' for the afternoon. The leader revealed, with the aid of a large-scale map, that *"Word has reached me that a large band of scum are planning to detain here, trek south masquerading as home supporters and gatecrash the party. The game as far as we are concerned is simple — we intercept the slags and cut 'em up!"* At this point you almost expected the rest of the gang to burst into a chorus of Officer Krupke, but mercifully they contented themselves with a cheer.

The 'slags' who had taken such care over their plan to quietly infiltrate the home supporters were found to be loudly chanting 'Here we go' as they rampaged through the streets kicking cans and jumping on cars: all with scarves round their wrists and bobble hats. Some sported Millets anoraks, and one spotty youth did bear a striking resemblance to Boy George.

We discover at this point that the leader can whistle as well as any lousy Puerto Rican when he summons his trusty lookout, and they all line up on the street waiting for their opponents to come round the corner of the tenement (sorry, alley). A scuffle and chase ensues which, of course, has to involve innocent bystanders peacefully going about their business, though they seem resigned to the fact that a football match in the vicinity inevitably means a

fight between a group of trainspotters and refugees from 1950's Manhattan.

The rest of the 'plot' is predictable: while on the run from the police (summoned by our undercover hero) the gang realise that it is he who has betrayed them and pursue him through the streets. He escapes, and in the closing scene he sinks back into a chair to the sound of the radio report *"as an added bonus, United Chairman Sir John Kilsborough's hopes for a trouble-free Saturday came true: although there were one or two arrests at the turnstiles the match passed without incident"*. Our hero shuts his eyes in disbelief, and presumably only shortage of time precluded a burst of *"I've just met a van named Maria"*.

By this time we were almost eager to turn over and watch Thatcher slaving about the Government's record on the environment for light relief, but discretion prevailed and we switched off and pondered about the thought-processes behind this piece of 'drama' on peak-time television.

Now we're not suggesting that hooliganism shouldn't be a valid subject for a TV series about the police, nor do we think that a programme about supporters going peacefully to and from the match without incident would make riveting viewing. Is it really just coincidence though that both BBC and ITV featured programmes on this subject within a few days, given the current attempts to pass the Football Supporters Bill through Parliament? Stranger things have happened, and what are we to make of scripts including such gems as: *"This poxy closed circuit television's ruining the in-ground entertainment, innit? ... We'll find a way round that before long"*.

DRIVEL

We've said it before, but it needs to be repeated that this constant drip-feed to the public at large of football matches as battlegrounds inhabited solely by mobs of murderous thugs bent on violence is pernicious. We may all agree that this is palpable nonsense, but how many people do you know who don't go to football matches but have this perception? Sheer drivel it may be, but the repeated innuendo gets through and needs to be answered.

In this case, anyone who saw the programme in question and agrees with us *can* do something. The address to write to is: THE IBA, 70 BROMPTON STREET, LONDON SW3 1EY. Remember — if this has an effect on ordinary members of the public, what will it do to MPs?

SATURDAY, February 25th, 1967, 2.00 p.m. Highgate United's tiny football ground was beginning to fill. The first of the all-ticket crowd were arriving. For today Highgate were acting as host to Amateur Cup favourites Enfield in the quarter-final of the competition, officials had been planning for weeks to ensure that the greatest day in the club's history went off without a hitch. A temporary stand had been erected, covered with canvas, scaffold terracing stood along the side of the small pitch, the trees on all sides of the flat field, that was Highgate,

Highgate, regulars and supporters for the day, were round the pitch on the other three sides. As the players ran through the space in the crowd they were given a terrific welcome. Even among only 3,000 people the "Cup-tie atmosphere" had been generated. Enfield in their blue and white, Highgate in their red, lined up for the kick-off. The kick-off for the greatest match in the local club's history. Instead of ordinary league matches in front of a couple of hundred, here they were, just two matches from Wembley, playing

breathing. His brother, others of the home team and Enfield's Ray Hill were the worst affected, although all but the first three recovered on the pitch.

Everywhere I looked there were women crying, some were hysterical, others just silent, staring. In the distance came the sound of an ambulance siren. After a few moments it burst through the gates and onto the pitch. One of the Taylors was carried past me on a stretcher, and still the rain poured down, never had I seen rain like it. The am-

HIGHGATE CUP HORROR

bent over in a gale force wind. I arrived in one of seven coaches that had made the journey from North London, together with numerous cars and vans. The first view of the ground was one of a small, young club trying to live with the giants of the amateur football field and determined to make a success of their first attempt.

The coaches, having found their way along the narrow winding, country lanes, unloaded their eager cargo. The sun was bright, the sky clear, the wind strong. A small club-house was on the left as we went through the gate, the pitch was a hundred yards further on past a large area set aside for cars. In every direction there were fields, trees and hedges, a typical peaceful country scene.

The solitary programme seller was desperately overworked as the Enfield supporters invaded the silence. The wind made it almost impossible to read the programme one had bought, we could only fold them and read on the way home. Two large flags went at the head of the group, there were a few good natured comments from the locals as we walked round the pitch. More Birmingham folk began to arrive as the kick-off approached. As well as large red and white Highgate banners they brought with them rattles and scarves of Birmingham City, Aston Villa and West Bromwich Albion, an idea of how much enthusiasm this match had generated in the Midlands.

2.55 p.m. The two teams appeared from the far off club house and made for the pitch. The Enfield supporters had settled behind one goal. Those of

one of the finest sides in the game. The crowd were determined to enjoy themselves. They didn't have to try very hard. Nobody noticed heavy black clouds come over the horizon and head for the ground carried on the wind. The locals were not going to worry about the weather, their team was doing very well. The clouds were above us and at about 3.10 p.m. rain started to fall, light at first, then heavier and heavier. Enfield scored, but it didn't dampen the crowd's enthusiasm, the match lasted for a full ninety minutes, plenty of time to go, or so they thought.

Nearly half an hour gone now, and Enfield attacked down the right, the ball was collected by Highgate's Tony Alden who pushed it upfield to a team mate. It never reached him. As it left Alden's foot the storm was at its height, then without warning there was a terrifying crash of thunder, a dazzling 'sword' of lightning burnt its way into the earth, a foot from Alden. In a second it had gone, and Alden fell backwards as if pole-axed, steam rising from his body. Other players had fallen, rolling over and over in the mud, holding their ears in agony. One of the Enfield players, someway from the flash, fell forward, his face in his hands, too overcome with shock to do anything. When what had happened sank in, every one acted swiftly, the two trainers were on the pitch, together with a large part of the crowd, desperate to do something useful, others, not believing in the famous saying, ran for the already over-crowded club house. The kiss of life was given to Alden, whose heart had stopped as had his breathing, and to one of the Taylor brothers who had also stopped

balance turned and made for the gate, but was slowed by selfish motorists trying to get their bogged-down vehicles home. Police made an opening and it was gone. Still the rain came, still the people wept, Highgate's "day to remember" was over.

A Highgate official waved our coaches off 'at nearly 5.00 p.m., almost three hours after our arrival. There was none of the usual singing and joking as we headed for the M1, everyone listened to radios for news of the three players. The sports programme came on. "Here are the five o'clock headlines" said the announcer, "many footballers struck by lightning near Birmingham, Manchester United win ..." How insufficient this seemed for what we had seen. After the headlines, came the details. Both the Taylor brothers had been allowed home but Tony Alden was "desperately ill". That was what all the news broadcasts said right through the evening, and nothing was mentioned on the Sunday morning, could this mean that he had pulled through and was living independent of the heart-lung machine he had been relying on? The final broadcast for us was the ten to six BBC news. The announcer said "Tony Alden, one of the four Highgate United footballers struck by lightning yesterday, died today in Solihull hospital. He was twenty three".

1967 will be remembered for many things by many people, the Middle East and Vietnam Wars, Sir Francis Chichester, Devaluation or a host of other happenings. For my part that year will always be to me the view of that red-shirted footballer lying on Highgate's pitch, his body shrouded in steam.

JOHN ANTHONY

FOOTBALL feeds fantasy and the imagination. Growing up is full of both — and if you're lucky in football and life, the gap between them will be very narrow at times. Let me explain.

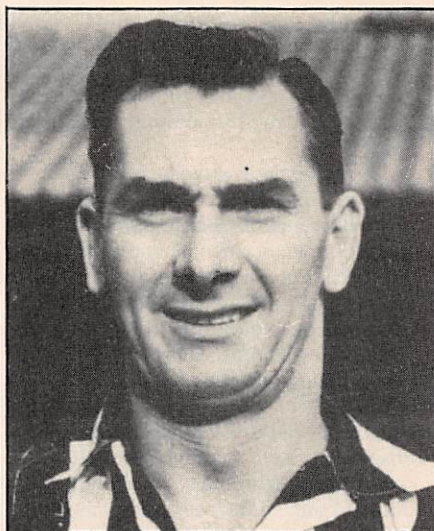
During 1988 a former English footballer died. The news of his death brought on a slight feeling of sadness. I was surprised. Why was this man whom I'd never met significant? To understand the feeling I began to wander back on the football Tardis. It's only thirty years or so. I was still at primary school, Eisenhower was President of the United States. There were reported sightings of Bill Haley's Comets; yet there was still an air raid shelter in the school playground.

In our house we were pretty keen on all kinds of sport. Our appetite for soccer was whetted by our Dad's tales of Peter Doherty who was from his home town and who by this stage had become Northern Ireland manager. Our staple diet was Raymond Glendenning on the BBC Light Programme and Ronald Rosser on the local radio plus whatever the local papers and the Daily Express had to offer. Our sightings of matches were confined to the Pathe News at the cinema, or the odd game on the rare TV's of our more privileged friends or relatives. Roy of the Rovers dominated the picture comics but the real fights in our house were for The Wizard, a word story comic which came out every Monday.

Out of its pages strode sporting giants like lorry driver Battling Briggs, who in his spare time became Wimbledon champion, and 'Limp Along Leslie', who despite having one leg shorter than the other, was able to combine life as a hill-farmer and champion sheep dog trainer with a creative John Gilestype role as a scheming inside forward at First Division level. Admittedly, we had worse handicaps, but we could dream. No matter how mundane the match in school or street it could always be lifted in the imagination. In real life there were fleeting glimpses of giants like John Charles, Stanley Matthews and Tom Finney. We had our own Irish heroes like Blanchflower, McIlroy and Tully, and local gods like Jimmy Jones, Tommy Dickson, Kevin McGarry and Derek Dougan.

Into this scene suddenly walked Jackie Milburn — 'wor Jackie' — centre forward for Newcastle United and England — famous for his Cup Final appearances with the 'Magies' in the early fifties and late of a winning appearance in the 1955 final against Manchester City. A name to be spoken with some awe.

MEMORIES OF MILBURN



*The Wee Red Vol. 2
— No.4*

I can't remember if at that stage I had actually seen on the Pathe News the marvellous goal that he scored in a previous Cup Final when he stunningly struck a back-heeled pass from Ernie Taylor to the net, though well outside the penalty area. Whatever, it was certainly the sort of vision I had of him as a player. The shock news was that he had signed for Linfield. It was as if Lineker were to return from Barcelona next season to play for Glentoran. Other English internationals had come to play in this part of the world but usually at the end of their careers. We didn't see these English gods as totally indestructible. After all, an English League team brimming with internationals was hammered by the Irish League at Windsor Park and an English international team containing Matthews had been held to a draw at the same venue by an Irish side including Jimmy Jones of Glenavon at centre forward. However, this import was more worrying to everyone but Linfield supporters.

Joining the Blues didn't endear him to the part of Belfast where I lived. Many in that area supported a classy Glenavon team which promised much success. Together with the local Distillery supporters they tried to reassure themselves by casting doubt on Milburn's reputation and fitness — "He must be finished", or "His knees have gone". I can't remember exactly his first match but after seeing him a couple of times he certainly didn't appear finished.

He seemed as quick as Carl Lewis, as agile as Willie Banks, as two-footed and explosive as Bobby Charlton, and he led the line like Alfredo di Stefano. The Glenavon men hopefully offered the opinion that the local defenders were taking it easy early on to lull him into a false sense of security. Well they must have taken a permanent rest as he went from strength to strength. The Glenavon and Distillery supporters were eventually won over. The legend was alive and well and touchable every Saturday.

I was young enough not to understand totally the sectarian nature of Linfield and old enough to stay away from a certain section of their supporters. In the company of an older brother we sought Milburn out at Windsor, Grosvenor, Solitude and Seaview. There were a couple of exhilarating years. I can't tell you statistics of his career at Linfield. I've never looked them up and I don't think I ever will. However, I can recall clear cameo pictures of moments from those matches. A day at Solitude when he led the line for the Irish League against the League of Ireland, and a temperamental genius of a left winger from Ards, Alec Boyd, was inspired by Milburn's presence. Together they pulverised the opposition. Of Rea, the Glenavon goalkeeper straining every part of his body to keep him at bay; of his prompting and continual cajoling of two young wingers at Linfield, Stewart and Ferguson — he talked them down the wing and eventually into international football; of the style of him running onto the field; of the way he chased the ball which was going beyond to the byline and with a two-footed slide tackle, pulled it back, stood up and moved off in a different direction with the ball under control. And of goals, and more goals ...

It doesn't matter if you don't agree when I call him the greatest centre forward. He came as a football missionary among us, and nearly united us on the terraces. He transcended the sectarianism for a period. Football was not the same after he left the local scene ... but for the better. He had enriched football for those who played around him and for those who watched him. He was an example as a sportsman and he showed what sport should be.

Memory can be deceiving. Is my memory deceiving me? Was this all a fantasy? Does it matter?

If you weren't around in those days, ask yourself this question — have you seen your Jackie Milburn? If you haven't — keep looking. He's out there.

'TIMELORD'

Surveying 1

NOTE:

The final two articles are reproduced precisely as they appeared in the Fanzines:

**WHEN
SATURDAY
COMES**

and

OFF THE BALL

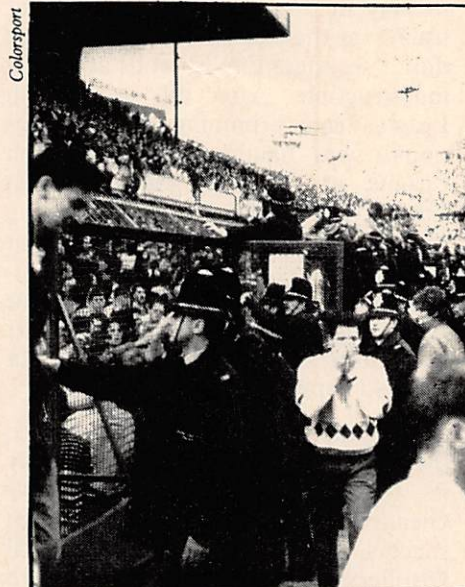
They sum up the commitment of Fanzines to the game of Football and highlight the campaigning role that fanzines also assume.

Like you, we have read a hell of a lot about Hillsborough over the last couple of weeks. We quickly reached saturation point, partly because there are a limited number of ways in which the same points can be made without becoming repetitious and partly because so many stupid things have been said.

One thing deserves to be re-iterated, however. The deaths of ninety people at a football ground in Sheffield were not just another tragic accident. Instead, they were a predictable consequence of the fact that the people who run English football have stumbled from one crisis to another without evolving a coherent, consistent, policy to deal with any specific problem.

The rise to public prominence of the FSA and the spread of the independent magazines, has encouraged the belief that supporters might finally get the opportunity to wield some influence on the way football is administered in this country. An incident such as this demonstrates both the urgent need for such a development and the amount of work that still needs to be done.

Slow progress is being made but nothing has really changed. The individuals who run football clubs with, in many cases, breathtaking incompetence, continue to manifest total disdain for football fans. Periodically, the cast-list is shaken up — new additions to the familiar clutch of pompous businessmen seeking personal aggrandisement — but the attitudes are as entrenched as ever. The same policemen adopt the same aggressive attitude to football, insisting that it should be treated as a public order problem rather than a form of entertainment. The same prejudice is attached to all football fans, deemed to be passive accomplices to the sociopathic minority.



The police see us as a mass entity, fuelled by drink and a single-minded resolve to wreak havoc by destroying property and attacking one another with murderous intent. Containment and damage limitation is at the core of the police strategy. Fans are treated with the utmost disrespect. We are herded, cajoled, pushed, and coralled into cramped spaces, and expected to submit passively to every new indignity.



The implication is that 'normal' people need to be protected from the football fan. But we *are* normal people. 'The Football Fan' is not an easily defined social stereotype, whatever the tabloid cartoonists may choose to believe. All manner of people go to football matches. A few of them are intent on unleashing aggressive instincts which are also manifested in wine bars on a Saturday night or in tourist hotels on the Costa Del Sol. Thuggish behaviour is rarely reported in any detail when it can't be directly linked to a football match.

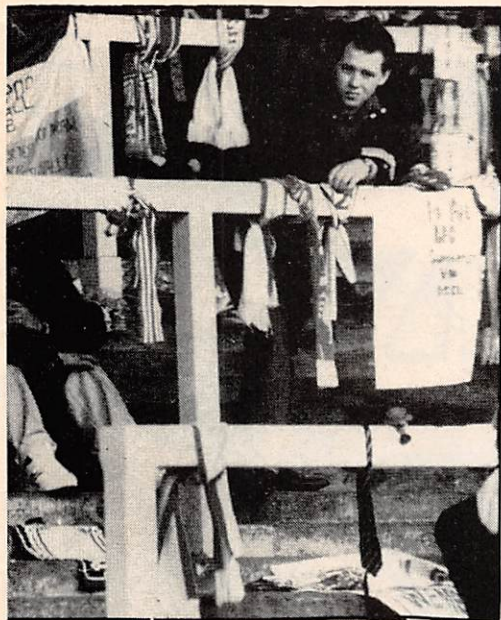
Football is being made the scapegoat for a society brutalised over the last decade. Yet, a proportion of law officers are afflicted with the same oafish sensibility which is exhibited by a minority of fans. Since this magazine first appeared, we have regularly received letters complaining about specific police actions. The correspondence has come from a broad spectrum of our readership and builds up into a weighty indictment of general policing policy at football matches over the last three years. A large proportion of the Liverpool supporters who angrily spoke out against the police tactics at Hillsborough will have had previous bad experiences which served to further fuel their sense of grievance.

Fans and the police have developed a prejudiced view of one another which has served only to create barriers which are of as much significance as the perimeter fencing.

Then there are the administrators. Their attitude is one of utter incomprehension and cowardice. They don't stick up for football supporters because they basically neither understand nor like them. The FA have abdicated any responsibility for the events of Hillsborough in typical fashion. Faced with crisis and degeneration, they have failed to take positive steps to resuscitate the game. They have obstructed change where it was proposed by the powerless (the fans) but prostrated themselves before a political establishment which would be quite happy to see the game destroyed.

Complaints about safety and comfort were ignored because they were being made by supporters. Official action will be taken now, because the same points previously

'he Damage



raised by fans are now being made by the government and the media. Their stupidity and cowardice over a long period of time allowed Hillsborough to happen.

Symptomatic of their paralysis is the frequency with which a certain phrase crops up in their public pronouncements. We are informed, with wearying regularity, that football needs to 'put its house in order'. This is, of course, a laughably imprecise phrase, intended to imply a commitment to resolute action. Needless to say, it means absolutely nothing.

Clubs have to accept a proportion of the blame. They own the fences and turnstiles that helped to cause the disaster. Sheffield Wednesday officials seemed to believe that, in an emergency, it would be possible to evacuate a large number of people through a tiny gate in the perimeter fencing. They and their colleagues at other League grounds across the country insult loyal, put-upon customers with the pathetic standard of amenities on offer. They have failed to develop long term strategies that rely on anything beyond glib slogans about families and the importance of sponsors. The executive box holders get central heating and smoked glass but the huddled majority don't deserve even an unobstructed view and a roof.

There is very little commonsense applied to football. In no other area of life is the victim treated with as much disrespect as the perpetrator, nor the majority held to be guilty of the crimes perpetrated by a minority.

But, ultimately, what happens to us doesn't matter. It is our own fault for being football fans. That is why MPs always ignored pleas from supporters' organisations seeking to prevent the sort of disaster which has become a reality. Whatever they may say, few politicians gave any indication that they cared about football fans before Hillsborough happened. Suddenly everyone knows the answer. A fortnight ago, they didn't even hear the question.

It didn't take very long for Hillsborough to become our fault. Indeed, initial reports pinned blame on supporters who were believed to have broken down a gate. Later,

as the analysts set to work, blame was heaped upon the large number of fans who arrived without tickets. Then the police's press department piped up, revealing that many were drunk and generally doing all the things that fans are famous for. Had the television cameras not been present to record the disaster as it unfolded, many people would have unquestioningly accepted the garbage that has been pumped out by some of the tabloid hacks.

Fans have been both the prophesiers and the victims of Hillsborough, but who believes that they will be invited to play an active part in solving the problems which it highlighted? We will be obliged to meekly accept the remedy offered. Standing has been proved to be bad for us, so we must sit. Stadia in urban areas are, without exception, unsafe places for large numbers of people to congregate, so, for the common good, all teams will eventually be required set up home on industrial estates in the middle of nowhere. Better still, we are to pay for the changes that are required, despite the huge burdens already endured and the fact that the government takes vast sums of money from the game.

By the time this issue appears, the deaths of those Liverpool fans will have become just another 'great story' disgorged by a media which revelled in one of the few disasters that happened live in front of the world's press. After a couple of weeks, there isn't much mileage to be derived from sombre proclamations that 'It must never be allowed to happen again.'

Of course, it *will* be allowed to happen again. The ID Cards bill with provisions that almost guarantee that such a tragedy will be repeated is to be pushed through nonetheless. No surprise there. Even after the Zeebrugge sinking, dangerous ferries are sailing the Channel, and on the London Underground, safety of passengers takes primacy only over ensuring that the chocolate machines are functioning adequately.

Some football officials smugly assert that such a disaster couldn't happen at *their* clubs. What they really mean is that now it has happened to someone else, odds are that it won't recur for a little while. It is less the Safety of Sports Grounds, but, rather, The Law Of Averages that they see as adequate protection for their customers.

Disasters are happening so regularly now that we have developed a meaningless set of pseudo-religious rituals to acknowledge them. As has been clear for a long time, no disaster is worthy of the name until leading religious and political figures are officially informed and have given suitably trite quotes to the press. This immediate reaction is followed by The Visit. The seniority of the visitor is determined by media interest and death toll, and is, of course, performed primarily for the benefit of those clicking cameras. Survivors' stories are served up in tandem with chilling reminders of how easily death can take any of us.

All such rituals, crassly inappropriate in the main because they are so formularised, are supposed to make us feel that a mixture of fate and circumstance was ultimately to blame.

The key ritual of this organised disinformation is an inquiry. 'Experts' are called forth (in this instance, few people other than football fans have any relevant expertise to offer). After accusations are made and refuted, a report is produced and the cheapest and most politically expedient bits form part of a new law. The rest is made voluntary. Identification of the real culprits is lost amid desperate, scurrying attempts to avoid blame.

The same people who indignantly call for the fences to be torn down now are the same ones who demanded that they should be put up in the first place. Thanks were duly said for there not having been any perimeter fences at Bradford, but no long-term lessons were learned from that fire. Superficial responses were the order of the day.

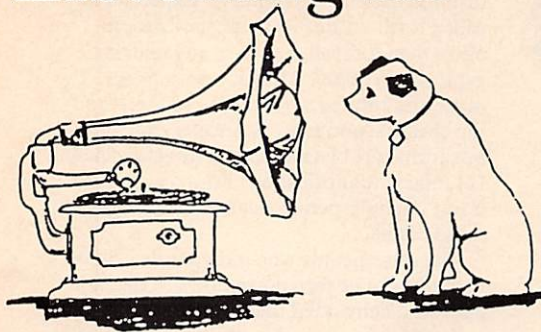
This is why it isn't all that surprising that the Government wants to continue with the dangerous ID cards. It has weathered a sufficient number of crises to know that concern passes very quickly. They obviously reason that all will run smoothly if they can only hang on until something else is on the front pages. However, the ham-fisted attempts to bolster prejudices against football fans through the front pages of *The Sun* has rather backfired this time.



Once more, everyone is offering opinions on the game and its followers. Can it ever be the same again? Should it continue at all? A number of journalists have trotted out their 'I'll never go again' line, much as they did after Heysel. It seems that any measure is justifiable in the wake of Hillsborough and some sort of punishment seems to be the accepted solution. The Prime Minister has no expertise to offer in this situation. She is blindly determined to act, and to be seen to act in accordance with her public image. She has nothing to say and yet remains shrilly determined to emphasise the fact.

Most of what we have outlined here has been said before. Some of it is repetitious, because football fans have gone on at considerable length in the past about most of these issues. To no avail. No one listens. Perhaps they won't listen now, because after all, we are only supporters. We derive no pleasure from saying any of this. We would much rather crawl into a corner and forget about football for a few weeks, but that isn't possible.

Listening In



In media terms, tragedy is the best kind of bad news. But for the press and television, Hillsborough was in a class of its own. It was surely the first time that disaster has occurred when newspapers and TV have all their facilities present and manned.

The papers have an established routine in these circumstances. Get pictures, get survivors, play guess the cause and pull out a few quotes from dignitaries. However, a football tragedy is rather different, with, uniquely, the victims being perceived as part of the problem. No-one blames airline passengers for plane crashes.

The imagery and phraseology of a disaster give one a disturbing feeling that an attempt was being made to glamorise the whole thing. In the tabloids, each story has its distinctive slogan and graphic, like cheap film adverts. It was 'Gates of Hell' for the *Sun* and 'Cage of Death' for *Today*. The *Star* picked 'Cup of Tears' as the motif for its coverage, and there were references everywhere throughout the week to 'The Tunnel Of Death'. These all sound like cheap paperback titles because that is the tone that they are seeking.

Disaster as entertainment (which is all the tabloids claim to be) has to be packaged in a way that sanitizes the horror by dramatising it. We are bombarded with such an enormous amount of information, with pictures and stories both heroic and tragic, that it is very difficult to take in.

The way in which the story is told places it alongside soaps and mini series with a dramatic, barely believable plot and rapidly developing story line. Media treatment

But First

degrades the human tragedy by telling the story on an epic scale and by using real disaster as just another tool in the ratings wars.

The first problem for the press was to distinguish between the good guys and the bad guys. The media are accustomed to blaming supporters so most were unable to resist at least a sideswipe straight away. By Tuesday, a few were really having a go. The *People* went for the headline **Bodies Spiked As Crazy Mob Flee**. The story beneath was a simple tale of how people tried to get out but couldn't. Who exactly the crazy mob were wasn't made clear.

So, most papers were perfectly willing to swallow stories of misdemeanour by supporters. The blame was put on "hundreds of non ticket holders... crushing hundreds under foot." (*Sunday Mirror*), or in the *Sunday Times* "ticketless Liverpool fans poured into the Hillsborough stadium through an open gate." The *Sunday Telegraph* found Dennis Howell willing to assert that there were "obviously large crowds milling about outside the gates without tickets."

The evidence for this all appears to have been fans let into the ground who still had their full tickets. While one may assume that some got in this way it's all a bit flimsy as hard evidence on which to apportion such a significant degree of blame. But, as with everything that is involved in the treatment of fans, prejudice (not necessarily malicious) reshapes the truth.

Telling Tales

The problem that pressmen everywhere had to wrestle with was that the TV pictures spoiled any attempt to blacken the fans. After clumsily failing to smear supporters who got on to the pitch, the *Sun* were forced into what, for them, amounts to a grovelling apology under the headline **Fan's Film Clears Fans**. Their only attempt to retire gracefully was a letter from a reader which read rather similarly to a *Sun* editorial. The reader, Mrs Clementson of Portsmouth is either not on the phone (there are no Clementsons listed in Portsmouth) or she doesn't exist. Make your own mind up.

Peter McKay in the *London Evening Standard* had decided to have a go as early as Monday. "The police often make wrong decisions. Soccer management is frequently greedy and uncaring. But fans are the biggest danger to other fans and we had better not lose sight of that." And why does he believe fans have to share the blame? "They accept a crowd penning system that would be controversial if used for cattle because it is the price they pay for behaving badly."

So, we should be more active in resisting things that are wrong? Don't be silly. McKay wouldn't want us to resist the sort of commonsense solution that he and so many of his colleagues have come up with. "Perhaps the best solution of all would be to cancel the 1990 home soccer season. The time



could be used to upgrade dodgy grounds and establish just which entrance scheme for fans will work. Soccer managements would howl..." But they should be ignored, or arrested for impertinence like so many fans who have complained about anything at a football match.

A big disaster gives every two bit columnist (and two bit is a generous description of Peter McKay) a chance to fill their columns with attempts at either sympathetic words of comfort and concern or ignorant bigotry.

Today NEWSPAPER OF THE YEAR
STARTS TODAY - PAGES 15, 16 & 17
PAMELLA REVEALS ALL HER VIPs (UNAUTHORISED)

Thatcher on spot where 94 needlessly died

TEAR DOWN CAGES OF DEATH

16-PAGE COLOUR SPECIAL. See Pages 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 12, 13, 24, 25, 46, 47, and 48

THE Sun THE TRUTH

Tycoon Adnan thrown in jail

GATES OF HELL

Some fans picked pockets of victims

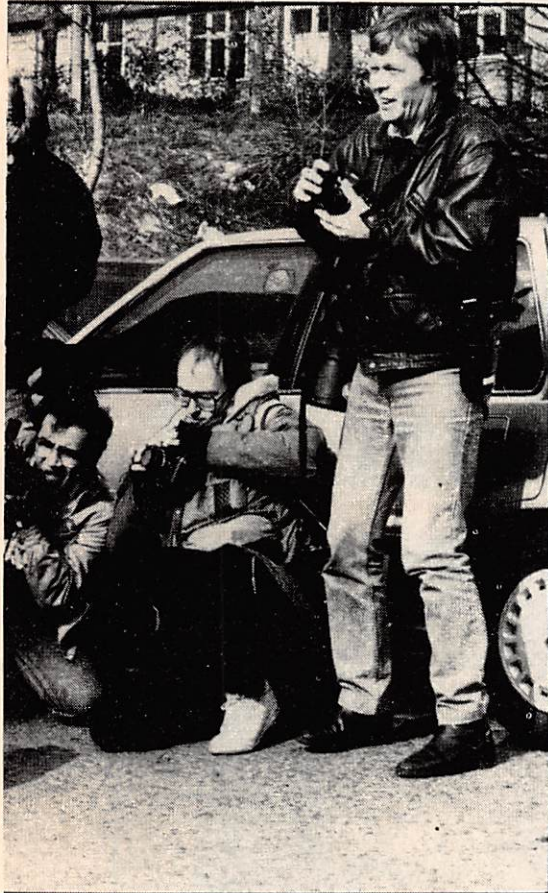
Some fans urinated on the brave cops

Some fans beat up PC giving kiss of life

DI GRIEVES FOR LEE, AGED 14: Pages 2 and 3

The Bad News...

Guardian



crushing and crowd problems of the past with nostalgia. Like rationing, or the Blitz, life was hard but fair. What was once 'just part of growing up in those days' is now regarded with terror by the Frank Johnsons of the world. In the same breath as remembering huge crowds and people peeing in your pocket, they decry the mob instinct and public urination.

They say you can tell a lot about a paper by the letters it receives. In the *Sun*, not surprisingly, most backed the paper's stance. Mrs E of Farnham blamed Liverpool fans "If they had arrived in good time and in good order tragedy could have been averted." And Mrs E Spencer of Chesterfield says "When we encountered the totally out of control crowd we went home. When will people take responsibility for their own behaviour?" As Mrs Spencer obviously arrived as late as the irresponsible fans she mentions, she will doubtless be handing herself in to her local police station. If not she had better hope that Mrs E of Farnham doesn't catch up with her.

Letters Rage

Today managed to find one reader who knew what really caused it all. "I wonder if the powers that be realise it is the players who trigger off the mass hysteria of crowds? Watching sports programmes one sees players having scored a goal leap on one another's backs and then dash to their supporters to receive their acclaim. This does not occur at hockey or rugby matches where fans are not caged like animals. Control the players and the crowds will settle down." There's always one, isn't there?

The coverage in the quality press was largely excellent, with less of the shock and a few more thoughtful pieces. The tone of most of the writing was depressed rather than aggressive, and in much of the best

pieces you could sense the frustration of writers who had seen it before but thought that things had changed for the better. Among the non football writers who chipped in, most notable was Jeremy Seabrook's excellent piece in the *Guardian*.

Then, surprisingly, there was the *Daily Express* whose assessment of the police stories of looting and yobbery was remarkably sensible. "No-one can justify loutish behaviour by Liverpool fans. And there was some of that. But on balance it seems that the police have more questions to answer than the fans." When the *Daily Express* says things like that, then there must be something fishy going on.

Then there was Ed Vulliamy, who typified a trend among the writers unable to resist a temptation to make what they believed to be hard edged comment but which tended to come out as crass generalisations and impressions gained at a distance. It seems that Ed only gets to go to football when there is something awful to write about, so his notion of crowd problems is largely shaped by that. But at least he was looking for some answers.

Anthony Burgess in the *Daily Telegraph* satisfied himself with talking guff. "Support for the local or national team can be invested with a frenzy that cuts at the roots of what we call civilized behaviour. And the support itself is more abstract or nominal than genuinely civic or patriotic." He can barely disguise his disdain for football supporters "Crowds as Elias Canetti has pointed out are primitive beasts very low on the evolutionary scale."

He doesn't really like football either. "For many thousands of Britons there is nothing more important on a Saturday afternoon than watching twenty two men kicking a piece of leather about. There is something wrong with our culture if we have come to this."

Ham Burgess

Burgess perhaps typified much of the media coverage of Hillsborough, too vast to cover here. He knew nothing and cared less. Everyone thinks that disaster gives them a right to pontificate or sympathise in the guise of 'Making Sure It Never Happens Again'.

However, all they succeed in doing in vulgarising the tragedy that they decry. Worse still, they set the agenda for what happens beyond the disaster itself, leaving others to sort out the mess of ideas and crackpot notions they spew out and leave behind. Perversely, their attempts to shout that 'it must never happen again' help to ensure that it probably will, by confusing issues and turning inquiries into debates. Their attentions hinder the process of learning and rethinking and twist tragedy into a self-perpetuating media circus, not far from soap opera.

John Duncan

The first place to look for the latter is always arch hypocrite Auberon Waugh in the *Sunday Telegraph*. But his column of April 23 started promisingly. "this new breed of Chief Constable finds it more congenial to terrorise law abiding citizens than to tackle the malice and perversity of the criminal element."

Surely this wasn't dear old Auberon talking? Yes it was. Only he was talking about the actions of police at Henley and Ascot who were apparently taking the shameful and oppressive step of stopping cars to check for drunkenness. When it came to Hillsborough things were different, and the well-informed Waugh identified the problem instantly. "Of the Liverpool supporters who had been delivered early to give them time to settle down, 3,000 were still rioting outside the gate, many of them without tickets, a few minutes before kick off having for the most part spent the time drinking." It is, naturally, quite absurd for anyone to assume that Henley or Ascot goes, might be drunk, but obvious when you are talking about football fans.

Waugh Fare

Alongside Waugh in the *Sunday Telegraph*, Frank Johnson tells it like it is. "Going to football is now the recreation of what Marx called the lumpen proletariat and what the rest of us are content to call yobs." Johnson moans about how crowds used to be much bigger but people were mainly good humoured. The difference is more one of age than facts. People like Johnson regard

DAILY STAR
HILLSBOROUGH DISASTER SPECIAL EDITION
MONDAY APRIL 17 1989 20p (21p Col)

STAR PAGE ONE COMMENT
by BOB DRISCOLL
Chief Soccer writer

THE FINEST and most fitting memorial English football fan dedicate to the dead of Hillsborough today is to order the immediate closure of the terraces - FOR EVER.

THE KILLING FIELD: ...

SHUT THE TERRACES NOW

CUP OF TEARS: PAGES 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7 and CENTRE PAGES

THE HILLSBOROUGH COVER STORY

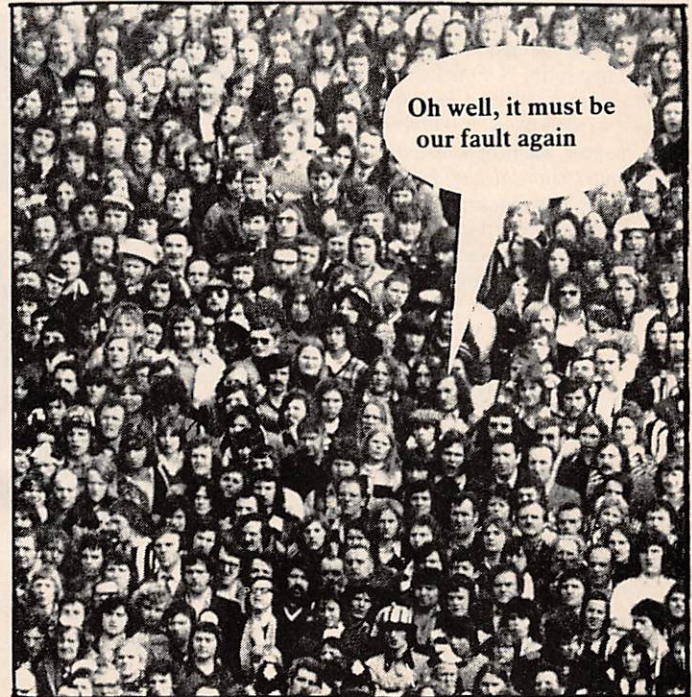
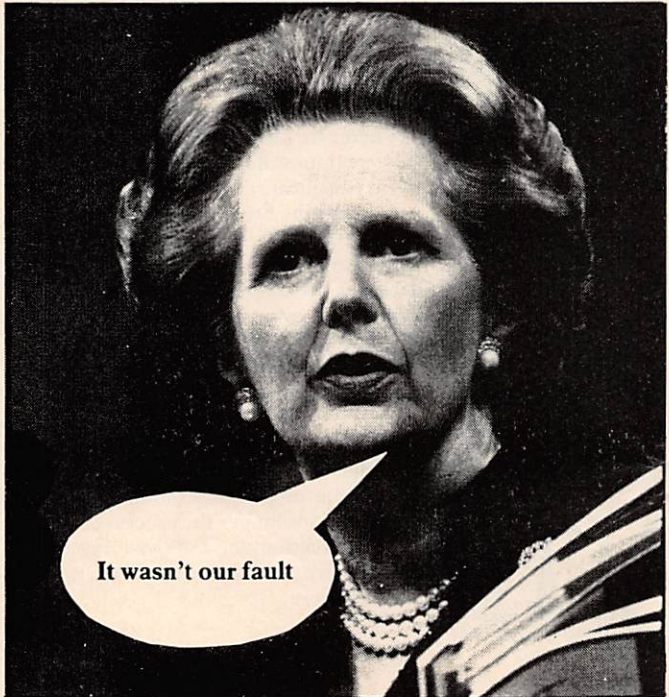
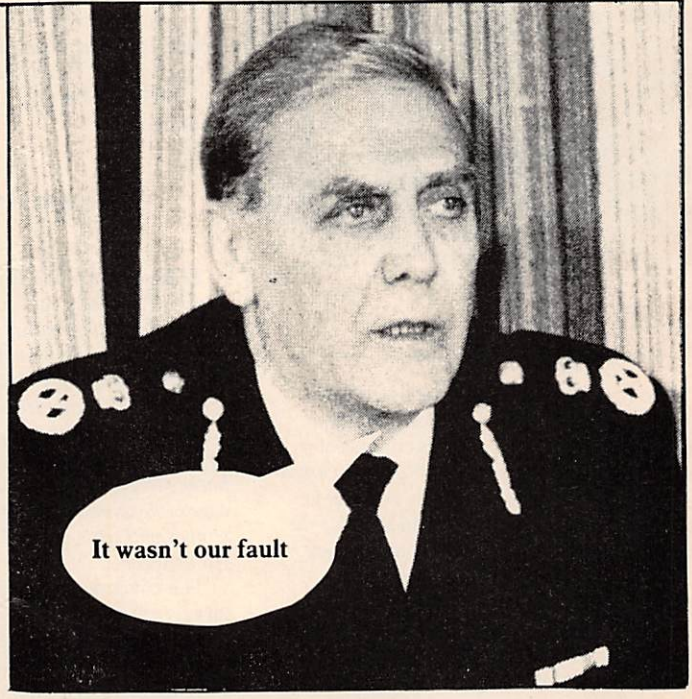
The Half Decent FOOTBALL magazine

June 1989 No. 28



50p

Hillsborough: Unanimous Verdict



Voice of The Valley

The INDEPENDENT Charlton mag



At Hillsborough, Sheffield, on April 15th, 95 Liverpool fans lost their lives in the worst tragedy that English football has ever known.

On behalf of Charlton Athletic supporters everywhere we extend our deepest sympathy to the families and friends of the bereaved.

A KICK UP THE R's

HILLSBOROUGH SPECIAL



we've witnessed your triumphs...
...and envied them

now we've witnessed your sufferings...
...and we share them

A QPR FANZINE.



The CROOKED SPIREITE

No.13
May '89
40p.

BRANDED as sub-human:
SHOVED ABOUT like cattle:
LEFT TO DIE in wire cages—



HOW MUCH LONGER WILL THEY
TREAT US LIKE THIS?

This issue is dedicated to the memory of Paul Clark and Martin Wild, from Derbyshire.



CHELSEA INDEPENDENT
SUPPORTERS ASSOCIATION

MAY 1989

ISSUE 12

PRICE 50p

PUTTING THINGS INTO PERSPECTIVE

WHAT a difference a day makes. We were planning a joyous front cover – in fact it had already been put into page – celebrating Chelsea's imminent return to the First Division. But now, after 95 people have died simply because they wanted to watch their favourite football team, there seems precious little to be joyous about. Indeed, the remaining issues of the season – the winning of Championships, cups and promotions, the scraping into play-off places, the descent into lower divisions – pale into insignificance against the real human tragedy of April 15th at Hillsborough.

The TV pictures emerging from Sheffield that day were shocking and disturbing, but if there was anything at all heart-warming to come out of those depressing scenes, it was the sight of rival supporters pulling together under desperate circumstances. At the very least this should serve to remind us that what unites football fans – our love of the game as well as our common humanity – is far stronger than the parochial concern for our own team's performance that tends to pull us apart.

For this reason the CISA extends its deepest sympathy to those who lost relatives and friends – we are sure we speak for all Chelsea fans in so doing. It is for this reason, too, that we have raised the cover price of this issue to 50p and will donate the extra 20p from each sale to the Hillsborough Appeal Fund. We hope you agree this is the right course of action to take.

SAY NO TO I.D. CARDS

FORGET the Headhunters, Zulus, the I.C.F. and the 6.57 Crew; Sports Minister Colin Moynihan is the most dangerous football hooligan ever let loose on our national game, ultimately more terrifying than even the violent mobs he claims to despise.

The hooligans are at least openly anti-social, consist of relatively few members, and can thus be effectively challenged by the forces of law and order.

But Moynihan's jackboot is fashioned in the guise of commonsense, bears the pattern of 'reasonableness', and is laced with the illusion of democracy. It is a jackboot nonetheless, one which stomps on football's fragile recovery and threatens to trample on our civil liberties. It must, and can be resisted. At stake is not just our national game, important though that is, but also the cause of freedom and honesty in public life; a freedom which, as his analysis of 'the hooligan problem' proves, Moynihan has cynically abused.

6,000 CRAZY

The Minister incants the figure of 6,000 arrests at matches last season as if it were some devotional mantra. Its validity as an indicator of widespread matchday violence is certainly a matter of faith, rather than logic.

● More than 2,000 League games are played every season and total attendances in 1987/88 exceeded 18 million. Those arrested amount to just 0.03% of all admissions. A statistically average match would draw 9,000 spectators, of which fewer than three would be nicked for any alleged offence - either inside or outside the ground.

● Policing at football is highly intensive (including CCTV surveillance) and the range of potential crimes enormous. But most of these offences are petty and victimless e.g. smuggling in booze, drunkenness, swearing, selling fanzines etc which in most social situations would merit no police action whatsoever. Many other offences are committed by those not even attending matches; more than 20% of charges at Villa Park, which topped Moynihan's 'League Table of Terror', were for attempted thefts from supporters' cars.

● Arrests in each of the last three seasons have been substantially lower than in the pre-Heysel year of 1984/85 when in excess of 7,000 fans were apprehended.

● Proceedings are often dropped because of insufficient or unreliable evidence, or where there is simply no case to answer. Even when charges are pressed, the courts may find the accused INNOCENT despite Moynihan's

contemptuous and deliberately misleading insinuation that arrests equal guilt.

● The only relevant statistic in this debate is the number of fans found guilty of violent, football-related crimes. League President Jack Dunnet's figure of 1,086 convictions (0.006% of total attendances) shows it is ludicrous to prescribe this draconian solution.

But logic is plainly taboo to the Minister, whose strategy relies entirely upon tabloid terror tactics, inspiring banner headlines instead of thought, fear rather than understanding. The clamour of noise and 'something must be done' frenzy he has generated obscures one of the most significant facts in this whole debate: after years of decline, League attendances have risen in each of the last two seasons, and are on course for an impressive hat-trick.

THE LUTON SCHEME

It is curious that the party which makes a religion of the marketplace should ignore this clear message from the paying public that they feel increasingly safe at grounds. Club administrators and police have worked extremely hard these past few seasons to combat matchday violence, but instead of praise, Moynihan chooses to lumber them with additional burdens which, as statements from the Football League's Executive Staffs Association and the Police Federation have made clear, they simply do not want or need.

Their professional advice counts for nothing, compared to the ramblings of David Evans MP, the Luton Liar, who has assumed the mantle of chief advisor to the Sports Minister.

Between them, they have concocted a ludicrous fantasy that Luton Town's members-only plan points to the future success of the government's initiative.

Comparisons between the schemes are misleading because Evans' specific intention at Kenilworth Road was to ban away fans - a policy the government has not (yet) sought at all League grounds - and also because Hatters' members can invite 'casual' guests to the ground right up to kick-off time, an option denied in Moynihan's shambles. Still, it is enlightening to consider the 'success' of the Luton experiment.

● Despite Evans' lie to the 1986 Tory Party Conference that 'we have no police at Luton' their cop costs increased from £285 per 1,000 fans in 1985/6 to £313 per 1,000 in 1986/87 - the first year of membership. Any subsequent reduction in charges must be measured against this steep initial increase, and also their rapid nosedive in attendances.

● In Luton's last season before 100%

membership, their home gates averaged 10,377. In 1987/88, despite two Wembley appearances and League success they struggled to just 8,162 - a pathetic figure inflated by the many away fans who beat the ban. Only two clubs have followed Luton's example - Torquay and Colchester. And the Essex club were forced to scrap their scheme halfway through its first season because attendances plummeted.

The real beneficiaries of the Luton scheme have been Evans, whose political career has flourished, and Moynihan, able to feed the media sharks a wholesome shoal of red herrings in the hope that his own plan could swim safely through parliament. So successful has this smokescreen been that the REAL objectives of the government's initiative have been obscured.

Remember that in addition to the full range of prison sentences, fines, probation orders etc:

● Judges can ban fans from attending matches (in 1987/88 more than 1,000 exclusion notices were issued).

● Young offenders can be forced to spend Saturday afternoons at attendance centres.

● Clubs themselves can ban any individual they see fit.

Moynihan's plan adds nothing whatsoever to this extensive range of punishments. Its novelty lies in who dispenses justice and how. Under the Minister's regime, supporters would henceforth be subjected to a separate and self-contained legal system, administered by the Football Membership Authority. As the F.M.A. will be composed by the government, it can hardly be considered an independent judicial body. Yet this sinister quango, accountable only to the Minister, would have discretion to ban any citizen from all League grounds, whether or not they had committed a criminal offence. The word of just one policeman, or any official from a club, the F.A., the League, or the F.M.A. itself could be enough to stigmatise you with what amounts to a petty conviction, and deny you the pleasure of watching football; without any of the safeguards and rights you enjoy in an open court.

CONVICT

Thus Moynihan's Law would give the state new and dangerous power over its citizens. It puts into practice an idea floated by F.A. President Bert Millichip who said that when England play abroad, passports should be confiscated from 'known trouble-makers' i.e. people who police believe cause problems, but who they haven't got enough evidence to convict. Moynihan's I.D. card plan simply adapts this authoritarian concept to domestic use: and it isn't good enough.

If the police 'know' who trouble-makers are, they should do us all a favour, and bring them to justice. The operation of some undemocratic kangaroo court will bring the legal system into disrepute, and opens the way to victimisation, heavy-handedness, and plain old British injustice.

The dangers are well illustrated by the case of six Southend United fans, who were barred from Roots Hall, not for any violent crime - or indeed for any crime at all - but simply for attempting to organise a peaceful protest against their club's plans to move ground. Currently, they can still follow their side away, but under Moynihan's plan, they and all similar 'undesireables' could be banned entirely. At this rate, even letters to the paper could be enough to earn you a twelve month suspension as a 'trouble-maker.'

Citizens who the state wishes to punish at least deserve a proper hearing in an open court; there must be no confiscation without conviction.

Such quaint principles of natural justice are evidently regarded as bizarre aberrations by the Minister. Despite belonging to a government which insists on 'targeting' benefits, Moynihan is happy to dish out punishment to all; EVERY club must suffer, EVERY fan must pay.

And the expense will be enormous; £34 million in installation fees alone according to the League's consultants. When you consider that outlay (unlike income) will be spread fairly evenly among clubs, it's blatantly obvious that for many, the price of League status could be extinction.

In all cases, expenditure on computers and electronic checking equipment will divert funds away from enhancements which would really bring in more fans; better facilities, new players etc.

What's worse, the costs vary wildly with virtually every statement the Sports Minister makes, as he strives to deflect damaging criticism of the scheme's safety - most notably from the Police Federation, who have warned that queues caused by turnstile card checks could threaten public order and even lead to deaths.

In desperation, Moynihan has pinned his hopes on the so-called 'smartcard' which, he assures us, will guarantee undelayed access to grounds. That is certainly news to members of the government's own Working Party, whose report made the following comments about smartcards:

- 'Smartcards may take very slightly longer to use at the turnstiles' (i.e. in addition to the delays which, it was accepted, other systems would cause).
- 'The use of smartcards in the U.K. is still in its infancy.'
- 'No [smartcard] reader yet in production is powerful enough for a fully secure portable system.' (The Working Party considered portable systems to be highly desirable).
- 'There is no experience in using smartcards in a hostile environment.' (i.e. it is untried in the real world).

It is also worth noting that smartcards, (as demonstrated by Moynihan on TV) seem likely to be fixed outside turnstiles to facilitate quick entry. Yet this option was specifically rejected by the Working Party because it would expose highly sophisticated machinery to the weather, and the risk of vandalism. And any alternative which involved passing a card to the turnstile operator (as the Working Party recommends) would inevitably cause some delay, no matter how advanced the equipment is.

Of course, the manufacturers insist these problems can be overcome. But then, with millions of pounds worth of contracts at stake, they would. It was noticeable, however, that at the first hint of reality the cost of smartcards rose from £5 each (as quoted in the Working Party report) to the £9 bandied about by Moynihan (a level of inflation to strike fear into the heart of Mr Lawson). In reality, football and its followers would be footing the bill for a computer company's research programme, whose costs are open-ended and whose results are uncertain.

DODGY

Just imagine what the expense would be if, after two seasons, the system had to be revamped - as happened at Luton Town last summer. The Hatters' original and inadequate installation was provided by Aquix Holdings, a company who also supplied Plymouth's Home Park with technology - recently described by one Argyle director as 'useless'. Yet Aquix have had the nerve to offer clubs 'free' hardware for a national scheme, in return for the right to exploit the 'commercial spin-offs' (these include charging fans £8 for a card lasting three years). And Moynihan has been stupid enough to chide clubs for not being more receptive to this dodgy offer.

The Minister insists on the commercial advantages of selling fans' names to mailing companies - a highly dubious practice at best - but with typical sleight of mouth he has so far failed to back his claim with any hard evidence. For sure, if the scheme reduces attendances (as even Moynihan admits is inevitable) it immediately offers less commercial advantages to any would-be opportunist. And any revenues gained from selling name lists have to be set against the burden of increased turnstile supervision, greater administrative costs, and computer maintenance charges. Reading, for instance, have a system which, despite free installation and a sponsorship deal, costs them in excess of £10,000 per year to run - and that's for a computer which controls entry to just one side of the ground.

CANDID CAMERA

And for what? As the Working Party report makes clear, the photographs on the I.D. card will not be checked on entry, encouraging abuse of the system. In any case, as recent 'hooligan' trials proved (e.g. at Wolves) existing video surveillance of crowds makes positive identification of violent fans possible, demonstrating that further encroachments on the liberty of innocent

supporters are unnecessary. And where trouble exists away from the cameras, carrying a card in your pocket will make you no easier to identify.

SKETCHY

The absurdities, dangers, and irrelevancies of this half-cocked scheme have got backbenchers worried. Many are busily trying to soothe the irate, football-loving constituents by forcing concessions on some of the more obviously stupid features of the plan. If the Bill goes through, amendments would be welcome, but they would not constitute any kind of victory for fans, merely reduce the scale of defeat. Yet the sketchy proposals Moynihan has presented to parliament deny M.P.s the chance to vote on crucial details in one of the government's key pieces of legislation. The Bill does no more than establish a framework for the running of the scheme, leaving almost all decisions on its operation to the F.M.A.

Further, if the Minister doesn't like the quango's recommendations, he will simply be able to replace its members. Any doubts that he would exercise such power have surely been dispelled by his threat to exclude the football authorities from the F.M.A. unless they help draw up precise proposals for operating the scheme - even before the Bill has reached the Commons.

The I.D. card issue is too important to flounder on fans' apathy. We must take heart from the Sunday Trading Bill, which was defeated despite government support. In the face of a well-organised and vocal campaign, M.P.s felt they could not vote for a measure which (like I.D. cards) was NOT included in the Tory Party's manifesto. They realise only too well that their livelihood ultimately depends upon the voters, millions of whom are also football fans. That fact must give us all the heart and confidence to belt this political football into touch. Here's what you can do:

- Visit your M.P. at his local surgery or write to her/him (c/o the House of Commons, London, SW11).
- Sign and circulate the F.S.A.'s petition.
- Use the facts to get the fans' message across on local radio, T.V. and in the papers.
- Photocopy this sheet and pass it on.

STINKS

If, as well as defeating the card scheme, we can halt the political career of Moynihan, then so much the better. This man's outright and unchallenged lie on Sports Report (Dec 3rd) that Luton's average gate last season improved 1,000 on the previous campaign was typical of his disgraceful abuse of high office, and his fast and loose attitude to the truth. There are no depths to which he will not sink to further his political career, but we must make sure he does not progress at the expense of football fans. Full of twists, swerves, dodges and trickery, we can only lament that he wasn't a born footballer. As a politician, he stinks.

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Continued on back page

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EVERY MAN A FOOTBALL ARTIST

75 JOHN STREET, KILKENNY, IRELAND
APRIL 1989 ○ EVERY 2 MONTHS ○ 50p ○
KILKENNY CITY

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○ 50p ○ EXETER CITY

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2 ROSE TERRACE, STENHOUSEMUIR,
FK5 4DW
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50p ○ FALKIRK F.C.

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P.O. BOX 91, DUNDEE DD1 9DW
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DUNDEE UNITED F.C.

FINGERPOST

19 ASHVILLE DRIVE, HALESOWEN,
W. MIDS. B63 3SD
1983 ○ EVERY 6 WEEKS ○ 50p ○ WEST
BROMWICH ALBION

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ENCIL Y COED, PLASGWYN, PWLLHELI,
GWYNEDD, LL53 6UA
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S11 9FR
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○ SHEFFIELD UNITED

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14 SELKIRK CLOSE, SALTERSGILL,
MIDDLESBROUGH, CLEVELAND
OCTOBER 1988 ○ EVERY HOME GAME ○
50p ○ MIDDLESBROUGH F.C.

FOLLOW FOLLOW

P.O. BOX 539, GLASGOW, G11 7LT
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FOOTBALL AND FIESTA

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HARBOUR LANE, LONDON SW9 8EL
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50p ○ WEST HAM UNITED

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HANTS.
JANUARY 1989 ○ BI-MONTHLY ○ 50p ○
WATERLOOVILLE

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36 MAIN STREET, HUNCOTE, LEICS.
LE9 6AU
MARCH 1987 ○ EVERY 2 MONTHS ○ 50p
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2/2 14 BANCHORY AVENUE, EASTWOOD,
GLASGOW G43 1EZ
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82 OSPREY ROAD, BIGGLESWADE, BEDS.
SG18 8HE
AUGUST 1988 ○ 4/SEASON ○ 30p ○
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THE GAS HEAD

30 COOPERATION ROAD, GREEN BANK,
BRISTOL
1988 ○ EVERY HOME GAME ○ 50p ○
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GLENMALURE GAZETTE

P.O. BOX 2443, DUBLIN 17, EIRE
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AUBYN'S GDNS, ORPINGTON, KENT
BR6 OSW
1987 ○ 4-5/SEASON ○ 50p ○ ARSENAL

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DURNSFORD ROAD, WIMBLEDON,
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12 SWALLOW CLOSE, HAVANT,
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GULLS EYE

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W. SUSSEX
SEPTEMBER 1988 ○ MOST HOME GAMES
○ 20p ○ BRIGHTON & HOVE ALBION

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41 WOODHALL TERRACE, THORNBURY,
BRADFORD BD3 7BZ
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○ LEEDS UNITED

HE'S NOT DANNY GRADY

63 EGERTON ROAD, FALLOWFIELD,
MANCHESTER M14 6UZ
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HEAD THE BALL

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HEARTS REVIEW

12 MAVISBANK, LOANHEAD,
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P.O. BOX 427, EDINBURGH, EH11 1RZ
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MIDLOTHIAN

HIBS MONTHLY

59 COMELY BANK ROAD, EDINBURGH
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HIBERNIAN

HIT THE BAR

10 GRAFTON STREET, BLACKPOOL,
LANCS
MARCH 1988 ○ MONTHLY ○ 50p ○
GENERAL BUT WITH N.W. BIAS

HULL, HELL AND HAPPINESS

119 NORTH ROAD, WITHERNSEA,
E. YORKSHIRE HU19 2AX
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(BUMPER EDITION) ○ HULL CITY

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43 ANGLESEY ROAD, BONDERS END,
ENFIELD, MIDDLESEX
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40p ○ ENFIELD F.C.

IN THE LOFT

24 WOODHAM ROAD, CATFORD,
LONDON SE6 2SD
MARCH 1988 ○ EVERY 6 WEEKS ○ 40p ○
QPR

INTIFADA

14C CONWAY ROAD, PONTCANNA,
CARDIFF CF1 8NT
MARCH 1988 ○ 40p ○ CARDIFF CITY

THE IVOR THIRST GOOD PUB GUIDE

61 STRATFORD ROAD, WEST
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MIDLANDS

JACKMAIL

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TALBOT, WEST. GLAM. SA13 1QN
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WILMSLOW, CHESHIRE SK9 3NQ
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SHEFFIELD WEDNESDAY

A KICK UP THE R's

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SY13 4QH
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25 HOLDENBROOK CLOSE, LEIGH,
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50p ○ MANCHESTER CITY

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ROOM 403, WIGRAM HOUSE, ASHLEY
GDNS., LONDON SW1P 1HH
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LE CHIC

16 SOUTH HINCH AVENUE, GLASGOW,
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WILTSHIRE BA14 7HA
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19 THE TERRACES, DARTFORD, KENT
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24 WOODHAM ROAD, CATFORD,
LONDON SE6 2SD
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CHORLEY, LANCES. PR7 4JZ
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c/o MORAY TAIT, ABERDEEN
UNIVERSITY STUDENT UNION, UPPER
KIRK GATE, ABERDEEN, AB1 1BA
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HIBERNIAN

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CF1 9NN
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12 MacCALLUM PLACE, KILMARNOCK,
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CAMBS PE18 6NH
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61 STRATFORD ROAD, WEST
BRIDGFORD, NOTTINGHAM NG2 6AZ
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○ NOTTS COUNTY

THE PNE VIEW

58 COMBE ROAD, FARNCOMBE,
GODALMING, SURREY GU7 3SL
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2 NORTHUMBERLAND PLACE,
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c/o 59 OAKWOOD ROAD, HALEWOOD,
LIVERPOOL L26 1XD
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42 HILLSIDE CLOSE, BARNSTEAD,
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2 BURDETT AVENUE, WESTCLIFF ON
SEA, ESSEX SSO 7JW
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THE SEASIDER

32A THE CHASE, RAYLEIGH, ESSEX SS6
8QN
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21 THE VINEWAY, DOVERCOURT,
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THE SPUR

153 UPTON ROAD, BEXLEYHEATH, KENT
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STORMING WITH MENACE

11 CHATSWORTH WAY, CARLYON BAY,
ST. AUSTELL, CORNWALL PL25 3SL
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40p ○ GENERAL/PLYMOUTH ARGYLE

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5 FETLOCK CLOSE, CLAPHAM, BEDS.
MK41 6BG
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○ READING

TALK OF THE TOWN END

20 CALDER CLOSE, ENFIELD,
MIDDLESEX EN1 3TS
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8EA
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21 LITTLE ROAD, EDINBURGH EH16 6SH
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133 LONGMORE ROAD, SHIRLEY,
SOLIHULL, B90 3EF
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BIRMINGHAM CITY

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18A HOGARTH COURT, STEEPLANDS,
BUSHEY, HERTS. WD2 3EP
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6 DIMOND CLOSE, BITTERNE PARK,
SOUTHAMPTON SO2 4LF
APRIL 1988 ○ 6/SEASON ○ 50p ○
SOUTHAMPTON

UTD UNITED

41 HILLBECK CRESCENT, WOLLATON,
NOTTINGHAM NG6
DECEMBER 1988 ○ MONTHLY ○ 35p ○
WEST HAM/DUNDEE UNITED

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12 CHESTNUT GARDENS, STAMFORD,
LINCS PE9 2JY
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VALIANTS VIEWPOINT

47 BRABOURNE CRESCENT,
BEXLEYHEATH, KENT DA7 5QJ
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VOICE OF THE BEEHIVE

FLAT 2, 84 MILTON GROVE, STOKE
NEWINGTON, LONDON N16
SEPTEMBER 1988 ○ 30p ○ BRENTFORD

VOICE OF THE VALLEY

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62 QUEENSGATE, BOLTON, LANCS.
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WANDERERS F.C.

WATCH THE BLUEBIRDS FLY

49 NANT-Y-FEDW, YNYSBOETH,
ABERCYON, M.GLAM.
MARCH 1989 ○ MONTHLY ○ 20p ○
CARDIFF CITY

THE WEB

89 BUSBY ROAD, CLARKSTON,
GLASGOW G76 8BD
1980 ○ 5/SEASON ○ 40p ○ QUEENS
PARK

THE WEE RED

FLAT 4, 1 MYRTLEFIELD PARK,
BELFAST BT9 6NE
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P.O. BOX 66, PERTH PH1 1YB
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THE WESTENDER

P.O. BOX 128, COVENTRY CV1 5TQ
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COVENTRY CITY

WHAT A LOAD OF COBBLERS

3 STAG COURT, SHIRE LANE,
CHORLEWOOD, HERTS
JULY 1988 ○ BI-MONTHLY ○ 30p ○
NORTHAMPTON TOWN

WHEN SKIES ARE GREY

32 EAST AVENUE, PORTHMADOG LL49
9EN, GWYNEDD, N.WALES
DECEMBER 1988 ○ EVERY 6-8 WEEKS ○
50p ○ EVERTON

WHEN SATURDAY COMES

1-11 IRONMONGER ROW, LONDON
EC1V 3QM
1986 ○ MONTHLY ○ 60p ○ GENERAL

WHEN SUNDAY COMES

2 MAYBURY COURT, SHAFTESBURY
ROAD, WOKING, SURREY GU22 7DT
MARCH 1988 ○ EVERY 2-3 MONTH ○ 50p
○ LIVERPOOL

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BACK?**

26 OAKWOOD PARK ROAD,
SOUTHGATE, LONDON N14 6QG
APRIL 1989 ○ QUARTERLY ○ 40p ○
BARNET F.C.

THE WILD ROVER

113 GREENLOANINGS, KIRKCALDY, FIFE
AUGUST 1988 ○ EVERY 2-3 MONTH ○
30p ○ RAITH ROVERS

WISE MEN SAY

P.O. BOX 2, SUNDERLAND SR1 1NG
JANUARY 1988 ○ EVERY 2 MONTHS ○
40p ○ SUNDERLAND

WITTON WISDOM

60 HIGHFIELD ROAD, BYFLEET, SURREY
KT14 7QZ
1989 ○ 4-5/SEASON ○ 30p ○ ASTON
VILLA

YIDAHO

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