

LARRIKIN 5, OCTOBER 1986, is edited and published by Perry Middlemiss (GPO Box 2708X, Melbourne, Victoria 3001, AUSTRALIA) and Irwin Hirsh (2/416 Dandenong Rd., Caulfield North, Victoria 3161 AUSTRALIA). This fanzine is available for written contributions - articles, letters of comment, postcards etc. - or fanzines in trade (one to each of us please) or even artwork. Many thanks as usual to Pam Wells in Britain for all her help as agent, Marc Ortlieb for the mailing labels and to Craig Hilton (page 1) and Arthur Thompson (page 8) for the artwork. All rights revert to contributors after publication. IRWIN HIRSH FOR GUFF

A DAY AT THE FOOTY

- Robyn Mills -

The editorial policy of this fanzine to football should by now be well known. Football in Victoria (as for the editors) is akin to religion, with some bright spark recently suggesting that the Pope should even "guest ump" a game during his forthcoming tour. Bearing this in mind and considering my Catholic upbringing, it appeared reasonable to join the religious throngs and attend one of the grand ceremonies at the MCG (Melbourne's Football Cathedral) - after all, the match was on a Sunday and A Qualifying Final and it beat the heck out of going to church or demoulding the bathroom, my other two alternatives.

This grand adventure into another form of Australian fandom had a very innocent beginning - "the inter-office memo". Two tickets in the members' stand were offered, a quick phone call to Perry was made, tickets purchased and fate was sealed.

In the weeks preceding the match, Perry gave me lessons on the important aspects of the game and by the time the big day came around, I was fully versed and could shout in my best Strine, "lift your game", "carn the Blues", "what do ya think this is ya mug - a girl's game?'

But for the uninitiated female, many problems still arose - what did I wear? - what was I going to read? - what was I going to knit? - what food did we need to take? (This last problem was, in fact, solved by Justin "Pigout" Ackroyd who, on the eve of the match, was invited for a civilised dinner and ended up eating the whole roast in his bare hands, thereby depriving us of lunch the next day and left-overs for the rest of the week). Eventually, all attempts to add a feminine touch to the great event were stamped on and the only items taken were a rug to sit on and a small "trannie" to listen to

the commentary.

The big day finally dawned (in typical Melbourne fashion) gloomy, dark and threatening rain. As home is only a short tram ride to the MCG we decided to catch one, only to be accosted by none other than Mr. Ackroyd himself, who stared wide-eyed at the sight of Perry in a tie!! Yes folks, to go to this big game, Perry had to wear a tie, a feat never before achieved (and probably never again). But the tie was ideologically sound - it was black and it was leather.

Arriving at the ground and having no idea of where to go, we latched onto two elderly respectable fellow spectators who were obviously members; who else would wear three-piece grey suits and old school tie to the football! We followed them through the car park and found our carefully chosen seats. A seat at the football is chosen for views of the video score-board and the goals, and closeness to the "Four'n'Twenty" pie stand and the bar.

After a lot of fanfare comprising of booing, hissing and the national anthem, the game commenced. For the uninitiated (such as myself) I will explain the game as I viewed it - thirty-six men on two teams wearing the barest essentials, each trying to kick the little red oblong ball from one end of the field to the other. Controlling this process are the umpires - men who wear white and attempt to control blokes three times their size with a barely audible whistle. Points are awarded for eye-gouging, head-butting, kicking in the groin, pushing your opponent over and abusing the umpire. The game's spectators, in the meantime, also shout abuse, wave team colours, eat cold pies and generally barrack themselves into a frenzy. If you miss any of the action (i.e. punches in the stomach) it is instantly replayed on the large video screen in full living colour to ensure that nobody misses the highlights. The action is so heated that the game is broken into four quarters, each of thirty minutes duration.

During the intervals, each team's coach works out tactics with his players. That is, how to get maximum bloodshed without getting reported in the next quarter.

The game we viewed was between the Sydney Swans and Carlton and flavour was added by the appearance of David Rhys-Jones and Warwick Capper; probably the two most hated football players in the league. Every time Mr. Capper got his hands on the ball, the MCG went into an uproar of hisses and boos emanating from all stands. When the match was eventually finished Mr. Capper was the very first of the players left standing to leave the ground - I wonder why.

When the final siren sounded and the results were known (Carlton by about twenty points) we packed up our rug and unplugged the "trannie" and commenced pushing our way through the throngs of football fans (all dissecting the game and the players' performances) for a brisk walk home. It amused me, as we walked, that some fans had parked cars as far away as we lived. We, too, walked dissecting the game, or more correctly, Perry dissected while I nodded and grunted in the appropriate places (or the places I believed appropriate). There were two reasons for this, firstly I was carrying all our gear and accordingly lagged behind - after all we are Australians and this appears to be the typical female function - and secondly, I was still hard of hearing due to having had shouted in my right ear for the last two and a half hours, "come on the blue boys" by a human ghetto-blaster behind us.

Eventually we reached home only to find it was six o'clock and time for the TV replay of the game.

THAT FANZINE

- Irwin -

Back in the days when we were publishing Thyme, Andrew Brown and I planned to put out a one-shot called "Thymol". I don't remember the reason why we never pubbed the ish, and because we didn't I promptly forgot about our plans. But I was reminded of it with the recent publication of The Motional. In the same way that TM is a parody of Leigh Edmonds and Valma Brown's The Notional, "Thymol" was to be a parody of our newszine, and while we weren't going to put our names on the issue we were going to provide enough clues to point people's suspicions in our directions. But the comparison ends there. While TM was published as a criticism of what Leigh and Valma have been putting through their newszine, "Thymol" was to be full of fake news, to do nothing more than give our readers a laugh. Among the items of "news" we were going to report were items with these headlines: 'Leigh Edmonds in Ornithopter Tragedy', 'Jean Weber to Work as Flo Bjelke-Petersen's Speech Writer', 'Carey Handfield Chokes on Chinese Noodle', and 'No more Crushing Blows: Bruce Gillespie wins Tattsлото'.

Last issue we asked who you thought put out The Motional. We weren't the first to ask the question, only the first to do so in print. Just trying to be up with the burning issues of the day. So who did put it out and took no credit for it, especially when there is a lot of agreement with the criticisms contained therein? It has been suggested that no-one will ever own up to accept the praise. (My major criticism of the zine is that its perpetrator(s) didn't have the courage of their convictions to put their signatures to the thing.)

If you were to ask Justin Ackroyd who his suspects are he'll tell you that he has his ideas but that he isn't going to say, as he is enjoying watching everyone go hell-for-leather. He does this with such a smug manner that I think he is hiding something. I don't think he did it (what? Justin write eight pages of a fanzine! Don't make me laugh), but there is something which tells me he knows what we all suspect. And unless he changes his attitude I think that the next convention we should take Justin out and throw stencil stylii at the boy.

Names have been tossed up for consideration with gay abandon. In fact, Russell Blackford writes to suggest:

A competition to see who has heard the most rumours as to who published The Motional, and with points added for the best juxtaposition of suggestions and suggestors? My list: John Foyster (suggested by Damien Broderick), Damien Broderick, Irwin Hirsch, Perry Middlemiss, Marc Ortlieb, Jean Weber, Eric Lindsay, Sally Beasley, or all of the above (suggested by John Foyster, who has a fertile imagination), Leigh Edmonds and Valma Brown (suggested by Yvonne Rousseau, who got the idea from someone else, perhaps Bruce Gillespie), Roger Weddall and Peter Burns (suggested by almost everyone). Jenny Blackford insists that it's Ortlieb and Weddall. Virtually all of the above have, to my knowledge, denied any connection with the cruel prank - the notable exceptions being Hirsch and Middlemiss. Ladies and Gentlemen, Boys and Girls, denying time's here.

I don't know about this "Hirsch" fellow but I didn't do it. As for my esteemed co-editor (and typist of this issue) ... well, when Carey Handfield asked me if Perry could've done it my immediate reaction was a straight, dead "No". Then Christine Ashby suggested Perry and that got me to change my attitude. Being an old Canberrite, and having spent a week up there a couple months ago, it was very easy for Perry to ensure that The Motional had a Canberra postmark. And recently when asked to deny having done the act, Perry deftly avoided the issue and moved on to some other matter. Perry has been telling everyone that he wasn't sent a copy, but this strikes me as a way of brushing off any suspicion at the pass, but should he have done it why would he have wasted a good stamp sending it to himself?

THE NATIONAL DISH

- Perry -

The humble Australian meat pie has taken something of a pasting of late - which I find rather lamentable. The pie's pastry has been accused of being nothing more than a tacky mixture of flour, water and salt, and its filling to be mostly gristle and gravy holding together a concoction of unidentifiable meat off-cuts. That may well be the case and in this day of dietary consciousness it has become an object of derision and scorn. But such supercilious complaints about its constituents totally disregard its true place in modern Oz society. Where would the average Aussie football fan be without his pie and dead horse in one hand and his cold tinny in the other? Overbalanced, that's where. In the heaving and shoving crowds in the outer one's balance is a quite precarious thing, yet a studious concentration on the uniform consumption of pie and beer allows for a feeling of pleasant equilibrium - and not only of the perpendicular maintaining variety.

Australians are renown, rightly or wrongly, for inventing nicknames or slang terms for all they hold dear, and many they don't. Yet no colloquialisms of any form have yet assailed the ears of this life-long pie eater. One can only assume, therefore, that Australians hold the meat pie in such high regard that they dare not insult its sanctity by bestowing upon it any derisive epithet to besmirch its good name - rather like lamingtons, Vegemite and pavlovas.

In fact, to the best of my knowledge, only South Australians have gone so far as to apply a nickname to the actual manner of serving a pie. A "pie floater" is just a good old meat pie floating in a big bowl of thick green split-pea soup. Taken with lashings of tomato sauce, vinegar and pepper it has been known to soak up the residues of many an alcoholic binge.

Yanks may have their hot dogs and the Poms their fish and chips, but the downtrodden Aussie meat pie is sure to outlast them all. Held in such high esteem is it that Rod Hill of the Federation of Australian Pie Connoisseurs composed this rival national anthem in 1976:

When the Englishmen go out to dine
Roast beef their staple dish,
The Russians all eat caviar,
And Eskimos chew fish,
The French, they say, are fond of frogs;
The Yanks - Kentucky fries:
But dinkum Aussies, one and all

Shout: 'Give us hot meat pies!'
Yes, dinkum Aussies, one and all
Shout: 'Give us hot meat pies!'

What more can a young lad say. It's enough to bring tears to your eyes.

LETTERS FROM OUR MATES (issue 3) - compiled by Irwin -

We start off with some words from Jack Herman:

I would never willingly submit myself to the deprivations of the Opera, like John McPharlin has done. Ordinary opera is bad enough - I can never appreciate the overly loud, overly repetitious librettos - but Wagner is worse. The only solution is to listen to Anne Russell's version which is over quite quickly or one on an album called "Miniatures" which includes a version of the Ring Cycle in One Minute. About my attention span for Wagner.

The mention of opera brings us to Harry Warner, Jr., who had problems with the colophon instructions with our first issue but...

...no trouble this time. I can truthfully say that I have no intentions of upsetting the Australian government by continuing my old pastime of gill-netting in Australian waters.

Maybe the left knee of jeans wears through first because most of us are right-handed people and our legs as well as our arms tend to be a trifle more muscular on the right side than on the left, leaving less padding between bone and jean on the left side. Of course, the circumstance might also be attributed to the current political tendencies in fandom.

Walt Willis particularly enjoyed...

... Judith Hanna's letter. About the Proletarian Function of Cricket in the Class Struggle... The proletariat toil all day in the field, fetching and carrying for the exploitative batsmen class. Their only weapon are red balls (i.e. the works of Marx). Eventually the proletariat prevail, and their leaders become batsmen, taking over all power and privilege, like elitist shops and cars and luxury housing. But the majority continue to toil in the field until in time with a new lot of red balls (e.g. Trotsky or Mao), a new lot of leaders get their innings. I wouldn't be surprised if Judith's analysis of the sociological significance of cricket were different, but that only demonstrates the universal significance of the game.

Shep was in sympathy with John McPharlin's attitude to Sundays.

I always think that Sundays are the closest we will ever come to making time stand still. As with time, I find that everyone instinctively knows it is there. Although you cannot touch it, see it, smell it, or even hear it, you can tell it's a Sunday! Example: As soon as my wife, Jean, shouts up the stairs; "Don't you think it's time you dragged yourself out of bed David (my Sunday name) and cut the lawns?", I think, "Gawd, Sunday again already?"

WAHF: Linda Gowing, Judith Hanna, Pamela J. Boal, Marilyn Pride (just back from her DUFF trip): "How about a regular Sunday feature with other fans? It's the first newish thing I've seen in a fanzine for some time." Not a bad idea at that. Sally Beasley and Bill Sharpe.

Who is Katherine Chopin and why is she dumping it on Ian Nichols?

A MEETING When Irwin and I got engaged Irwin's parents decided that rather than host one big engagement party they would host a series of Sunday Brunches. "We don't like big crowds", they gave as their excuse.

- Wendy Hirsh -

What this meant was that each Sunday morning 15-20 people were invited over to eat, drink, and say a toast to Irwin's and my health. And I mean every Sunday. To say it was a drag is an understatement. I didn't enjoy going over every Sunday morning to meet people I barely knew - if that - and who I probably wouldn't get to know. Irwin didn't like it because his Sunday sleep-ins were continually broken, and there were always people he didn't know who weren't going to be invited to the wedding reception.

It wasn't too soon before Irwin and I developed a system where he would stay in bed till I arrived, usually quite late, and we would go in to be introduced. Every week Etta (Irwin's mother) would introduce us to those around the table: "This is Wendy and Irwin, and this is Bob, Ted, Alice,...(etc)". Apart from those few people I already knew I would immediately forget every name.

One particular Sunday I walked in and saw just one vaguely familiar face. I didn't remember his name or where I'd met him, so I took particular note when Etta made the introductions.

"Wendy, this is Bob, and Ted, and Carol, and Judy, and Clive, and..." At that point I remembered. Clive is Irwin's old school head master. We had met once before. I went over to say hi.

"I know you. We've met before?"

"No, I don't think we have", was the reply.

"Yes we have. Aren't you connected to ERA School?"

"No, not ERA. My kids went to Preshil. But not ERA."

"We have met. I'm sure of it."

"No, I don't think so."

At this point I noticed that a few people in the room were taking notice of our conversation.

"So how do I know you?"

He shrugged his shoulders. "I don't know."

By now everyone was listening in to our conversation. Some were smirking, while others were just staring. I started to feel embarrassed. I was positive, though, that I had met this man before and I continued to press him about it. And he continued to shrug me off. But what was particularly annoying was that he refused to tell me who he was. In addition to being embarrassed I was getting frustrated.

We continued going around in circles. Finally Irwin interjected, saying "Wendy, this man is to me what Andrew Peacock is to you."

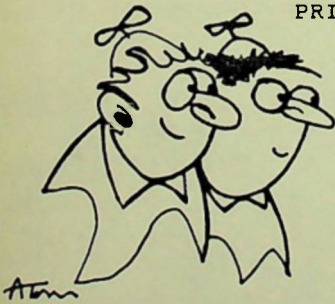
therefore find out for themselves in less than felicitous circumstances.

Firstly, if you intend to fry rice, you still have to boil it beforehand. Even the rice in Rice-a-Riso, which is supplied for frying purposes only, has been boiled at some stage before you see it. The packet does not tell you this, but it is true nevertheless. If, for some reason which makes sense to you at the time, you decide to pad out the rice in the Rice-a-Riso packet with a handful or so of very similar looking brown rice purchased cheaply at the local K-Mart, what you end up with is a large number of hard, black lumps, some of which explode unexpectedly out of the frying pan at you. Those which remain in the frying pan, mixed in with the rest of the food, cannot easily be separated out, nor can they be eaten, unless you are really (and I mean really) desperate. This I know from experience.

The second tip stars Paul Stokes, the third Karamazov brother, and arises from the time when we shared the house at Cthulhu Corners. A fellow teacher had given Paul a dynamite recipe for curry but, perhaps because she is a woman and therefore takes certain knowledge for granted, she omitted to mention some of the ingredients do not go into the curry directly. These items are placed in a muslin bag, which is suspended into the curry pot. During cooking, their flavours ooze out and contribute to the overall taste sensation, but the bag and its diabolical contents are removed before ingestion is attempted. In the absence of this significant piece of information, the resulting curry proved to be one of Paul's few culinary catastrophes. While the odd mouthful clearly demonstrated promise (which was not kept), all too many contained overpowering and inedible surprises in the form of lemon grass, corriander seeds or pieces of bay leaf. A gloom descended over the dinner table amid recriminations and threats to call the poisons advisory bureau. As far as I am aware, this is the only instance where the curry itself was a failure, so always remember "It's not the taste, it's the afterburn!".

Beware the big red "X" next to the mailing label mate. If you've got it you'd better write or contact us somehow.

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