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LARRIKIN 4, SEPTEMBER 1986, is edited by Irwin Hirsh (2/416 Dandenong Rd., Caulfield North, Victoria 3161, AUSTRALIA) and Perry Middlemiss (GPO Box 2708X, Melbourne, Victoria 3001, AUSTRALIA). This fanzine is available for written contributions - articles and letters of comments - and your fanzine in trade (2 copies please). It is also available for \$1 for one issue, but only to get you started. This fanzine does not support the recent decision of our Federal Government to sell uranium to France, or the VFL's expansionist policies. Thanks go to Taral (art, this page), ATom (art, last page), Marc Ortlieb (mailing labels), and Pam Wells (our British agent).

Irwin Hirsh for GUFF

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**BLOOD-LETTING TIME**      The first time I donated blood was back when I was eighteen, in 1973. At that time my family was living in a small country town about 220 kilometres north of Adelaide in South Australia. My mother was president (or chairperson or whatever they were calling it then) of the local branch of the Red Cross and had helped to organise what she called a "bleeding day".

- Perry -

Due to the small population of the district - about 400 in the town and surrounding areas - these wondrously named events only took place once a year. As it happened, I was home from my first year at university when this mass blood leeching was to take place so my mother persuaded me to do my bit for mankind and the universe. My father had already been roped in and as my mother was unable to donate due to continuing health problems I was informed of the need to maximise the family's involvement - in other words I didn't have much of a choice. Actually I didn't need much convincing of the correctness of this action, just the boot to get off my backside and go ahead and do it.

As luck would have it, the "bleeding day" dawned fine and hot - about 42°C in the shade - so a lot of the local farmers were coming in to town to donate, probably as a good excuse to get out of the heat and have a beer in the pub. (I should mention at this point that while blood donation is a voluntary unpaid act the Red Cross in South Australia thoughtfully provides male donors with a can of cold beer or stout after the deed is done. Very civilised bunch the Croweaters.)

Anyway, when I turned up at the local town hall - where everything was set up - just after lunch, the street out the front was lined with cars while the hall was practically empty. They were probably all down the pub by that stage discussing the weather, the beer, sport, the wheat crop and how many of them had fainted that day.

I went through the standard rigmarole of signing up as a volunteer blood donor and took my place on one of the empty camp beds scattered about the place. The insertion of the plumbing went off well enough without too

much discomfort on my part. Now the major problem I have when approached with syringes or needles of any kind is that I get rather nervous and apprehensive. This usually manifests itself in a rapid wriggling of my toes and severe sweating on the soles of my feet. This is not much of a problem usually as I am wearing shoes so nothing shows. On this occasion however, I was bare-footed due to the heat, and the attendant ladies from the Red Cross were much amused by this young long-haired lad staring at the ceiling with his life's blood flowing out of him and his toes going hell-for-leather.

The leeching over, I was made to lie down for another ten minutes to rest; standard practice as I have since discovered. At least the toes got a bit of time off. After a few minutes of this inactivity I got more than a little bored with the nondescript pattern on the roof and, feeling not the least bit dizzy, made to get off the bed and have a well-earned beer. My problem at this point was that I had forgotten two things: (i) my sweaty feet, and (ii) the very slippery floor. The first step I recall was quite okay but the second had no chance and hit the floor like a skate on ice. I caught the bed on the way down and knew that I was fine all the time. The gaggle of nurses that seemed to appear from nowhere had other ideas and made me lie down for about another twenty minutes. No amount of argument on my part was going to convince the ladies that I was fine. They obviously knew better and that was that.

The lady sitting next to me all this time (no doubt there to make sure I didn't "flake out" again) told me about one of the farmers that had come in earlier in the day. He was a big bloke - a couple of axe-handles across the shoulders - and had come in with his mates to see what all the fuss was about. All was going well until he went to stand up after his donation. As the lady told me, he hit the floor like a sack of wheat; huge and unwieldy. That would have been all right but one of the Red Cross women had had the misfortune, or misjudgement, of trying to catch him as he went down. She didn't stand a chance. All that happened was that she ended up on the floor with about 18 stone of unconscious farmer lying on top of her. All the other ladies could do was roll him off, put a pillow under his head and let him come to as best he could. He did that and was last seen heading out the door with his highly amused mates for a couple of cold ones. If I was him, I wouldn't have been seen dead in that pub for weeks.

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RADIO CHAMPS      I have reached Football Fans' Heaven and it feels good.

- Irwin -      Last issue we mentioned, in passing, the "Goodabeen Champions" radio show. It is broadcast every Saturday morning on 3RRR-PM, a public broadcast station, and takes an irreverent look at the local Aussie Rules competition. They have replaced the hype and true-believer attitude of the usual commentators the media dishes up for us, for a good mix of scepticism and humour. It all results in an entertaining hour of common sense and good times.

In 'Players Under the Microscope' they ask players those really pertinent questions ("Now tell us about the time the coach caught you having a beer a hour before the game."). In 'Academic Thinktank' they've conducted a Marxist analysis of the current changes to the competition; they've drawn comparisons between the telecast of the Grand Final and Kabuki; and we've had semiotic readings into the various team colours. (John Flaus: There's one side that's got Australia's national colours - it's got yella and brown... (which) stands for what is the characteristics of this great

nation - sand and sheepshit. On the other hand I look at the red and black and I say 'But they're the old colours: there's the black flag of the anarchists and the red blood of their suffering and the toiling downtrodden generations...')." ).

We get the musical talents of Greg Champion and his fine football filksongs. It would be enough to admire the skillful way he uses well known tunes, even if his lyrics weren't amusing, pertinent, and concise.

Audience participation comes in the mode of the weekly contests. We've been asked to name a team of overweight players, or a team of players who played in a Grand Final but didn't deserve to, or a team of players whose surnames were occupations. We've been asked to write the speech a particular coach would say to his players at the 3/4 time break of that day's match, and we've been asked to report on a major historical event as if it was a football match.

All class stuff. Ever heard the birth of Jesus reported as if it was a football match? "And the three wise men displayed great skill in their handling of the gifts." Or ever considered a team of twenty Smiths? Or rather, a team of eighteen Smiths, one Lester-Smith, and one Warne-Smith. "What's a Lester-Smith do?" asked one Coodabeen. "Someone who fixes your Lesters" came the matter-of-fact reply.

A few Sundays ago Daniel and Toby Collins, Perry and I went to the big match. Walking to the ground we started discussing the previous day's show: the good lines, the discussions, and the competition. They had asked for a player profile for a real or fictitious player. Within a few moments we'd contributed a few of the typical responses given to such things.

Once we'd taken up our seats, we turned to a profile in that day's program and used the questions to formulate our entry. Mixing in the typical responses of most footballers and the unusual, we came up with someone who is the typical yahoo footballer, but who comes from a trendy home and has leftist leanings. It was a most pleasant way to fill in the time before the match.

We are reproducing our entry below, because we were given a commendation. I mean, hey, our names were mentioned on radio. The Coodabeens took particular delight with Perry's name, wondering if he is related to Glen Middlemiss. That ex-player has the dubious honour of sharing the record for having been reported by the umpires the most times in one season. Perry believes he isn't related, but if I was related to a thug like Glen Middlemiss I'd be denying it too.

A PLAYER PROFILE - Daniel Collins, Toby Collins, Irwin, and Perry -

Name: Wayne Windsor III, The Duke of Royal Park  
 Team: Footscray  
 Favourite position: tuck-rover  
 Date and place of birth: 11-5-1961, Lorne (in my parents' holiday home)  
 Height: 183 cm  
 Weight: 80 kg  
 Recruited from: Footscray  
 First played: 1979  
 Games played: 112

Football honours: Reserves Best & Fairest: 1980  
 Teal Cup Captain: 1977  
 2nd Best & Fairest: 1984  
 Winner Brownlow Medal: 1984  
 State Team: 1984, 85, and 86  
 Winner, World of Sport Handball Comp: 1983  
 ABC Most Valueable Player: 1984  
 Selected to ride on the VFL Moomba float: 1985

Marital status: Single, but living with Kirsty

Children: Damien (3), Troy (1)

Brothers/sisters: One brother and one sister

Occupation: Research assistant to Senator Gareth Evans

School/s attended: Freshil, University High School, and Wesley College

Car: Commformodore

Favourite pastimes: Raging, stamp collecting, and going on peace marches

Favourite food: ~~The People's~~ The Place's Quiche Lorraine and the Greasy Parmigiana from The Rising Sun Hotel (the great pub in the people's suburb - ie the one that had their football club taken away from them)

Favourite drink: Bisleri mineral water

Favourite singer/group: Joan Baez, Bob Dylan, Birthday Party, Jimmy Barnes, The Boss (Bruce), Midnight Oil and Laughing Clowns

Favourite author: Karl Marx, Tom Robbins, Harold Robbins, Junichiro Tanazaki, Kurt Vonnegut Jr, and J.G. Ballard

Favourite holiday spot: Kings Rd, Chelsea

Favourite TV show: MASH, Yes Minister, Point of View, and Addams Family

Favourite movie: Singin' in the Rain, The Terminator, Local Hero, and Les Enfants du Paradis

Biggest influence on career: My father, Don McKenzie (my first coach at Footscray), and R.F.X. Connor

Most admired sportspeople: Bruce Doull, Geoff Hunt, and Adair Ferguson

Football superstition: When tying up my bootlaces I make sure I am facing Karl Marx's tomb

Biggest disappointment: Being dumped by Footscray at the end of the 1983 season, and losing the Elimination Final in 1985

Biggest thrill: First game of career, winning the Brownlow, and meeting Gough Whitlam

Nickname: Lefty

Favourite ground: The People's Ground - the MCG

Football ambitions: Play in a premiership team, to play as long as I can, and to follow in Neil Tresize's footsteps and be the Minister for Sports in a Labor Ministry

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ENERGY CONSERVATION AND  
 THE PERTH FREEWAY SYSTEM

- Mark Loney -

Driving along either of Perth's two freeways, which are, it should be pointed out, one freeway subjected to a name change where it crosses the Swan River on the Narrows Bridge, I find my thoughts constantly turning to the most efficient and environmentally sensible method of heating a home. This is not simply because it is currently winter, and a cold winter for Perth at that, or because I lack attentiveness to the process of driving - rather it is brought about by the excessive quantities of wood that litter the lanes and shoulders of the Mitchell and Kwinana Freeways. Wood that quite often turns a simple drive along the freeway into a real-life obstacle course.

The wood is generally dressed hardwood of various lengths up to two

metres, in sizes around 10cm by 5cm. As I don't believe in the spontaneous generation of dressed timber on the roads of the twentieth century, I assume that the timber in question falls off the back of trucks or out of trailers - you may deduct correctly from that that I have never seen this happen, only the results. And the results must be fairly expensive for some of the users of Perth's freeways. Wood that one afternoon is lying inconveniently in a lane while traffic swerves around it at 80-100 km/h, will be innocuously occupying the shoulder area the following morning. It's shape will also be somewhat deformed, testimony to the number of tyres and car underbodies it met on its journey. Wood that falls onto the lanes of the Narrows Bridge, where there are no shoulders, generally suffers much worse punishment. Within a few hours, a length of timber rated as ASAA structural jarrah and suitable for building houses, will be a spreadout patch of wood pulp suitable only for use as termite fodder.

But this is still begging the question of the relationship between freeways and home heating strategies. Space and water heating are two subjects that I quite often muse about. Western Australia has a surfeit of sunshine and natural gas - a situation which has led to the dominance of solar and gas heaters in the domestic water heating market. I still remember the days of my youth when the hot water supply to the family home in Kalamunda was my responsibility. Every afternoon I would come home from school and light up the fire at the bottom of our Braemar wood-fired hot water system. I used to entertain myself, on days when I felt like stoking up a good fire, with seeing how high I could make the temperature gauge go. It's highest reading was 140' and I took great delight in jamming the needle against the stop above that reading. Of course this led to steam coming out of the hot water pipes instead of hot water, but it was a small price to pay.

We lived on a farm then and collecting wood meant going for a walk in the uncleared land behind the house and picking it up off the ground. Down in the inner suburbs, wood is neither that accessible or that cheap. So I had mentally resigned myself, should I ever get the chance to start with a clean slate, to a house in the suburbs with space heating and hot water powered by natural gas. Suddenly there is a wood alternative. Travelling on the freeway as frequently as I do means that there is a steady and cheap supply of wood right outside my car door. Care would have to be taken collecting it but it would, in a way, be a poetic example of striking back at the system. Perth, with its low density housing and consequently spread-out metropolitan area, has the highest per capita car ownership in Australia as well as the highest per capita petrol consumption. If that intrinsically wasteful (if very pleasant) social planning can result in cheap hot water, even if only for one family, then perhaps there is some balance in the universe after all.

All that is needed now is a wood-fired hot water system that will not add to the pall of smoke that hangs over many of Perth's inner suburbs on calm, cold winter nights. Or maybe I should just move back to the farm.

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LETTERS FROM OUR MATES - compiled by Perry -

It appears that the mention of restaurants, in whatever guise, strikes a chord with many of our readers. Harry Warner, Jr. is obviously someone who like eavesdropping at other tables.

...there was a pair of young men who spent most of their meal arguing

quite loudly and several times I thought they were certain to come to blows. They argued over the proper way to use a wrench in the plumbing trade they both seemed to follow, they yelled at each other over the merits of another restaurant or the lack thereof, they disputed the wisdom of placing bets on certain teams in the National Football League, and they went on like that for perhaps a half-hour. Finally one said to the other: "I guess I ought to tell you. I've been sleeping with your wife." His companion responded: "I sort of thought you were. Well, no sweat." They got up, paid their bill, and left, chatting amiably.

Mike Glicksohn, like a few others that wrote, couldn't or wouldn't remember any embarrassing personal anecdotes so did the next best thing and dumped it on someone else.

I have it on good authority that many years ago at a restaurant that liked to think of itself as serving meals Like Mother Used To, Bruce Pelz called over the waitress and ordered a particular dessert, only to be told frostily, "Not until you finish your vegetables." If this tale is apocryphal it ought not to be!

John Foyster moved a little closer to home and took us to task over a passing remark.

On page 5 you refer to the Danube as being "staffed by kindly Jewish Mother types". I have never before heard the word "kindly" used within a paragraph or two of any reference to staff at the Danube, and it seems to me that you insult them by suggesting that they were born of man and woman; their cruelty to new or small customers is legendary, and I can only assume that major brain surgery was performed on Irwin at some point during his most recent visit to the Danube.

Not brain surgery just different perceptions John; half Irwin's ancestry were Jewish mothers. He tells me the Danube staff don't, really, hold a candle to his grandmother at her best. Nor for that matter his sister, and she isn't even a mother. We can't allow John Foyster to escape that easily though. Big Name Fans have to expect attention, of whatever sort. Firstly, Jack Herman:

Foyster's restrained reporting reminded me of the good old days of Sydney fandom when we used to get together regularly and meet monthly at the SSFF. Ah, the joys of entering Maxy's and saying, "A table for 25, please." Or the fun of the regular serious book and/or film discussion at the SSFF as everyone talked at once, several of them on the subject of the evening's topic. We always admired the less anarchic ways of Melbourne fandom, where the gentlepeople paid attention to whomever they had invited to talk. Such was John's skill that he even managed to give character to some of the fans he mentioned.

The praise over, we can now move on to what really happened at the June Nova Mob from two Who Were Actually There. Lucy Sussex:

I have never fallen over drunk at a fannish party, or any other kind of party. If Foyster does not stop this character assassination I will tell the world how he brings chocolate-covered meringues to ASFF meets, and doesn't let anyone else eat them. Also, I was misquoted. Foyster left the "hooray" off the anecdote. It should have read: "Only twice this year, maybe he's getting over it, hooray!" The "hooray" adds that certain frisson to the tale.

And Yvonne Rousseau adds fuel to the fire by explaining that:

John Foyster's "Nova Mob Nights" has got the June meeting a little bit wrong. This is because (apart from reporting his impressions and a few comments he made) he has had to leave himself out; and the whole style of a Nova Mob alters when John Foyster is absent.

In June, having arrived late for the second Nova Mob in succession (this time, because a civilian car stopped in front of my tram; the time before, because the Queen drove in front of my bus), I sat on the floor near the doorway, with my view of the Foyster almost totally obscured. Thus, I was unable to observe whether he engaged in those eye-rollings and forehead-wrinklings and thrashings-about of a-man-tortured-by-inconceivable-stupidity which Nova Mob speakers and discussers must learn to cope with (their various methods offering interesting lights on their ... personalities). Asked once by John Foyster why she had not spoken a second time at the Nova Mob, Jenny Blackford matter-of-factly replied it was because John Foyster had yawned and groaned through her first talk and had announced afterwards that he had never heard anything so boring in all his life. "No, no," I protested, in possibly an over-sincere manner. "You can't mean that John would say a thing like that..." John, on the other hand, seemed mildly astonished that Jenny should be so sensitive.

Since the Nova Mob had moved from the Foysters' house to the Blackfords', coping with the Foyster style is a little less complicated. A contingent from the Danube restaurant, being greeted on the Foyster threshold by John exclaiming, "Go away! You can't come in; it isn't eight o'clock yet!" was somewhat stymied by its sensitive status as his guest. Not knowing John very well at this time, I merely murmured, as we all sidled past him, "Ah, John; hospitable as ever, I see..." whereupon he seemed disconcertingly disconcerted, but recovered and ran at me with a chair.

WAHF: Brian Earl Brown who would've written his loo while on strike, except that he isn't allowed to strike, Philip Collins who writes of Tarzan-A-Grams and Rambo-Grams - the mind boggles. Taral Wayne, Rob Gregg, Helen McWabb, Lucy Huntzinger who, after purchasing a copy of a Travel Guide to Australia to research the true meaning of this journal's title, sent along some very interesting photocopies with the best bits highlighted. The pick of these just has to be "the larrikin is a compulsive lowbrow." Blood oath. Dave Collins, Grair Hilton, Bruce Gillespie who thinks that "Perry really should stop spreading this impression that he spends all his time in pubs or restaurants drinking." Don't see why Bruce - it's pretty close to the mark. Ian Covell, Walt Willis, Kim Huett, Jeanne Gomoll, Brad Foster, and Pamela J. Boal. Thank you one and all. You should have figured out how the letter column works by now so no more clues. If not it's quite obvious there's a few kangaroos in your top paddock.

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X MARKS THE SPOT      When she lotted LARRIKIN I Pamela Boal expressed the hope that she wouldn't have to send us a monthly loc  
 - Irwin & Perry -      to get every issue of our monthly fanzine. As it happens, Pamola has probably ensured a long stay on our mailing list by virtue of her's being the first letter written specifically to comment on our fanzine. But only one person can occupy such a position, and it is about time we answered the basic point of Pamela's question.

We've discussed the matter of when we start dropping people for non-response and have decided that we'll give everyone at least four issues

before we throw anyone into the void. Once someone has received four issues we'll keep them on the mailing list for only as long as we feel comfortable about the idea. And just in case you hadn't noticed this is the fourth issue of LARRIKIN, and some of you are in danger of being dropped. If there is a 'X' in the space at the right consider yourself warned.

THE "A GOOD JOKE'S A GOOD JOKE NO MATTER WHERE YOU STEAL IT FROM" DEPT.  
No. 1 on a continuing series. - Perry -

In an attempt to increase their overseas sales Carlton United Breweries decided a few years ago to promote their famous Fosters' Lager in France. This worked very well and Fosters' started to gain something of a cult following amongst the Parisians who have a taste for the good stuff.

Seeing this, the other part of the Australian brewing duopoly, Castlemaine-Tooheys, attempted to do the same by exporting their leader, XXXX (pronounced Fourex) to the same country. The company approached the Department of Trade for assistance in this venture but was met with horrified looks from the public servants and an absolute refusal to help. The brewer's representatives were mystified at this and naturally enough wanted to know why. They were told that the reason behind the refusal was very simple: Fourex was the name of the most popular French condom.

If that wasn't bad enough and even if Castlemaine-Tooheys did decide to go ahead and export the beer, it leaves one to wonder how they might possibly advertise the product. You see, their major commercials here in Australia are based around a jingle whose major refrain runs "I Can Feel a Fourex Coming On!"

Who do you think published THE MOTIONAL?

PRINTED MATTER



LARRIKIN 4

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