

MUDHUTTER

F O O T B A L L E X P R E S S

NO DECKCHAIRS

NO WINDBREAKS

NO SUNCREAM

NO SHIRTS



MEXICO '86 FIRST SEASON IN THE LEAGUE

WIGGIN PARK GOT TO ITALIA '90 SABOTAGE TIMES

POSTCARD FROM MYKONOS CLASSIC MUDHUTS

AND TONS MORE



2010 SUMMER SPECIAL



SO WHAT YOU GOING TO DO WHEN THE NOVELTY HAS GONE?

Wild scenes of ecstasy prevail on the Fylde Coast as tangerine face painted dickheads go delirious with joy as their little club beats all the odds to reach the promised land and can look forward to visiting the great grounds (never stadia you prick) of English football, probably getting stuffed in the process but hey they'll have a laugh.



Down the road in another Lancashire town moaning buggers call for the manager's head because we only finished 16th, got tonked heavily by nearly all of those self same big boys (although beating three out of four of them at home) whose grounds they can no longer be arsed visiting any more because it's too expensive. Calling for the manager's head for his ineptness. A decent, knowledgeable football man with passion for a humble club which he learned to love. Learning his trade in a big league and trying to get a team to play the right way on a limited budget.

The only difference between Wigan Athletic fans and Blackpool fans is perception. The dream that Blackpool fans never believed possible is nothing but a memory that a good chunk of so called Wiganers have now taken for granted. We are in exactly the same situation as them, and will be every year until we get relegated or Sepp Blatter

discovers disco biscuits and has a mad 'un. The fact that the Blackpudlians will love it and a large part of our support moaned their way like fuck through last season only goes to show how spoilt some people have become.

If I read one more Internet bell end saying 'I'm a lifelong fan but I'm not going again if Martinez is still in charge' I'll scream. If you're stopping going purely because little Wigan aren't taking enough points off other much bigger Premier League fans or you don't like the system, or the manager, then you aren't really much of a fan at all, certainly not a lifelong fan. May I be as bold to suggest that you might just have OD'd on Sky Sports and Talksport and perhaps fuck off back to watching whoever it was before you became a 'lifelong fan of Wigan Athletic'. The rest of us who are left will seek out that long forgotten beating heart and take our club back thank you very much.

We stayed up, we had ten magical never to be forgotten minutes against Arsenal at home, we've got a good young team and a good young manager. If you want fireworks and textbook tactics every week then maybe you'd be better off staying at home playing on computer games. Let's hope 2010/11 is the year we kick on as a team and rebuild some of the dreadful divisions between fans who used to be some of the tightest in the country. (in every sense arf arf)

TRY TAKING THIS TO THE BOG

That's enough football for the moment especially given that we launch this in the midst of a World Cup tournament, much more of which inside. You may notice that this online Portable Document Format (see we educate as well as abuse each other) looks exactly like that

printed thing you may occasionally relieve yourself of £1.50 for in order to procure it from a surly, middle aged fella on match days. Or you acquire from a newsagent stealthily slipped inside a knock mag. Or maybe you stopped reading it years ago because we're a bunch of cliquey, self important, know it all bastards. Well that bit's definitely not changed but at least you're not paying to read this pile of bollocks in the meantime.

The times are a changing and although the easily foldable, left down the back of the pub seat print version will continue to rear it's head in the up coming season, we will also look to bring out an online version periodically as well. What you have on your screen is 44 pages of free fanzine that you can probably still read on the bog if you've got a phone that cost more than a week's wage. We've got old stuff, new stuff, tasters for the new season and reviews of the last season. Football, music and general bollocks.

If this is your first exposure to our fanzine, well you might just find a little ad or two to point you in the direction of our very reasonable back issue and subscription rates.

We will also be adding loads of content, old and new to our new (ugly) sister Website [The Mudhutter](#), whilst continuing to pack [Mudhuts Media](#) full of the kind of features you've come to expect.

Feel free to leave us feedback at [The Mudhutter](#) if you like what you read - and of course if you don't. And we are always on the look out for new contributors of all ages and viewpoints.

All we exist to do is to serve Wigan Athletic fans and independent writing in the town and keeping that fanzine spirit alive. So in the words of the mildly intimidating 80's football chant: Come and join us, come and join us, come and join us over here.....

Cheers, Jimmy

THE CONTRIBUTORS WORLD CUP PANEL

Jimmy: Michel Platini, Migs: Sepp Blatter, Tony Topping: Kevin Keegan, Orrible Ives: Edgar Davids, Andy Brown: James Corden, Dirrrryoldman: Craig Burley, Les Bagg: Louis Van Gaal, Tat: Alan Shearer, OPM: Andy Townsend, Sean Livesey: Clarence Seedorf, Finton: Ruud Gullit, NeilM: Gabby Yorath. Special thanks go to James Brown (the writer and publisher, not the dead Godfather of Soul).

The views and opinions contained herein are those of the individual contributors and not of Mudhuts Media. Any resemblance to any person living or dead is purely coincidental, especially if it turns out that it's libellous.

For more info, please visit [Mudhuts Media](#) or [The Mudhutter](#). Alternatively e-mail as at info@mudhutsmedia.co.uk.

Obviously elusive purchasing points, as we don't sell as many as we used to, are on the bridge or outside Rigaletto's on match days. Alternatively, you can buy the MFE at any one of these fine retail establishments - Wigan Wallgate Station Kiosk, Sam's Bar on Frog Lane, The Brickmakers on Woodhouse Lane, Mesnes Rd. News, Sparks News on Wallgate, KMS News on White Street up Pem and Waterstones in the Grand Arcade.

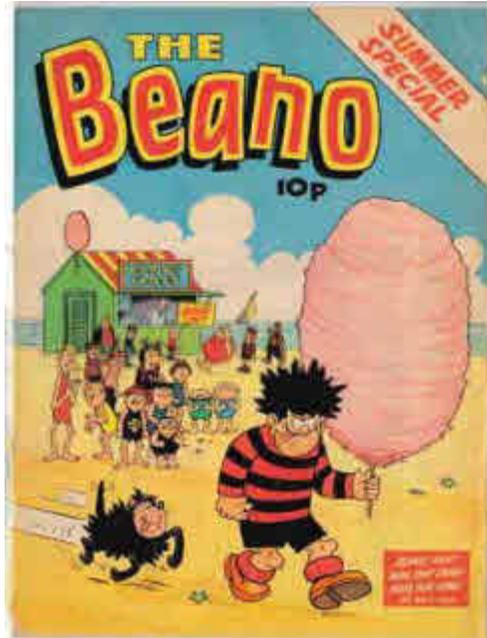
The front cover image is by David Nightingale. Go to www.chromasia.com for more fantastic work by David and his wife Libby. If even that is too much work for you, just click on the image.

Next (printed) issue will be on sale at the Chelsea match .

Have a Retro Summer

Fill a bottle with water and go to a park or Haigh Hall
Play football from dinner till it goes dark
Throw a tyre over a lamppost
Tie a rope to a lamppost and swing on it
Swing from a tree in the woods like Mr Ives
Make a catty
Go nesting
Stick a straw up a frogs bum
Go ratting
Play Skillie
Peruse the penny tray
Suck a Jubbly
Make Vimto lollies
Camp out in someone's back garden
And tell ghost stories about red clogs
Make a gun from wood
Use a washing up liquid bottle as a water pistol
Madden your Mam by using it before it was empty
Climb on your wash house
Break in an empty house
Lie on the grass reading comics
Get a Summer Special Beano
Play splits with your penknife
Make a raft on the canal
Go fishing
Cycle to Southport
Jump over people's hedges in your Grand National
Have your own street World Cup or Olympics
Wait for the ice cream man
Spot your Mam and Dad through the Labour club windows
Get some cheese and crackers from them
With a wooden spreader and a little onion
And an occasional plastic sword without the cherry
Fall in love with the girl across the road
But don't let your mates know
Get pop from the pop man
Hit golf balls all over Laithwaite field
Get a football fixture card
And the Shoot league ladders
Watch a friendly and be really interested
Listen to Radio Caroline in bed
Make bubbles in tarmac
Start a fire with a magnifying glass
Get some baseball pumps

- **Tony Topping**



ORRIBLE IVES WORLD CUP FIVES

Five Foods at Finton's BBQ

Sausage plait
Italian Kebab
Marinated belly pork
Potato salad
Spicy couscous

Five World Cup footballs

Adidas Telstar
Adidas Tango
Adidas Azteca
Adidas Tricolore
Adidas Jabulani

Five Foods at migs' house

Bacon
Hyams
Mars Bars
Hermesetas
Lard

Five World Cup fouls

Jose Batista on Gordon Strachan -
1986
Benjamin Massing on Claudio Caniggia
- 1990
Leonardo on Tab Ramos - 1994
Harald Schumacher on Patrick
Battiston - 1982
Ramón Quiroga on Grzegorz Lato -
1978

Five Great World Cup commentaries

"Kempes one nil"
"El ray Pele"
"Ohhhhhh, Pat Bonner"
"Beautifully brought down by
Bergkamp... Oh what a goal!! "
"Maradona, he's got Burrachaga to his
left, Valdano to his left, he won't, he
won't need any of them. Oh you have
to say that's magnificent."

Five World Cup Final stadiums

Azteca, Mexico
Estadio River Plate, Buenos Aires
Santiago Bernabeu
Stadio Olimpico, Roma
Olympic Stadion, Berlin

Five Things you hear on a golf course

"Fore"
"Twat"
"C*nt"
"Bollocks"
"Sorry"

Five Great World Cup moments

The ephedrine scream, 1994
Marco, Marco, Marco, 1982
Pele's Dummy, 1970
Banks's save, 1970
Zinedine Zidane's sister, 2006

Five Things that have pissed me off lately

Scousers at Ingleton Falls
Donnelly
Robert Green
Bluebottles
Shearer & Hansen

Five people ruining my World Cup

James Corden (C*nt)
Clive Tyldesley
Adrian Chiles
Vernon Kay
Robert Green

Five People who love a drag on a cig

Johan Cruyff
Dave Allen
Les Bagg
Peter Cook
Ardi Rizal

- **Orrible Ives**

SABOTAGE TIMES

May 2010 saw the launch of a new electronic magazine called *Sabotage Times* from a man who is said to have led the way in defining the modern men's magazine marketplace with involvement in *loaded*, *Jack* and the recently relaunched *sky sports magazine*. However, *Sabotage Times* is somewhat different in its M.O. than many of the myriad of other media titles out there. MFE interviewed its creator, **James Brown** to find out more about his latest flame and some of his other work as well.



MFE: Firstly, Why the title Sabotage Times?

JB: Well first up thanks for the interview. I felt like I'd unwittingly sabotaged my last project, *Jack* magazine, to a degree, I'd made it hard to get into so I liked that word, I thought if I used it, it would be staring me in the face and I wouldn't do anything but give it my all. I like the Beasties song too. I couldn't get sabotage.com and I liked the idea of it looking clean like a newspaper so I added Times. It's more distinctive.

MFE: And roughly speaking what are you covering within the pages?

JB: Football, interviews, crime, travel, fashion anything the writers want to pitch really. We've got a lot of film and a mixture of new articles and old ones from the archives. I've already found some really good new writers and then I've had contributions from people like Jon Wilde, Chris Sullivan, Alex Godfrey, Trevor Ward and Ben Raworth who I've worked with before. Then there are a few people from message boards like Keith Wildman (KW) and Russ Litten who've written really good stories. It was designed by Simon Brown at &&& Creative and one of his guys there - Lucas Kroll. Simon worked on *Jack* and *Hotdog* with me and Jon Link and he's got a successful design company of his own now. I bought in a bloke called Matt Weiner who I'd always remember had just missed out on a features job on *Jack*. He's great at coming up with story ideas and he'd just left *442*. So at the moment it's just me and him and various writers chipping in.

MFE: So why are you doing an online mag instead of print?

JB: Doing it online really just stemmed from the ease of setting something up, plus trying to make something more constructive of all the time I spent on OneMickJones.com. I wanted a job I could do from anywhere, and the site is one of a few different strands to what we're doing. We're promoting the first London *Modern Toss* exhibition (see www.sabotagetimes.com/life/modern-toss-london-exhibition/) and there'll be more exhibitions coming up. I'm going to do a limited edition mag in the autumn if I can get a couple of good sponsors. I'm also talking to a couple of people about doing mag/books that I think people will like.

MFE: How you think Sabotage Times will work as a magazine format on the web when others such as Maxim, Monkey and the like, that turn up in our inboxes, don't appear to?

JB: A few months ago when I started to get the stories in, I thought about what the guys who write for me have as individuals and what happens when I bring their articles together. As I was getting excited by compiling these stories and seeing what they looked like sitting next to each other - which is essentially one of the key skills of

editing - I decided that what we have that other magazines don't have is *soul*. This is ironic given my name but that's what I think the guys like Jon Wilde and Chris Sullivan have, soul and authenticity. They really give a fuck about what they're writing about. I think people identify with that. Having said that there are some very strange articles that KW reviewed for another mag I worked on privately; like a £136,000 bed and so on and I just chucked them in to bulk it up and give it some heritage. They are certainly a little odd alongside his *Favourite Trainers* and *Real Ale Haunts*.

How does it differ from the others? They've all got massive overheads, and lot of staff, are required to provide profit for big companies and have a print media mentality. *Sabotage Times* is driven by enthusiasm. We do it from our keyboards - wherever they may be.

MFE: Can you explain the syndication bit and do you think the young writers/journalists are out there?

JB: I'm constantly asked to get writers work and get writers for publications, so I just thought I'd stop doing it for free and create a service that would pay for *Sabotage Times*. Like all syndication services we split the cash with the writers. They make money for something they've already been paid for; we make some money for finding a new home for it in a new territory. We've been selling a lot of football stories about the World Cup.

Yes, there are lots of good new writers. We carried a piece on ST by Jenni Davies about *Sex and the City* which was absolutely superb. I found another woman Olivia Foster on Twitter who might become as good as Barbara Ellen was when we were on NME together. We've a young lad call Sam Rowe who's been working on it with us, and a few other guys leaving college that are supplying stories. Plus there are a lot of guys I mentioned before from OMJ and so on. Alexander Netherton is some sort of talented maniac and I guess it's just a matter with him of what he ends up with first The Booker Prize or The Priory. Andy Dawson is a very funny writer (<http://tinyurl.com/34anm7v>). They are both stars of Twitter and write for us. Andy does *Diana in Heaven* and Alexander did the spoof Paul Merson and Phil Brown characters which were so dark and just very, very funny, best things on Twitter for ages. So yes, there are lots of good writers out there.

MFE: Are the star writers still about? The Morleys, Parsons, Burchills and Penmans? The Savages, Hills, Deesons and Maconies (well maybe not our Stuart but you get our drift)?

JB: Do you mean would I use them? I doubt many would do it for free, and I always like looking for another generation of writers. By Hills I guess you mean Gavin, who sadly died. He was a great, great guy and a good writer who appeared in *The Face* and occasionally in *loaded*. I did write to his old editor about using some of his stories and she's put me in touch with his parents again. I was very upset by Gavin's death; you kind of expect writers to drink themselves to death but not drown whilst fishing. He was very popular and the church at his funeral was packed. It's nice that you remember him. He was a leader of men and women, although he often led them into very strange places. He had a great smile and apart from one time when he broke down - after too much gak in Ibiza - I can only ever think of him laughing. Anyone who's reading this and has never heard of Gavin Hills should try and find his book *Bliss to be Alive* on Amazon or eBay for interesting insights into youth culture in the early-90s. I like the name of

Morley's thing on The Guardian, *Paul Morley's Showing Off*. Parsons it still about; writing good books about parenting and relationships and he's a good guy. If you asked him for an interview he'd sit down and do it, I see him pretty regularly and in the same way Tony Wilson did, he never stops encouraging people.

Jon Savage did the Joy Division walk in Macclesfield recently; Bernard mistakenly called him Jon Sandwich when we were discussing it, which made me laugh. Martin Deeson lives in a big house on a hill over-looking the English Channel and has a great wife and enough wine and food in there to last about a decade. I don't think either of us can pinpoint the last time he wrote an article as good as the ones he did for *loaded*. I've been trying to get him to send something good in to *Sabotage Times*. Some people stop writing great songs or articles when they get happy. That might be Martin's situation. Stuart's writing books and is on the radio a lot*. I dunno about the rest of them.

**Editors note: Oh, we know all about Stuart's books...and his titles!!!*

MFE: If Primal Scream was *loaded's* house band, who's got the gig at Sabotage Times?

JB: Beastie Boys.

MFE: Do you think kids will 'get' Sabotage Times or do you think it'll be just the same old lads that nip on *Swine*, *DJ History*, *OMJ* discussing crap adidas reissues, lost nights on dance floors, their latest hernia op and their daughter's mates?

JB: Check out the comments after the articles for diversity of feedback, I can hardly understand the slagging match going on in the *Most Corrupt Football Nations* article, there's some sort of war building up between irate African football fans. There's witchcraft being threatened. Same with the Frank Lampard comments, they seem pretty young. We got more unique visits on Friday than *OMJ* gets in a month so I guess it is finding a wider audience than the sites you mentioned.

Interviewed by Andy Brown (no relation). Thanks to Jimmy, Finton Stack & Vaughanie for the additional questions.



We'll be publishing more of our interview with James in the next print issue of MFE, when he'll be telling us about Jack Magazine, One Mick Jones, Katie Price, Factory Records and whether he butters his bread with soup. In the meantime, why not check out www.sabotagetimes.com and tell them The Mudhutter sent you.

In addition to great writing, the people at Sabotage Times also do great t-shirts. Check out this Kraftwerk style Wayne Rooney design.

Priced at £15, available in red or white and limited run of 100. For more info check out:

<http://www.sabotagetimes.com/fashion-style/rooney-kraftwerk-style-t-shirts/>

I wanna play for Latics

Scharner's off to Fulham
to play Europa League.
N'Zogbia to Arsenal
and Beckford plays for Leeds.

I just wanna play for Latics.

Henrik Larsson,
Mark Viduka,
Lindsay's a Queen,
a pooper scooper.

But I just wanna play for Latics.

Whelan broke his leg,
Cup Final 1960.
Brenda rubs it nightly,
the thought it makes me sickly.

Could I have played for Latics?

A room full of dreamers
in the Bellingham tonight.
Dreaming the same dream,
guided by the sight.

We all want to play for Latics.

Dirrrrrtyoldman



WANT TO ADVERTISE IN THE MUDHUTTER?

Do you want to advertise in MFE and get your message across to hundreds of football fans? We offer very competitive prices and are seeking Latics friendly businesses to take out limited advertising space out in the MFE. Our packages also incorporate free advertising in our online Mudhutter publication which goes out to thousands of people across the world.

Prices start at £10 per issue or £40 per season. Email info@mudhutsmedia.co.uk for further details.



Follow Mudhuts Media and The Mudhutter on
Twitter

www.twitter.com/mudhutter

THE BEGINNING OF THE AFFAIR!

By Les Bagg

It all started rather painfully on a lovely summer's day in July 1978 as a group of young lads were strolling down past The Wash at Beech Hill on their way to watch Latics play Birmingham City in a friendly. We got chatting, about girls and stuff, like you do when you're 14, and I just happened to let it slip - "Them Nolan Sisters are reet dogs aren't they?"

And it hit me like a bloody hammer. CRACK! Across me ear, then another on the side of me head, I turned round to see Nedber's fist heading towards me face. I ducked and he swiped at fresh air. "What did yer do that for yer big fat twat?" "You insult the Nolans boy, and you insult Nedber!" he replied. Nedber was a Standish legend, a Latics mad 16 year old who looked 20 but knocked about with 14 year olds, I didn't know him that well, certainly not enough to know he was the North West's maddest Nolan Sisters fan. We arrived at the ground. Springfield Park looked magnificent in the sunshine, Birmingham look cool as in their yellow and blue Adidas kit and the game was a 0-0 draw. That day I got Trevor Francis' and Jim Montgomery's autographs and I fell in love. I fell in love with The Latics and I think I still am. I also still think The Nolans are dogs!



After a couple of friendly victories over top class European opposition (SP Erkenwich & St Johnstone) Tranmere Rovers got dusted over two legs in our first ever League Cup tie. Frank Corrigan scored two and had been on Kick Off before the season started talking about how him and a few of the other lads were taking a drop in money to turn pro. Gerald Sindstadt - in between visits to specialist cinemas - reckoned we were far too good for the

Fourth Division and that was good enough for me!

"Mam, can I go, can I go?"

"Where? The moon? Australia? Timbuktu? Give us a clue and I'll tell yer"

"Hereford, watchin' t'Latics"

"No"

"But Philip Martindale's goin'"

"I'm not bothered about Philip Martindale"

"You are when you say how smart he looks when he goes to church in a shirt and tie.."

CRACK!

"No, it's too far for you be mauling about on yer own at your age, now be told will yer?"

I couldn't go so we played football all Saturday afternoon then at half past four went home to watch Grandstand and hear Wigan Athletic's name read out on the classifieds for the first time ever.

"Hereford Uniiiiited nil, Wigan Athletic, nil"

We decided Grimsby Town would be our first victims at Springfield Park. BANG! - Did you hear that? That was the sound of Latics being brought back down to earth! Grimsby were bloody good and their little posse of supporters went barmy every time their lads hit the back of the net. All three times. Coming off the ground, in a season of many firsts, I heard something for the first time. A sound I've heard countless times in the 32

years since then rang out loud and shrill across the heads of the people streaming out of the Town end at 10 past 9.... "Bloooooody Rubbish Wiggin!"



By the time Newport County came to Town we'd been knocked out of the League Cup at Luton and got beaten at Reading without even scoring a goal. By twenty past four we were 3-0 down. Then it happened. Joe Hinnigan scored our first ever league goal then Ian Purdie scored our second. Unfortunately we ran out of time and lost 3-2. To top it all some bastard nicked me bob hat at the end and legged off down First Avenue with it.

Rochdale at home, midweek, up next. We'd lost 2-1 down at Wimbledon but Rochdale were crap. We'd do 'em easy. I never found out how easy we did actually do it. I'd got caught smoking at school and as well as not being able to sit down for a few days I was grounded for the Rochdale game. I climbed out of me sister's bedroom window at the front of the house, started to slide down the drainpipe and then heard me mam's voice underneath me.

"And just where does Sir Edmund Hilary think he's going?"
So I missed the fantastic 3-0 win. In't life a bitch?

The following Saturday a new Latics song was born. You know the old Land of Hope and Glory song about following the Latics over land and sea? We added the end line.... "AND BRADFORD"! Bradford brought a couple of thousand with them and they were MENTAL! There was no segregation and these scruffy Yorkshire buggers ran the show. They were all over the place up Wigan smacking folk and then they did it again in the ground every time they scored. They ended up winning 3-1 and I spent the game with me silk scarf stuffed down me kecks and a Bratfud gruffer breathing down me neck! No way was Sammy the Seal coming out and going the same was as me bob cap!

I was still banned from away games and this was the days before mobiles, the internet and even teletext. So when the trimphone in the hall made that ringing noise that all them people on "That's Life" tried imitating, at about ten to five, I thought nothing of it. Me Dad answered it and came into the front room.

"I've geet a message for yer," he said "that was your mate Boothy. He said fot tell yer "We've done it, we've gone and bloody done it" then he rang off."
Yep, Boothy, me mate who wasn't banned from away games, had just watched us beat York 1-0. He'd legged it straight out of Bootham Crescent and found a phone box. In our lives, this was our first President Kennedy moment!
Tommy Gore, 1-0 GET IN!

To read more of Les Bagg's tales of Latics' First Season in the League, get hold of The Mudhutter on match days or subscribe at www.mudhutsmedia.co.uk

WIGGIN PARK GOES TO THE WORLD CUP

There must be a hundred kids here, piling out of the park gates, legging it down the streets after us, fists shaking in the air. There's four of us in an E Reg two hundred quid white Citroen Estate. That's E Reg first time around of course bought from a local car dealer down the Miry Lane scrapyards. No need to pay for buses, flights or train fares - we'll just chuck £50 each in and buy a car, even though two of us aren't even old enough to drive and one of the other two only has a provisional license.

We've a big Union Jack hanging out of the back window and as the park boys wave us off, let there be no doubt - we're off to Italia 1990. Me, Parry, Kev and Pickle - To the World Cup! Three months earlier I had hand picked three lads from out of the park to come around to my house, as my mum needed convincing that her sixteen year old son was in trusted company to go bunking around Italy for three weeks. It wasn't these three lads who are with me now, but never mind she wasn't to know that.

Last night, we'd sat in the Brick and watched England draw one apiece with the Republic of Ireland, no more of that this time we were off to Italy ourselves, armed with a trusty map and a dodgy tape deck which played everything at double speed. Kev at nearly 18 was the oldest of the bunch, a Man United and Latics fan, the badge of each tattooed on each arm. Except he'd gone into a tattooist and asked him to write WIGAN ATH on his arm, and he'd done exactly that, complete with the H in front for HATH! He did a top job in driving us from Wigan to Dover, hop on the cross channel ferry and straight through the middle of France until we found a camp site to get our heads down for the night and tucked into some French bottles we'd got from Calais and opened the tin of cheap "no label" Heinz tins from the factory shop and lit up the Calor stove.

Next morning we were onwards again until we reached Switzerland and were driving through the Alps in the evening dusk. They were absolutely breathtaking and scary as fuck in equal measures, weaving through the snow capped peaks with sheer thousand feet drops on either side. All ideas we'd had of each taking a turn of the wheel had been put to bed early doors, especially when the Swiss coppers pulled us over and demanded a hundred Swiss francs for - check this - driving on their roads - and asked to see our documents.

The more worrying aspect was that we were low on fuel and every station we passed seemed to be closed. We drove in and out of three, looked around, knocked on the window and there was nobody home, so drove off again. 'We're gonna run out, next one we see, let's pull over and see if we can just smash it in and rob some' said Parr. Pull over we did and just as Pickle had found a mop handle to dislodge the pump panel someone noticed a little panel on the side with, in perfect English 'Insert coins and notes here' We bundled in what Swiss notes and coins we had and found ourselves soon after driving through Milan at 5am in the morning.

Now Milan is known for lots of things - fashion, architecture, football! But when you're lost at five in the morning and the only people about in the shithole you're driving through look like knife wielding psychopaths, well the sooner we got out of there the better. The morning sun came up and the temperature rose higher and all is well with

the world, driving down through Tuscany in glorious sunshine with The World In Motion on a permanent loop (at double speed with John Barnes sounding like one of the Smurfs) Our two other tapes consisted of OMD and Pink Floyd which sounded equally surreal played at the wrong speed but the scenery takes the breath away for four scrawny kids from Wigan driving down the boot of Italy.

It's Thursday night now and we're in good time for Saturday's game. Our destination is the Italian port of Civitavecchia, the ancient port next to Rome. As we arrive late on the Thursday evening we find we've missed the 9pm ferry to Sardinia and will have to wait till the morning for the next one. Nothing to do but drive back through the town and see what entertainment is offer. Our youthful naivety is however about to lead us into a near death experience.

Italy have beaten the USA 1-0 and as we drive back through the main drag we can hear the beeping of horns on cars and dozens of youths fly past on scooters to celebrate their win. There's traffic up ahead as it opens out into a square and we can't really turn back as the cars are bumper to bumper, we're curious to see what the party is like. More youths fly past and we see a big crowd up ahead. More than a few dozen now, more like a few hundred.

There are Italian youths dancing on the roofs of cars waving the green, white and red of the Italian flag with their Azzurri shirts on and skanking around on scooters patting the cars and high fiving. As each car enters the square, the locals playfully rock it. They take their football seriously around here! As our car approaches the square where the youths are congregating, it's our turn to get rocked by greasy sunglasses wearing Italians.

Despite their numbers, it takes a minute to click: *Inglesi, sono Inglese!!*

They've clocked the English registration plates! Ooh fuck!!



The rocking turns to kicking as a motorcycle helmet is smashed against the roof. An Eyetie comes running over the bonnet onto the roof and back out of the end. There are white teethed, greasy haired Italians surrounding our car, kicking in the lights and banging on the windows

"Lock the doors, close the windows before they go through" shout me and Pickle head under the seats in the back. Parry's saying 'Come on let's get out and get into them'

Four versus three hundred - or what seems like it! He must be mad!

Kev shows a bit of nous, the car in front has moved on, so he manages to half swerve the car around, reverse and charge up some side alley with the sound of smashed lights and kicks raining in on our shitty Citroen estate.

We drive out up into the hills and park up in a lay by catching our breath and surveying the damage. Five smashed headlights and brake lights, more dints and holes in the body work than Swiss cheese and one slashed, flattened tyre.....ever been hundreds of miles away and just wanted to go home??

Fortunately, some Italian couple accost us in the middle of the night, sensing our troubles (I don't think dogging had been invented then) and they help us change our tyre. The next morning we drive back into the town and find a secluded hotel car park, where we explain slowly to the manager what has happened and can we leave our car there for a few days while we go across the Sardinia.

The next day, the port is tranquil - the angry faces of last night are nowhere to be seen, just a couple of young lovers hanging precariously over the high harbour walls snogging away in the sunshine. We bump into some Man City fans, and soon after some Italians turn up on scooters with a scrap book.

They show us photos: "We are the firm" they say in pigeon English and show us photos of them causing bother at Roma games, chucking flares and stuff. "You are the famous English wheel-igans, we swap scarves and badges". We give them a few bits and pieces, and it's only afterwards one of the City lads points out "They only want them to say they nicked them off us while kicking our heads in"

Ah well, welcome to Italy. The ferry across to Sardinia takes nine hours and is a little turbulent. On arrival we hear about a coastal camp site in the resort of Pula, the Campeggio Cala D'Ostia. The manager Gino, is charging two quid a night and isn't turning away anyone, he's one hell of a gent to put up with the English hordes. Two of the lads kip in a tent, the other two of us in a wooden hut with dozens of other lads

We quickly hear of a journalist on the site who is doing a fan's view documentary, a well spoken fella called Kevin Allen. He seems to like the Wigan lads, and is filming and interviewing us all. We didn't know at the time but it was brother of Keith Allen and Uncle of Lily.

The next day is match day: England v Holland. We get in Cagliari early and make our way to the station. This is the home of the England fans show of strength: hundreds of lads, big burly fellas with their shirts off, beer bellies and tattoos aplenty.

We see the groups we've seen at Latics games: the Huddersfield lads, Shrewsbury with their top boy with the blonde mop, our mates from Northampton and of course the surly Bolton bastards including Jimmy Darby, the lad also known as Bulbhead who got interviewed by all the press. The Cockneys of West Ham, Chelsea and Millwall are all out in force along with the notorious Paul Scarrott and some dickhead posh fella from Crystal Palace called Wright (not Ian) who seems to be claiming to be some kind of leader. We won't lose any sleep over the fact we all owe him money for T-shirts anyway.

We manage to pick up tickets for £20 and the word going around is that we march on the stadium at six. I've no idea who starts it but it's an impressive sight to a sixteen year old, there must be 10,000 here and it starts off friendly enough with chants of

England. Some Dutch fans appear behind a fence and get jeered and stuff chucked at them, they run a mile. The notorious Dutch hooligans are nowhere to be seen.

We walk up a narrow hilly road to the ground, I turn around and the sight of thousands of England fans behind me in the dip in the road is an amazing sight. It quickly turns sour - no-one knows why? The Carabinieri are blocking the England fans way perhaps? Either way the England fans aren't backing off, they are steaming ahead and the Italian police are backing off. It's funny and an adrenaline rush but older heads know it can't last.

There's tear gas everywhere and batons drawn and we end up surrounded in a petrol station with nowhere to go but a thirty feet drop behind us. No game for us tonight just hours of intimidation and filming and then we are just let go...

The Holland game finishes a draw. We spend the next few days back at the campsite just playing the arcade games, sunbathing on the beach, the occasional football match and defending ourselves against the riot police who charge through our camp site with guns and batons every night.

We head back into Cagliari for the Egypt game but there's none of the previous tension. The Egypt support seems to consist totally of their navy and air force all in posh suits. We pick up tickets for next to nothing and watch England win 1-0 with a Mark Wright header to pass through to the next round.

We've come with little money, like the others I've brought £300 to last me three weeks but we know we can definitely do another game so Second Round here we come. The ferry back to the port is no problem this time with hundreds of English and I wonder where our cowardly Italian friends are hiding when we exit the ferry in Civitavecchia. We pick the car up - still (just) in one piece and head for Bologna. It's late when we arrive and there is a fans' camp set up next to an open air disco.

We dump the car and go for a mooch about, we quickly realize that many of the ladies in the open air disco aren't actually ladies at all by virtue of their deep voices and Adam's apples. We find some weed stuck to a credit card on the floor and smoke that.

There's no tickets going and the camp is a shithole. We hear that most England fans are heading to Rimini, the Italian Riviera, which is just an hour away and much more enticing. We get our heads down in the car and the tent and then set off in the morning.

The car with its English plates gets stopped twice on the way to Rimini. Italian police stop us, search us on the bonnet and jokingly ask us 'You are the famous English wheel-igans yes?' Like we're going to say yes to that with truncheons bearing down on us!!



We club together enough money to get some digs in Rimini, albeit two of the lads check in to a room which will later be used by twelve of us to crash into, and head into town. Rimini is full of England fans and the Lord Nelson English pub seems to be HQ central. At two quid a pint, it's out of my price range so we go for a walk to supermarket.

We're pottering around Rimini when we see a familiar face - it's Daft Donald from Manchester City. We bumped into all his lot when we were coming back from Chesterfield and they'd been to Derby last season. He threatened to kick our heads in if I remember rightly? This time he's as nice as pie.

'I've always liked you Wigan lads - Have you lot got any digs?'
'Mind if I throw my bag in?'

Given my cash flow issues, I team up with Donald and find a supermarket selling three litre vats of red wine for about 80p. I've never drunk red wine in my life before and after three litres of the stuff I am somewhat disorientated. There appears to be a riot going on all around me with England fans and police charging at each other down the main street.

While all this is happening I am preoccupied in the toilets of the Rose & Crown throwing my ring up in the sink. There is red wine all over the bogs. When I go out I join the mob of England fans for the usual game of cat and mouse until the Carabinieri get on top and start hitting people and throwing them in vans. I end up running down a dark street with three Spurs fans and they are big lads, they can look after themselves I think.

Until they open their mouths that is and they are the campest Cockneys I've ever heard, I swear one of them appears to be crying. 'Quick Jeremy, pick up those sticks, we need to defend ourselves against the Old Bill' There's sirens blaring everywhere and angry police looking for England fans to hit, I find my bearings and the street where our digs are.

I can't get in and the police are coming down the street, I hide under our Citroen until they pass by. There's no lights on in the B&B but there's a building site next to it so I climb over the fence and hide in there. A minute or so later I hear a very angry dog barking.....OH FUCK!!!! Thankfully it's owner waves a torch and has the dog on a lead.

My pathetic Italian does the trick 'CARABINIERI, HIT ME, THEY HIT ME' and the Italian fellow escorts me back to the B&B.

The morning after we quickly ascertain from the news that two hundred England fans have been deported, including the driver of our car but we find another Wigan lad who can drive to take us to Bologna

Daft Donald has also been deported and as we walk down the street to the car, Parry asks 'Who's bag is this?'
It's none of ours so with that Parry just drops it on the floor and walks off - Sorry Donald!!!

We park in the backstreets of Bologna and gather at the station. I pick up a ticket for the Belgium game for just £15 although some grizzly Cockney fella appears to take umbrage at my Wigan Athletic shirt and I have to beat a bit of a retreat. No idea who he was but I was quickly learning that not all bets were off at club level at England away.

As there's a booze ban and we have no money anyway, we sit around smoking cheap cigs all day. I've bought some really low tar menthol shit which Andy, one of our new passengers points out 'these are shit, like smoking a cig paper'

There's a good atmosphere at the game, a few Belgians get chased off but generally the England fans are in good spirits, doing the Disco and the Conga all around the ground and refusing to join in the Mexican wave. The game is shit, we just sit there smoking cig after cig.

"Shit game, shit cigs" says Andy as extra time looms

And then this happens.....

David Platt scores one of THE great World Cup goals

"I tell you what they're bloody shit hot these cigs eh Jimmy?" Says Andy



We have the usual run in with the Italians when we walk back to the car from the station after the match where one of them throws a crash helmet at me and we hit the road for home. Skint but content.

"We'll be back for the final" we all say, but we never did.....Cameroon were overcome but Gazza's tears and heartbreak against the Germans waited in the semis....and that is the Wiggin Park Story of World Cup 1990

Come on Eileen



I'm lying in this hospital bed and the wife's saying "Have they said what's wrong wi yer?" and I say "No there's nowt wrong wi mi" and she looks at mi as though I'm stupid and says "There must be, you wouldn't be in here otherwise!"

And it started with a visit to the doctors, cause I was a bit short o' breath, and she checked me over and said "I'm sending you up to the hospital in an ambulance" "Oh it's alright" I said "I'm int car I'll drive up" but she wouldn't let me move and before I knew it th'ambulance men came and carried me

out wit oxygen mask on. I was shamed pot but there was nowt I could do.

Anyroad they checked mi heart and stuck electrodes every weer and then they put me on a ward and then I phoned wife and that's where we are now.

And t'kids come up and look reet worried and say "Hiya Dad, how are yer?" and I say "I'm awreet" an't wife gives me a dirty look but says nowt.

And then they have to go and lad an't girl go first so they won't be embarrassed when wife kisses mi but not before t'lad gives me a football magazine saying "summat read for yer" and there all worried when they turn and look and wave goodbye and I wish I hadn't gone tut doctors.

And wife once told me summat I wish she hadn't, she said that they put all patients who are dying on a ward near t'door and I'm one bed away from it.

I look at the poor bugger in the next bed and he lies there quiet, he looks dead and he's not made a sound all the time I've bin here. And it smells of wee, stinks to high heaven with the smell of it.

And then they turn some of the lights out but it's still light in here and I can't sleep thinkin' about the wife and kids. And it's late and the nurses chat in a little corner havin' a brew and loads of biscuits in this pee ridden place.

And then he starts...

The old bloke in the next bed, near deaths door, he starts "Eileen... Eileen... Eileen..."

And he carries on for hours and I wish he'd shut up and I hate his constant "Eileen.. Eileen... Eileen..."

And I whisper to him "Be quiet lad please" but he carries on and on through the long tortuous night. And somehow I fall asleep and the sound of the tea trolley lady wakes me up "Cup o' tea luv?" and I rub my eyes and say "Yeah please"

And I look to the bed near the death door an' he's gone, an his bed's bin stripped but there's a stain on the mattress and it looks like blood.

An the nurses come to mi later that day and say "Wer movin' yer luv" and I think don't put mi near deaths door wi the stained mattress, please not near the door.

But they move mi down the ward away from the door an I stayed there for four more nights then they sent mi home wi a blood clot on mi lungs.

An I'm in bed an't wife cuddles mi an says "Eee I'm glad to have yer back" and we lie there till she falls asleep an I hear her soft breathing.

An I close mi eyes and try to sleep but all I can hear is "Eileen... Eileen... Eileen..."

- **Tony Topping**

MUDHUTTS CLASSIC ARTICLES

For those of you downloading this for nowt, and too tight to pay £1.50 every few weeks for the printed version of The Mudhutter, we are proud to present eight pages of classic articles from the past five years.

Of course, if you are a regular reader (and we thank you for your support) we hope you enjoy reading them again.



MFE BACK ISSUE OFFER

If you like what you see, you can pick up all available back issues from our online shop (currently 24 out of 28 issues) for just £5 plus another £5 postage

That's a great price for a lot of bog reading

For further details go to:

[The Mudhuts Media Shop](#)

David Twattenborough's Naturist's (oo-er) column

This issue: The EGGUS SAURUS



Deep down in the wilds of Whelley and Platt Waz lies a species which once roamed freely and is now almost condemned to extinction, despite many years of attempts to reproduce earlier success. The Eggus Saurus is a primitive beast, an ancestor of the sloth and is easily recognisable by it's large red & white striped (with brown gravy stain) midriff. The Eggus Saurus (or Eggies for short) waddle around the under growth making lots of unintelligible noises which sound suspiciously like 'gerrum onside' munching on their pies whilst urinating

openly through their piss stained Primarkus coat.

Estimates of remaining numbers of this species are subject to some confusion. When the animals make their fortnightly pilgrimage to their adopted home, local statisticians have predicted that there could be around 15,000 left in existence yet independent eye witnesses have stated on many occasions that the true figure is several thousand less, unless their grazing session happens to have been infiltrated by other nearby more popular dinosaurs. Indeed it is believed that during the secondary doldrum period of the late eighties century surviving numbers plummeted to below the four thousand mark during a particularly infertile period, though advocates of the breed strenuously deny this.

Due to the extremely primitive nature of this animal, it is only found in undeveloped former mining terrain in Northern parts of England. Although a small, stronger and leaner strain of this beast is believed to exist in a small corner of the Southern Hemisphere after being introduced to the area by local convicts many years ago. However, all attempts to breed the species elsewhere have encountered widespread failure despite campaigners views that this is the greatest breed in the hemisphere.

The species considers itself continually under attack even though it is left alone by most of the advanced world. It's family member Eggus Unionus continues to flourish and this causes inherent bitterness within the Eggus Saurus. Consequently, it often takes shelter and forms a pact under the wing of its' comrade breeds, T'councillus, Tharlocalus Mediar along with its' long standing tribal alliance with the incubating predator, Mauricuslindsayus who sits amongst the it's natural enemy, Laticus Premierius.

Despite it's hefty size, the Eggus Saurus will usually fade into the back ground when confronted by Laticus Premierus and often flee to the safety of Tharlocalus Mediar, even when faced with something as insignificant as a household parrot with bright plumage sat on a perch.

The beast is not known particularly for it's mating skills either; known colloquially as 'Getin Legoer' this typically involves two minutes of sloshing and sweating as the large and hairy male breed attempts to mount the even larger and hairier female species. The mating scent emitted from the female is extremely repulsive and any subsequent offspring are known to be especially vulgar creatures. Sadly the future does not look bright for this lumbering dinosaur given that their attempts to breed further afield continue to fail miserably and the resurgence of Laticus Premierus amongst it's natural habitat. It is thought that over time the creature will face further threats of extinction if it's rival continues to prosper.



PASCAL CHIMBONDA - GENIUS OR THE NEW GREEN VIGO?

| <u>GENIUS</u> | <u>GREEN</u> |
|--|---|
| Those gloves in September | That baseball cap/headscarf combination he seems so fond of |
| Apartment in Hacienda | Pem Taxis to the ground |
| Not owning a suit when he came over | Buying and wearing one two sizes too small a month later |
| Sneaking off from the TV cameras to try and negotiate a loan for a Ferrari in Barclays | Asking if he could go shopping instead of training before the Charlton game |
| Stating that Lee McCulloch "spoke a different language" | A complete lack of command of the English language |
| Coming from a small fishing village that nobody has heard of | Coming from a small fishing village that nobody has heard of |
| Player of season in first 6 games and continuing fine form until May 2006 | Player of season for first 6 games and then discovering drink with the modern day football equivalent of Colin Clarke |
| That "pushing the roof off" celebration he does at the end of each game | Celebrating as though HE had scored against Boro |
| The Chumbawumba "He gets knocked down and then he gets up again" all-action hero | Taking the winger on in his own area! |
| CHIMBONDA - chant to tune of Kumbaya | CHIMBONDA - chant to tune of Black Lace |

YOU DECIDE

1984 19 02

GOLLY the GOAL

BY TAT 08

GOLLY GOLLSWORTH WAS THE LUCKIEST 75 YEAR OLD IN ALL OF SPRINGFIELD. FOR NOT ONLY DID HE OWN THE WORLDS LARGEST COLLECTION OF INDUSTRIAL STRENGTH GERMAN SCAT PORN, HE ALSO PLAYED CENTRE FORWARD FOR THE TOWNS SECOND BEST SPORTING TEAM THE ATHLETICO'S OF WIGAN, OH, AND HIS TIE UPS WERE SPONSORED BY "HALF MAN HALF BISCUIT".

FOUR MINUTES INTO THE NEW SEASON AND FRENCH STRIKER ANTOINE LE'SIB HAS AN ALLERGIC REACTION AFTER BREAKING INTO A RUN.

ANY CHANCE I COULD HAVE YOUR MOBILE NO.?

'ERE KEN SHALL WE JUST LOB HIM IN THE DUGGIE?

IT MEANT A DEBUT FOR THE CLUB FOOTED FORWARD.

GET STRIPPED LAD. YOU'RE GOING ON

NETTO

QUICK AS A FLASH HE CHANGED INTO HIS KIT.....

DAD, I CAN SEE THAT MANS WILLY!

GOLLY WAS SOON INTO THE ACTION AND HIT A SCORCHER

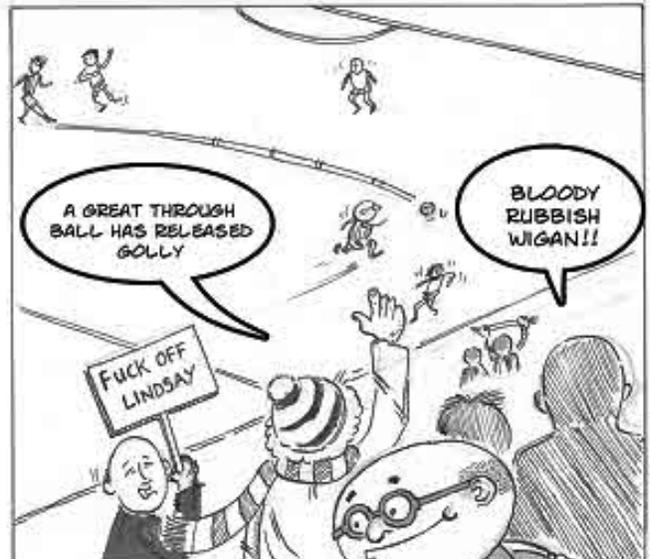
GOAL!!

THE LINESMANS RAISED HIS FLAG OFFSIDE!!

APPRECIATING THE DIFFICULT JOB OF THE OFFICIALS GOLLY TOOK THE DECISION IN HIS STRIDE

C**T

OUCH!!!



Are you a JCL?

Take our fantastic quiz and find out if you are Wigan's loyalist fan or a Johnny Come Lately

- 1. What's your match day attire?**
 - a. Anything smart and appropriate for the weather conditions
 - b. Replica shirt, hair dyed three colours, a drum and some Clearasil
 - c. Eight replica shirts, painted face, jester hat and bad trainers

- 2. How many matches a season do you go to?**
 - a. As many as I can afford
 - b. As many as I can get to without missing lectures
 - c. All of them. Every season. Since the club was formed.

- 3. When was your first game?**
 - a. Some non-descript lower league game against Worksop or Walsall on a shitty midweek night at Springfield Park
 - b. Reading at home, May 2005
 - c. Oh you know what, it was that long ago I can't remember.....[chuckles]

- 4. What do you think of this fanzine?**
 - a. It's OK, the lads have been doing it for years and their heart is in the right place
 - b. It's not 4 me m8. 2 many words!
 - c. This is a fanzine? Sorry I thought it was the programme!

- 5. Have you ever been to watch Wigan Warriors?**
 - a. Once or twice in the 80's when you could get a drink on a Sunday afternoon
 - b. No man, they give tckts out at school but no1's interested
 - c. No never, I hate them bastards. And always have. Oh yes, cherry and white shite, cherry and white shite hello, hello!

- 6. Which away ground have you been to the most?**
 - a. Gigg Lane
 - b. City of Manchester Stadium
 - c. Knowsley Road

- 7. How do you get to away games?**
 - a. In the car or via alternative means wherever possible so we can have a few beers
 - b. Wigan Coachways
 - c. In the X5. With flags hanging out of every window

- 8. Which websites do you frequent?**
 - a. Hardly any, they are full of clueless whoppers
 - b. The official site and any syndicated ones
 - c. I post on all of them because they all need to know what a super fan I am

- 9. Which pubs do you drink in pre-match?**
 - a. Brick, Pear Tree and Sams
 - b. Soccerdome and JJ's Club

c. On the concourse

10. Who's your favourite all-time player?

- a. Bobby Campbell
- b. Emile Heskey
- c. Ellery Hanley

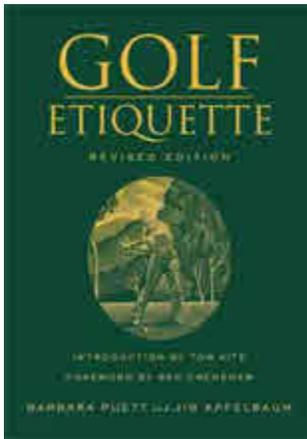
How did you score?

Mostly A's: You'd never claim to be the club's greatest fan but you've always been there through the good times and the bad and are loyal to the core, not that you like to bang on about it. You go to the game because you always have done and not to seek the praise or acknowledgement of others.

Mostly B's: You're young and enthusiastic and your heart is in the right place. You're to be commended on your choice of football club in these Big 4 Sky Sports dominated times. You are the lifeblood and future of the club. Just keep the noise down at the back of the coach when us old farts are trying to get some kip on the way back will you?

Mostly C's: Congratulations - give yourself a big pat on the back, you're the greatest Latics fan in the world! You would literally die for the club and your loyalty knows no bounds! Until we get relegated that is and then you'll probably f*ck off back to watching whoever you followed five years ago, you phoney JCL bastard!





Ives Guide To Golf Etiquette

When a couple of players are holding you up with slow play never walk up to them on the tee and say "I'm playing through or you are getting twatted"

Never drive a trails bike across the green

After missing an easy putt never put the flag back in the hole then twat it with your putter and snap the flag in half. And don't put the now smaller flag back in the hole so the green looks further away than it is.

Never book a 5am tee off then decide to shit in the hole on the first green

Never fart on someone's down swing

Never take a 3 iron and fire at the green on a par 5 with your second shot. You may end up hitting the lady in front of you and have to say "Sorry luv I was trying to lay up with an 8 iron but I got a flyer". This won't mend her shattered ankle

When someone tees off behind you far too early and the ball goes whistling past you on the fairway never stamp the ball into the ground as hard as possible

Never shout "c*nt" when you slice one off the tee

Never hit a fresh dog shit with your 5 iron

Never chase rabbits with your 9 iron and never throw it at them

Always buy golf balls off kids on the course

Never smoke a bong on the 5th tee at Malkins Bank in Sandbach

Never sink your 6 iron into the green after missing a birdie putt

Never stand behind a golfer on the tee and piss yourself laughing at his spakker swing

When approaching the 18th green at Longridge in Preston never over club and send your ball blazing at the clubhouse window. And think yourself lucky if you escape with hitting the PVC that separates the top and bottom of the pane

And never walk into their clubhouse with a flat cap on back to front and cig in your mouth

When a golfer from the group in front who has slowed you down all day with his piss poor play, never say to him as he's counting his total up "You'd better get a fucking calculator pal"

Never take a huge divot out the fairway and then throw it at the back of your friend's head rather than replace it.

If someone from the group in front's head cover falls off and you find it, give it to him on the next tee. Don't put it in your bag because it's better than yours.

Never throw the bin into the lake on the picturesque par 3 because you've took 7 off the tee

If you get hit by a ball on the fairway leave it in play. Don't pick it up and throw it in the rough

Lying on your back and laughing at your mate hacking his way up the fairway is not acceptable, especially when you're holding up the group behind

When you have booked a twilight tee off at Standish Court please make sure you have eaten your hot & spicy spare ribs at home. Don't take them in tinfoil onto the course and throw the bones all over the fairway

Be careful that your umbrella doesn't blow inside out at Longridge in the wind and rain. Trying to fix it may end up with you falling over your trolley while your mates piss their pants laughing at such a Frank Spencer moment

Never look for magic mushrooms after finding your ball

1986 AND ALL THAT... BY LES BAGG

Look at 'me, they're everywhere, England fans, from the fat get who once said he'd shut his curtains if they were playing "That Foooo-ootbaawww" in his garden to the little urchin in the tansad with a little flag on it being fed bits of pie by his fifteen year old Mum. They've all got their colours on, cos it's World Cup time and they all love Engur-land.

The flags are flying, from bedrooms, taxis, vans and car windows all over the country, those things that used to symbolise "THUG!" in the Daily Mail are now tabloid world chic. It hasn't always been like this, and thank God for that, the game used to belong to us before the money and celebrity obsessed media took hold. When Dennis Waterman said he'd give anything to see England lift the World Cup he meant it, because he was a real fan, not a "fan" because it was trendy to be.

The Americans, when they had a brief time in the limelight with the NASL in the late 1970's called their football supporters "Fannies", which funnily enough is a term I'd use for about 95% of people who wear an England shirt these days!

Back in 1986 players didn't cover themselves in ridiculous tattoos and a wag was someone who used sharp, cutting wit. Grown men who watched and played the game didn't cry when their team lost, they had a bit of an anger spasm, told everyone to "Fuck Off" and then just got on with things. People called Jez, Josh and Chantelle didn't wear England jerseys and the only people who painted their faces were the crazy fuckers who used to follow Warrington (who were genuinely mental and it was a war paint "W" on their faces, not a happy

clap cross!) In the media world loads of advertisers and "celebrities" wouldn't touch football with a very long barge pole, not great for the image, happy days!

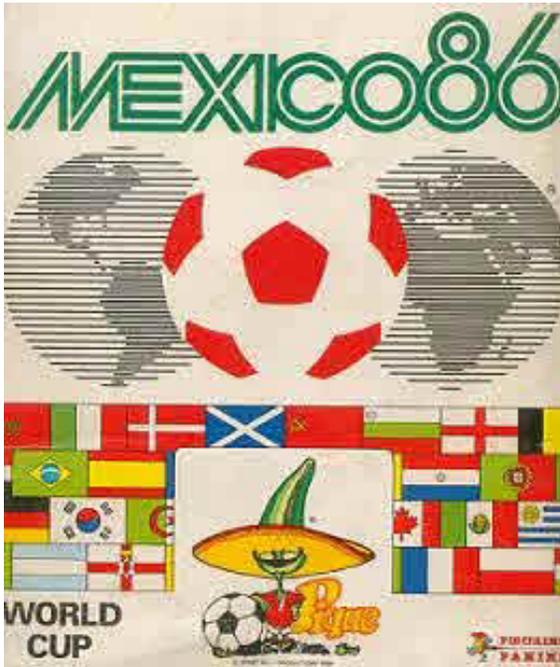
We'd spent the 1970's as kids watching the World Cups as neutrals, loving the fantastic tournaments, all wanting to be Kempes, Cruyff, Neeskens or Zico but wishing there was a Keegan involved as well, we wondered what it would be like if England ever qualified like Scotland always seemed to. How it would be if we had our own players to cheer on instead of the BBC telling us we should support the Scots and Jimmy Hill referring to them as "We". Of course we did support them and all the glorious failures and fuck ups culminating in the manic Ally MacLeod's public nervous breakdown in front of millions against Peru and Iran was television gold!

The 1982 World Cup, the first one that England actually qualified for since 1962 (check it out!) gave us a taster, a fabulous feast of football without the pretentious crap that follows the game around these days, by the time the Mexico '86 tournament came around we were salivating over it! It really did seem like four years between Cups, cos, as you all know, time goes much, much slower when you are younger!

But, come round it did and I remember jumping around the front room when Bulgaria equalised against Italy in the opening game, every game I watch I have to have a team to support, I can't watch a game as a "neutral" so the underdogs from Bulgaria were my team for a couple of hours! After the game I strolled up to our local of the time, The White Duck in Standish, I whistled some tune from a

spaghetti western; it was the only thing I could think of with a Mexican hat in it. And I had a feeling that it was going to be a good few weeks!

England were drawn with Portugal, Morocco and old foes Poland, the team who had put to bed any ideas that England were still a World force after the glory days of '66 and '70. I'd missed those days, only just born for '66 and too young to remember '70 as it happened so



this 1986 side was undoubtedly the finest England team I'd seen in my lifetime up to then. It wasn't perfect, not by a long way with lads like Terry Fenwick as a regular but there were some great players in there with Peter Shilton, Bryan Robson, John Barnes in his pomp, Gary Lineker turning into a class striker of anything inside the box, Peter Beardsley as reliable as clockwork and Terry Butcher working like a Trojan at centre half.

The first round of games was spent with a pack of cans in front of the telly for these late matches, the English media didn't fancy Portugal, which was strange cos England didn't even qualify for the Euro's

in 1984 two years earlier and Portugal got to the Semi Finals, being very unlucky in the classic semi against France that had John Motson screaming in orgasmic pleasure. A tournament incidentally that gave me a Renton/Archie Gemmill moment when Spain scored in the other Semi against West Germany, a romantic coital moment disturbed by a glance over at the portable telly in the corner.

"Just a sec, love, Spain have just scored, they're beating Germany!!"

We sat there, cans and fags in hand and watched open mouthed in abject horror as the cross came over and a bloke called Manuel scored the winner for Portugal in our "home" ground for the group in Monterey! Fucking Hell Fire!

Not to worry though, Morocco next up and they are shite, aren't they? This was the John 3:16 World Cup, the banner appeared at every single game and the mon who spotted it first on the little black and white portable in the bar at The Duck got a free pint which we chucked in for (times were hard!) Or if we were at someone's house it was a free can. It was intriguing, a mystery, who was John? And what was this numbered code that appeared at the end of his name? The truth was a disappointment; it was simply some God Botherers quoting the number of a tract from the Bible. Never had so many people reached for a copy of The Good Book in the history of the World since it had been printed, just to find out what the hell they were on about! Again, the result was a bit of a disappointment, no Paisley like hell fire and brimstone reading promising horrible deaths to sinners and stuff, boring or what?

The Uruguayans were obviously not into this peace amongst men business as they kicked the shit out of anyone who came near them, especially the Scots and especially Gordon Strachan! They were

fun to watch and they'd have about three players left on the pitch these days. Denmark, Brazil, Argentina and Russia were providing the best of the football. Scotland and Northern Ireland got drawn in bloody hard groups and suffered the inevitable 1st round exits and John 3:16 now became a target for derision, how the fuck can these peace and love merchants get into every game of this fantastic tournament whilst we were stuck at home stretching out 40 quid a week wages eh? Twats!

Pissed for kick off time against Morocco, it was gonna be easy this, a straightforward win to get back on track, so the first half was spent flag spotting around the half empty stadium. The Scousers certainly caught the attention of the Thatcherite Tory press back here with their cheeky "On the Dole drinking Tequila..." flag, the outrage in Daily Mail land was funny as fuck!

The phrase "It's all going tits up" was invented for this game, a 0-0 draw in which we were lucky to get nil, captain marvel (and he was, there was never any question about that) Bryan Robson went over on his dodgy shoulder and Ray Wilkins got sent off for throwing the ball at the ref. Fucking Hell Fire! Again!

I now had an inkling as to how all those Jocks had felt in '78 as they settled down with a million Tennants carry outs and packets of Kensitas Club to watch the Peru and Iran games!

The press laid into Bobby Robson, no mercy given and one of the most iconic pictures of the tournament from the England camp was Bobby with his shirt off sporting a T Shirt tan with his head in his hands leaning on his hotel balcony. The various back page headlines were all relaying the fact of how useless he was. I was a BIG, BIG England fan at the time, I was 100% behind Bobby, it was the

players who were letting him down. I hated the press who always followed England, who couldn't wait to stick the knife into whoever was the manager. I still do and some of the tributes to Sir Bobby when he passed away rankled 'cos some of these people called him not fit to burn as England boss so many times in the 1980's.

Anyway, it was a change of tactic for the vital Poland match, no goals, one point and bottom of the group. White Duck to the rescue! The White Duck at the time was run by a fantastic old couple called Bob and Edna (both sadly no longer with us) even though the pub was next door to Standish Police station when the local Bobby shops were manned they were always quite forgetful with the licensing laws and saved our lives many a time when we were skint by letting us all have a tab. In the days before all these big screens, HD and 3D and the "Watch it here with your painted faces" billboards outside pubs the only telly in the place was that little black and white portable on the bar, and the bar was small, very small, so only about four people could see it! Bob, being Bob said "Leave it to me lads, we'll have a good neet out of it, don't you worry."

On the night of the game we got up there and he had sorted it, he'd got his own big colour telly from upstairs and put it on a shelf in the pool room, we had a stadium! The Estadio Universitario in the pool room!

How the hell this little fella had managed to get a 1986 colour telly down the stairs is still a mystery, it must've been 2 feet deep at the back and weighed a bloody ton but he promised us he'd done it all on his own, Aye reet Bob!

There weren't many of us, just the young lads and a few of the regulars all sat on and around the pool table to get a good

view of this monster of a television, no phoneys, no women, just lads who loved their football.

And the match kicked off, Bob's notoriously slow bitter pumps meant that the bittermen had three pints stowed away for the first half to save on the hassle, I'd gone for the Merrydown option, me stomach turns at the thought nowadays!!

It was tense, the sound was turned up nearly full blast so we could get a taste of the atmosphere, what we did get in those first five minutes was one the best and most memorable pieces of football commentary from an Englishman that I've ever heard. Barry Davies was doing the game, I always liked Barry Davies, he was a fan and told it like it was, none of this arse licking that the likes of Clive Tyldesley does now, he just watched the game in the same frame of mind as we did and called it back to us.

Poland pressurised, England made mistakes at the back, Shilton parried, Butcher cleared and Davies gave out an angst filled "Aaaarghhh!" around the same time that we in the Duck did and then said

"..And England just cannot afford to make crass errors like that, we've got away with it twice, we can't tempt fate further.."

Fucking fabulous Barry mate! And then it happened.

"Four in the box... LINEKER!"



And the pool room exploded! We didn't know it until we saw the replays later but we were doing exactly the same as the lads over in Mexico did when the ball hit the back of the net as the ale flew up into the air with the sheer joy and relief at seeing it go in. It happened three times before half time and it was tremendous, Lineker's 2nd goal was a cracker and the 3rd sealed it.

The second half flew by, we were just waiting for the final whistle to go, time up so we could say we'd qualified, got through to the next round then celebrate properly, the whistle went, Barry Davies was chuffed as a butty and Edna brought out a plate of boiled ham ones for us! We knew how to celebrate in t'Duck tha' knows!!

It's Paraguay in the knock outs and England moved from the adopted home of Monterey into Mexico City, the team were to play in the awesome Azteca Stadium, we were to watch the game in the newly refurbished White Duck Stadium! Everyone had such a good crack for the Poland game that Bob had said he'd leave the big telly down in the pool room until England got knocked out. So, we asked him if we could make it a bit more Mexico like by sticking our flag up, it was a St George's flag that I'd got for my 21st, with Wigan Athletic FC written across the red horizontal, me being an arty type at the time had even got the lettering painted on and spaced out properly so that I didn't run out of space by the time I got to the tic FC bit! It had graced such exotic places as the back walls and fences on the terraces at Bournemouth, Walsall, Reading and Brentford, it was now going to witness England win the World Cup from the window of the White Duck, well, that was the plan anyroad!

Paraguay had a dead smart kit, a star mon called Romero, who John Motson told us when he scored against Mexico

was more commonly known as Romerito to his adoring fans. The turn out in the White Duck Stadium was much better for this one and the pool room was full, with some standing on the back benches to get a better view.

“There doesn’t look so many on”

Said one mon in typical Wiggin fashion as the game was kicking off, yeah true, there were a few empty rows at the front, but this was the Az-fucking-teca! A little bit further up there were over 98,000 people watching it in the flesh!

Paraguay it seemed had hit their limit, and after a couple of scares that had the bitter swilling round the rims early on it turned into a bit of a stroll in the sun. Lineker giving us a jumping around the pub moment with the ale flying for the first goal, then Beardsley and Lineker again providing “Yesssss, get innnnn!” moments later on for a 3-0 win, it looked good, winning 3-0 to get into the quarter finals even with Alvin Martin in the team!

Drunken conversations into the night went something like this

“Aye, we’ve only ever won t’World Cup when there’s bin a six in t’year....it’s an omen like”

The fact that England had only ever won it once anyway didn’t matter, it was a bit like saying we’d only ever won it with a goalkeeper wearing a yellow jersey!

The flag stayed up in the window until the Quarter Final, people noticed it, it wasn’t a massive flag by any means but in 1986 it was an original thing to do and folk who’d nipped in for a pint in the days building up to the Argentina game seemed to be saying they were going to come in and watch it, boosting the attendance and Bob’s takings, which he more than deserved for putting up with us and just for being such a star.

Funny this, these days I can take or leave it, the players and the way they and their

pampered lives are covered by the media has alienated me from them, I can’t relate to any of them like I could with the likes of Bryan Robson. I don’t give a flyer whether England win the 2010 World Cup or not, part of me says,

“Yeah, why not? it’ll be a good laugh and involve some mighty football piss ups”

Then, the other half says

“Fuck that for a game o’ skittles, I just want a good football tournament to watch, I’ll be going out on the razz for the big games, no matter who is playing, cos, I love the football”

Then that part of me goes a bit further, with the stomach starting to churn a bit.

“Just think, Sir John Terry, Sir Ashley Cole, Sir Steven... fucking hell! The pubs full of Walkabout Bar planks with their replikits and painted faces shouting at people for not singing God Save the bastard Queen with enough passion or not singing it at all (if Rooney can do it so can I!) The false hysteria from people who dare to use the term “celebrity” to describe themselves, that fat bastard James Corden and slim bastard Tim Lovejoy being even bigger twats than they already are. The women famous only for being WAGS, the Talksport generation claiming that it is a bigger and better achievement than ’66, when it was 11 no nonsense men against 11, no subs, no get out clauses for the manager if he fucked his tactics up. Players who saw it as an honour to be asked for their autographs, who drank in the pubs, who spoke to fans as equals, who knew where they’d come from and thanked God every day for what they had been given the opportunity to achieve.

In ‘66 the country watched television coverage without a million replays so the net nerds and plebs couldn’t analyse every single pass after watching it for six hours and then try to impress their mates with their tactical knowledge.... Oh no! I’m with Bobby Charlton and Nobby Stiles

on this one, I'm with the immortals, let them stay immortal!

Yeah, at least until the players get their heads from up their own arses and become less c*ntlike, act like the fucking lucky human beings they are instead of treating football as an intrusion on their social lives (ever heard of the chicken and egg question you thick twats?). Until their tarts show a bit of humility instead of parking the pink £100,000 car up on double yellows when they do lunch to be served by fans on less than £20,000 a year. When football belongs to the people again, people who really care about it like they used to in '66, before the money men and SKY took over and devalued everything with their twisted greedy vision of football. THAT is when I'll want England to win the World Cup!"

Phew, I needed to get that off me chest! Anyway, going off on a tangent, but in 1986 it really did matter to me, it mattered more than anything at the time, and irony of ironies, one of the lads who boozed with us is now well into the whole Enger-lund thing but then, when it was good, when it was really important and when following the England team in person was an honour and a privilege and sometimes, a little bit naughty, he didn't give a fuck about it. He couldn't care less, couldn't see why we were getting so worked up and eventually fucked up after the game that was about to come.

Argentina were good, no doubt about it, they'd done for the brutal Uruguayans in the last knock out round, Maradona had learned to avoid the body checks and scything tackles that did him in '82 and this was a game that gave you the butterflies to think about. Utterly jealous of the lads who were out there but making the most of what we had at home and desperate to win it. The papers obviously played on the Falklands aspect, some television interviewer tried to push

Bobby Robson for a mischievous, shit stirring quote to stoke the fires, Bobby, being Bobby just said

"This is a football match, we are football people not politicians, if you want to talk football, fine....." (Take note Mr Whelan!).

Another flag had appeared in the window, Pilps and his younger little crew had joined the party for the game, the attendance in the Duck would have registered a sell out if Bob had sold tickets, it was packed and buzzing on this beautiful Sunday evening. The jukey was turned off an hour before the game, none of this singing along to middle class boys telling us how much they love "footy" and England. We never caught on to the '86 World Cup song, it was crap, we still sang the '82 song with words changed from "Ron's 22" to "Bob's 22" in honour of both Bobby Robson and Bobby Duck!

England played in the real kit at every opportunity, unlike nowadays as the kit manufacturers seem to hold sway on what colours the team wears to shift units. It was the famous white shirts with a change to light blue shorts and socks, the Argies switching to a second kit of dark blue and black, a moral victory already we thought!

It was tense, it was very quiet despite the numbers as everyone concentrated on watching the game in various states of fingernails in mouths and counting imaginary rosary beads, the odd "OOOOH" and "AAAAH FUCK!" would fill the air as a chance went begging or a tackle was missed, no Alvin Martin for this one, instead there was the equally worrying presence of Terry Fenwick to provide those moments!

0-0 at half time, 114,000 on in Mexico City about 30 in the little pool room in downtown Standish, all wishing for the same thing whichever side they were supporting, the dream was still on. The

smog in the pool room was like a London pea souper, so bad that even seasoned smoke addicts like meself had to go out for a breath of fresh air at the break.

And then it happened, six minutes into the second half, it's all a bit scrappy, he's running through, he lays the ball off and it bobbles in the air and it's knocked into the box by an English foot, he runs through the group of players at the edge of the box and him and Peter Shilton both go for it with their hands, he punches it into the net and we laughed.

Yep, we laughed, it was funny, it was one of those things you do when you play and you can't connect with the ball, you punch it, you turn to the ref when he blows for handball and you both smile, like we did when the ball hit the net that day.

"He's a cheeky little twat that mon"



But, but, Maradona's running over to the corner, where the Oxford United Union Jack is, he's running to the group of Argentina fans there, he's celebrating, the fucking ref has pointed to the centre

circle, why has the liner not flagged him and told him No Goal?

"He's given a fucking goal!, he's given a fucking goal!!!"

"FUCKING HANDBALL YOU BLIND RETARDED FUCKING TWAT!, HAND FUCKING BALL!"

I ran from the back benches to the front of the telly and shouted at it as if it would make a difference, Shilton and Fenwick were doing the same on the pitch.

"YOU BENT FUCKING TWAT, THAT WAS HAND FUCKING BALL, ARE YOU BLIND?"

"WHERE'S THAT REF FROM? BUENOS FUCKING AIRES? BASTARD!"

And so it went on, it was genuine fury, and to this day you watch that goal and think how an international class referee and his linesman couldn't see it, the liner on the other side could probably see it, we could see it, 114,000 people in the Azteca could see it, Bobby Robson saw it, Carlos Bilardo saw it, so why didn't the referee?

We were still going mad, Barry Davies was still waxing lyrical about the disgraceful decision the world had just witnessed, the whole of Scotland apart from various Rangers supporters clubs would be dancing in the streets.

Then, we settle down again, he picks the ball up in his own half, skips past Fenwick, Butcher puts in a foot to tackle him that me Gran would've been ashamed of and he skips round him, then he's getting to the box, there's three England players around him.

"FUCKING TWAT HIM!"

People stood at the bus stop across the road could hear the cries

"FUCKING STOP HIM, HIT HIM!"

They didn't, he'd sailed past five players since taking the ball, and he only had Shilton and a back pedalling Gary Stevens to beat which he did, easily, he ran over

to the Argies in the corner again and Barry Davies conceded

“You have to say that was magnificent...”

It probably was if you watched it as a neutral, or were Scottish but what I had to say was that the bastard should've been kicked into the stands as soon as he'd beaten Terry Fenwick, what I did say was.

“FUCK OFF, JUST, FUCK OFF!”

The head went down, I was wrecked, the handball goal was a 1966 moment, but not the one we wanted, it was like the goal against West Germany, every Englishman surely admits that the ball never went over the line, the Germans had their Russian linesman, and England now had their Tunisian referee.

John Barnes came on and the mood lifted, if anyone could try to salvage this Barnes could, he took the ball to the line, crossed, beautiful, Lineker in the box: I rose with him, I met the ball, and I headed it with him

“LINEKER!! YES! GET FUCKING IN!”

The roof lifted, the ale started flying I got bear hugged by a bear called Tinny!!

The people sad enough to be stood at a bus stop when a World Cup quarter final was being played once more heard the roar and saw the bodies flying around through the window, this time in celebration.

Time was running out, the Barnes substitution had been a great decision by Bobby, but why leave it so late?

Barnes picked the ball up again, Barry spoke for us all when he told Barnes to run at them, he got to the line again, he crossed again, Lineker rose again, I rose again with him I headed it, I jumped up in a screaming celebration as the ball went past Pumpido, YESSSS!

The only trouble was, I'd scored, Lineker had missed! I was on my second star jump when I realised the ball had gone wide

and I slumped down on the bench when the corner that was gained was wasted.

“That's it we're fuckin' done now, Jesus Christ, I thought that was in!

Within a few minutes it was all over, I was too knackered to be angry, I was just in a daze for ages, it was a couple of pints down the line that I started muttering again

“I don't believe it, the cheating little bastard”

I've never taken the result of a football match as a body blow in the same way, it felt like I'd been assaulted, we all felt the same and the rest of that fantastic tournament was spent cheering for anyone against Argentina. Fucking Belgium in the Semi Final, Belgium! We'd have slaughtered 'em, which made it all the harder to take. West Germany in the final, fucking Germany! Imagine the day that would've been, an England v West Germany final 20 years after the first one, the ultimate grudge match final. Brian Clough called it right when he said it was the World Cup Final that every Englishman dreads, cos it's hard to watch a match when you want both teams to lose! We had to support Germany, the normally robotically good Schumacher had a nightmare in goal, there was hope when they got it back to 2-2 but Argentina were miles better and they got another and the jeers rang round the pub as Maradona lifted the trophy, then someone shouted

“Handball you little c*nt!”

In later years things happened that sent silly England fans into hysterical rage, the stupid West Ham fans putting effigies of Beckham on lamp posts cos, in their words

“He stopped up winning the World Cup...”

No he fucking didn't, he made a mistake, he didn't miss a penalty, he didn't commit a foul that got the last minute

equalizer chalked off, there's no way we would've gone on to win it in '98 anyway.

Ronaldo, whatever you may think of him, wrongly got it in the neck from folk booing him at every touch after the last World Cup.

"That bastard did us out of a World Cup..."

They cried, no he fucking didn't, he didn't miss any penalties for England did he? He didn't get himself sent off when England needed him most, again, even if we'd won that game I don't think we were good enough to win the whole thing anyway.

1986 was different, the Hand of God goal really did rob England of a chance of winning the World Cup, like Italy in '82 England started poorly but improved with every game they played, the Germans weren't a great side and I'm still utterly convinced that England starting with Barnes and Waddle would've tonked 'em, honest, we would!

Bobby Robson and Bobby Duck, gone but never, ever forgotten!

- Les Bagg

Visit our new site at www.mudhutter.co.uk for news, views, downloads, articles from the archive and chat. All new and online from June 2010



Late night on King Street.



Skull cracking sounds;
c*nt had it coming,
heed to the law
a faultless discern.

Swear on an oath,
big brother watching,
law above law
my friend it's your turn.

Soldier of war
dodging *real* danger,
comrades cut down
lay dead in the sands.

Back home again
safe in the bosom,
lawlessness left
in far away lands.

Brave boys in blue,
late night on King Street,
entered a deal,
the contract unread.

Meaningless hurt,
poured on a hero.
How does it feel
to live life in dread?

Late night on King Street
a story unfolds,
an innocent soldier
beat to the ground.

Cops in the dock
awaiting the verdict,
justice is served,
guilty you're found.

- Dirrrrtyoldman

I think it's spelt 'OPTIMISM'

Normally I have something specific to discuss/rant about in this column but as the season is over I can be a little more chilled out and throw a couple more light hearted topics in to the mix. The main reason being that if I came in to contact with one more moaning, miserable, disillusioned, negative, message board spouting bastard then a stroke was a distinct possibility, which at 22, isn't a good sign. The season is over and we did what Bob said we needed to do in a season of major transition which was to simply survive. Yes it wasn't as comfortable as most would have liked but I would much rather have finished the season having beaten two of the big 4, Liverpool and Villa and survived than have been stuck with that horrendous record of not beating one of the 'big boys' having picked up those 12 points from less attractive fixtures. I cannot think of another football club who can boast a season that included goal of the season (Figgy's cracker against Sjoke), comeback of the season (those fabulous 11 minutes against 'The' Arsenal) as well as being on the receiving end of the 2 biggest drubbing's of the season. So nobody can say it is ever boring watching Wigan Athletic if sometimes a little frustrating.

We have had to endure some of the worst results/performances in the club's history this season but even at my young(ish) age I know that Wigan Athletic have been through far tougher times than this and come through the other end a better club. Bobby and the lads have delivered some unbelievable results along the way so I am more than willing to give them the benefit of the doubt and look forward to the next campaign with the same excitement I do every year. With this mind here is my wish list for the year to come:

A couple of new strikers to take the weight of Hugo's shoulders.

A versatile defender to either fill the void left by Mario or act as cover for Boycey.

A half decent goalkeeper who can push Kirky for a starting place.

Look to introduce some of the young, academy lads in to the first team.

Clear out the deadwood trimming the wage bill substantially in the process.

A decent cup run (I'm only talking QF stages here).

A comfortable league position (Just below mid-table would be acceptable progress).

An away at one of the 'Big 4' or Liverpool.

I purposely didn't mention keeping hold of our better players in my wish list as I can honestly say I don't know what is going to happen this time around. Over the last couple of years I accepted early that we would not be able to hold on to the likes of Valencia, Heskey and Palacios. It was sad to see them go but that's football and I can understand why we have to do it as I for one do not fancy going through what the likes of Pompey have this season. I don't like the way in which DW goes about flogging our players but I know he only has the club's best interest at heart when he does. This may seem a little optimistic but I am starting to think that the huge profits we have made over the last couple of years (as well as the heartache of losing our best players) is beginning to benefit us in that we may not have to sell the likes of Hugo, Charlie, James Mc, Figgy and Mo to keep us afloat. We have sold high and bought low so maybe, just maybe this pre-season, we don't have to give in to the likes of Spurs who think throwing millions at a problem is justifiable rather than being patient with young, undiscovered talent like we are.

I am also optimistic that with it being a World Cup year talented foreign players who wouldn't normally be in the shop window are going to be on display. And I'm sure no-one is going to pay the quoted £15 million for Charlie when they can pick up an unknown player from abroad who has a half decent tournament for a fraction of the price. And despite us doing this for the past couple of years without actually seeing the likes of Valencia for example perform on the big stage I'm certain there are a few managers knocking about who will take great pleasure in revealing to the world how they've been 'tracking him for some time'. This will be a lie of course but they aren't going to pass up the opportunity to increase the size of their already overinflated egos. It's a long shot but I'm hoping my positive attitude toward our club and in particular building a side good enough to compete in this league will rub off on a number of our supporters. Although if you're reading this fanzine then I'm sure you won't need a lecture on the realities of Wigan Athletic and what is actually within our reach in terms of taking this club forward.

Willie McKay is back! Yes boys and girls the snivelling, money grabbing weasel is on the prowl. He has been quoted in this weeks WEP saying that James McArthur may not sign for us as he doesn't know whether we *'...have the finances.'* Either we have suddenly gone bankrupt and are now unable to fork out the reported £800,000 it would cost to purchase the lad or Mr McKay is sniffing around for a better price from other interested parties. We have had our differences in the past Willie my man but I haven't half missed your plainly obvious conquests to make a few extra quid. If you lived in Gotham City Batman would be fooked!

I normally don't mention our chubby lodgers as over the past couple of years my hatred for them has been swung toward a sense of light hearted pity so giving them the time of day seems unnecessary. But I couldn't help chuckle when hearing how, after Lee Smith had celebrated a late, match winning try in front of the loyal (18) Worriers fans, one particular chubby launched a butty box at the Leeds Rhinos player. Trust that lot to add a bit of glamour to the 'greatest sport in the world!' I suspect said lunch box wasn't filled with healthy, mid-meal snacks either!

Finally I would like to end with something that, although infuriated me, did not surprise me in the way in which it would if it was in any other town than this. Whilst nipping for a brew to the staff canteen at work (I won't mention the company just in case any of



my superiors suddenly get their acts together and not only support their local team but also find this article by chance whilst surfing the web) I noticed signs had been put up by the girls in HR mentioning that on the days when England will be playing it would be OK to wear a national shirt of his or her choice, which is fair enough. Below this was the usual rules stating what must not be worn so as to still appear smart to our customers which again is fair enough. But the following line had me fuming; 'YOU CAN WEAR A NATIONAL FOOTBALL SHIRT

OF YOUR CHOICE (EG. ENGLAND), NOT A LOCAL SHIRT (EG. MANCHESTER UNITED). I

was livid. Since when is Manchester 'local?' I am starting to think that we will never change the opinions of the narrow minded idiots who inhabit this town. One thing is for certain if it had been a Rugby World Cup the line would not have read; '*NOT A LOCAL SHIRT (EG, ST HELENS)*'. But fear not, as the picture below shows I managed to regain a little pride by scribbling out said 'local' team and replacing it with an 'actual' local team on the 5 or 6 posters around our canteen. Yes it was childish but it made me feel a little better!

I hope you all have a brilliant summer, one hopefully ending with a couple of great big ticks on my wish list as well as a decent showing in the World Cup. Enjoy the finals; get behind the lads and you never know! I mean come on; freakier things have happened in football, just ask this Mon!



- OPM



SUBSCRIBE TO MUDHUTTER FOOTBALL EXPRESS FOR THE 2010/11 SEASON

RECEIVE EVERY PRINTED COPY WE PUBLISH (WHICH WON'T BE MANY PROBABLY AROUND FOUR..OR MAYBE FIVE IF WE CAN BE ARSED) DIRECT TO YOUR DOOR DELIVERED BY A CHEERFUL, WHISTLING POSTIE

THE PRICE?? JUST SIX QUID TO YOU MY FRIEND PLUS A COUPLE OF QUID POSTAGE. OVERSEAS ON REQUEST.

TO BUY ONLINE GO TO:

[The Mudhuts Media Shop](#)

The Temptations - Still Here

The past twelve months have represented a monumental time for The Temptations, soon to celebrate their 50th anniversary since their inception they embarked on a World Wide tour celebrating 45 years since the release of their first major hit 'My Girl'. The



tour took in Australia, New Zealand, Britain, Europe and the USA where along with The Four Tops the group performed to sell out arena crowds nationwide. The group also spent the last twelve months creating their next and arguably one of the most important albums to date. Advance snippets of the album began to leak out in Autumn '09 with the completed product due in early May 2010.

This would be the group's first album as an independent, in that it was the first album released away from the Motown/Universal umbrella group that they have been part of since Motown's sale to Universal in the early 2000's. After the relative lack of support for the groups last two albums 'Reflections' and 'Back to Front' the group took the decision to depart Universal and go it alone. With all of this confirmed the group entered the studio in the summer of 2009 and with the title already set "Temptations - Still Here" they set about creating one of the most important albums of the group's near fifty year career.

So why exactly is 'Still Here' such an important album? It isn't necessarily the fact that the group are releasing another album (this will be the 44th) it has more to do with the ever changing face of the Music Industry and just how a group of The Temptations age and stature manage to stay relevant in this ever increasing populous, independent and digital age.

'Still Here' is also integral as it is a vehicle for the group to show that they still for want of a better metaphor can cut it musically. The last two albums namely 2006 'Reflections' and 2007 'Back To Front' were heavily criticised as poor offerings not in terms of the standard of the tracks but more to do with the fact that both albums were filled with cover versions of other Soul & Motown tracks with no original material on either. Nothing could be further from the truth with 'Still Here' as the Tempts take on 13 brand new tracks.

But how does 'Still Here' match up to previous offerings from one of the longest serving groups of all time? Quite well is the answer to that question, the long standing arguments of the group not featuring the likes of David Ruffin, Eddie Kendricks, Dennis Edwards etc are becoming quite stale and predictable. The Temptations, as has been argued many times are not a group simply to rely on those long gone halcyon days. This will be their 44th studio album and to argue that the group should have ceased to exist in the early seventies due to the departure of one of the original line up's is like arguing that the current Manchester United team should cease to exist as they aren't a patch on Bobby Charlton or Duncan Edwards who went before them. No matter where your football allegiances lie you can see what I'm getting at.

The Temptations who can currently count sixteen former members in their ranks are not like their close label mates The Four Tops; The Tops were together until the late 90's without any membership changes until Lawrence Payton passed away in 1997. This is in stark contrast to The Temptations who have had somewhat more of a tumultuous past. So as the group embark on their first release of a new decade and their first independently released album it's important to realise that The Temptations are a constantly evolving machine and even in their near fifty year history can still offer something fresh to the music industry of today.

So what of the album? 'Still Here' is fresh, vibrant and energetic. The tired cover versions of 'Back To Front' and 'Reflections' are kicked into touch in favour of brand new productions that show that The Tempts are indeed 'Still Here'. The album kicks off in true Temptations style with a track laden with social comment, covering the Obama election and taking to heart the mantra for change 'A Change Has Come'. It certainly does what it says, powerful vocals from Big Bruce Williamson which become a hallmark of this album take the lead on this track as The Temptations tackle current social trends and a feeling of optimism among African Americans. The un-necessary rap is a small blight on an otherwise excellent opener; Otis Williams describes 'Still Here' as "A concept album that covers the writing style that The Temptations have been known for throughout our history. Starting with the present day and going back to our roots this is an album that is reminiscent of those that made The Temptations one of the most iconic R&B / Soul groups of all time" and that is clearly evident as the group return to what they know best.

The freshness of this album is an important element and the group hit some real high notes with soulful vibes that haven't been felt since 2000's 'Earisistable' and 2004's 'Legacy' that freshness has been provided in some part by the arrival of Johnny Britt one half of Impromp2 and Michael Panepento as co-producers on the album both Johnny and Michael work with The Temptations on a constant basis as touring music director and production manager / sound engineer respectively so arguably are in the best possible position to work the boards on an album like this as they truly understand the five distinct harmonies that make up this group.

Those five distinct harmonies are also one of the major highlights of this album along with the criticism of an over reliance on covers for the groups last two albums the vocals were firmly split and emphasised too much on one single member's influence and as a result lacking in the trademark five part harmonies that have made the group's name over the last fifty years, a criticism that can't be levelled at this album.

Following on from 'A Change Has Come' we enter straight into the fresh sounding 'One of a Kind Lady' which will no doubt be one of the tracks of 2010 for the Modern Soul scene. Featuring a combination of lead vocals from Ron Tyson, Terry Weeks and Bruce Williamson 'One of a Kind Lady' really hits the spot as a track just right for now. Other tracks that deserve highlighting are 'Let me Catch your Diamonds' a retro feeling Soul stepper which again has the feel of a track just right for now, listen out for the wonderful harmonies on this track as Terry Weeks & Bruce Williamson take it in turns to pour their hearts out the rest of the group manage to add as much emphasis on the background vocals as on the lead vocals. 'Shawtyismygirl' despite the somewhat 'risqué' title is one of my favourites as again Terry Weeks takes the lead and guides us through a R&B flavour trip ideal for the Manchester steppers sound that is apparently

“For The Ladies”. Here’s hoping that there won’t be too much of an issue if any of the more shall we say masculine DJ’s on the Soul Scene fancy dropping this one.

You may have noticed there’s quite a bit of ‘love’ emanating from The Tempts on this recording and rightly so but don’t despair as alongside ‘A Change Has Come’ there is a very welcome hark back to the halcyon days of when the group were under the tutelage of Norman Whitfield with one of the closing tracks on the album. The socially aware ‘Listen Up’ which sees Bruce Williamson take forth the mantle of Dennis Edwards as ‘the’ voice that makes you stand up and take notice. Whilst Ron Tyson is given a welcome lead on the wonderful ballad that is ‘Warm Summer Nights’ very reminiscent of some of Ron’s earliest leads with the group in the mid 80’s ‘Warm Summer Nights’ manages to once again showcase Ron’s falsetto in the ideal fashion.

‘Still Here’ is an important album as in many ways it showcases the distinct talent that this group of five individuals poses and still poses. Otis Williams is nearing 70 but seems in no rush to slow down. As the group take on a regular touring schedule that would have someone 50 years younger than Mr Williams crying for the nearest exit, Bruce Williamson and Terry Weeks are finally coming into their own. Which is down to in some way being able to tackle their own material, Bruce Williamson in particular who joined in 2007 and has spent the last three years developing his style to be just what the group were looking for when he came on board i.e.: a powerful lead in the mould of Dennis Edwards who is as comfortable tackling social comment tracks as he is love songs.

Whilst Weeks himself has finally come out of the shadow of the various leads that have been part of the line up’s in his time with the group and has really shone on this selection. Honourable mentions also go to Ron Tyson who is now second in line to Otis Williams in terms of amount of time served as a Temptation, joining in 1983 Tyson has done well to survive so long where others have faltered and indeed developed a style all on his own. Ron Tyson by his own admission isn’t an Eddie Kendricks or indeed a Damon Harris but what he does possess is a clear talent and has managed to tailor his voice to The Tempts style without being too affected by the unfortunate ravages of time on vocal qualities. Joe Herndon has the unenviable task of filling a position held by the late great Melvin Franklin for over thirty five years and does a commendable job bringing a deep booming bass that is essential to the makeup of the Temptations sound.

‘Still Here’ is a highly recommended release, it isn’t the best Temptations album you will ever hear but nothing ever will match up to those early albums that came out of Hitsville USA, No; this is an album that showcases a truly talented group of individuals who perhaps feel that despite their best efforts have no real place in the modern throwaway world of music. A group not destined to fall into oldies obscurity quietly and a group who still believes they have something to offer to today’s music scene. The fact that The Temptations are indeed still here and still releasing new material in 2010 is a fact that should be cherished. For our sake I hope they continue for as long as they can!

SEAN LIVESEY

To listen to individual tracks or order a copy of the album check out the tempts official website www.temptationssing.com or to buy direct go to either www.amazon.co.uk or download direct from I-tunes.



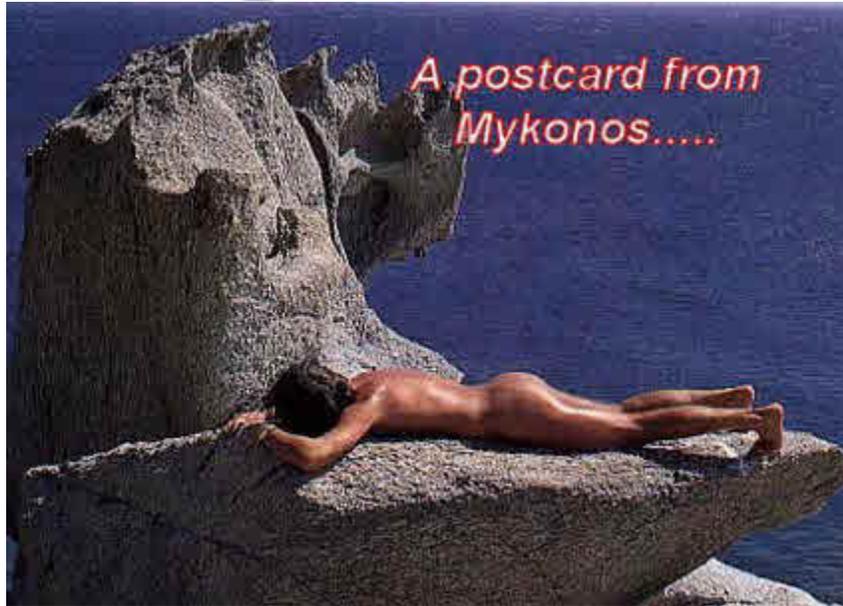
Talking shite

with Will
Philkinson

Hello there. Hope you're all well and the weather's nice and sunny back in Wigan. My business manager and chauffeur Maurice and I are having a lovely time in the villa we bought off the late Steven Gately's husband.

We did have a bit of a mishap the other day though. Maurice fell asleep in the sun without any sunscreen

on his face and got quite badly burnt. To make matters worse, we'd run out of lotions. Luckily, once the locals found out about this, the younger ones all rushed to his aid with those new fangled pump type dispensers of Aftersun. I must say, the sight of Maurice lay there while teenage Greek boys take turns to spray their cream all over his face filled me with great pride. He's on the mend now though and has gone with our houseboy Agador Spartacus to look at one of the local's impressive Greek column (said to be possess exceptional girth and incredible detailing from shaft to base) so I thought I'd drop you a line whilst waiting for Stelios to arrive and attend to my back, sack and crack.



I believe the wendyball world cup is just about to kick off. I have to admit, I did accidentally tune in to the England v Brazil game in 2002 but only for 5 minutes. The sight of an athletic black man lobbing Seaman from 30 yards at that time in the morning was a little hard to stomach. You'd probably miss it altogether though if you weren't looking as I've hardly seen it mentioned anywhere. The quality press have virtually ignored it, save for a small column in Friday's WEP, and the true sign that it's a damp squib is that Sky haven't bothered showing any of the games!!! Quite rightly, they've decided to screen Batley v Keighley in the Northern Rail Cup qualifying round the same night as the final and I think this sound judgement will be validated when the viewing figures arrive. I imagine it's the predictability of it all that puts people off. You just know that come the final, it'll be Brazil or Spain lifting the trophy. Or possibly Argentina. Or the Italians. Or Germany. Compare and contrast this for the last Rugby League world cup - the TRUE world game!!! The competition was wide open, any one of the 86 teams could have won and the whole world joined in the celebrations. You couldn't move for bunting, the pubs were packed and the chippy on Beech hill had a picture of the Lebanese team in the window. How's THAT for a "rainbow nation"??

Whilst on the subject of cabbage kicking, I see Blackpool have won promotion to the premier league. I've a lot of time for the place and we're good friends with a lovely couple (Trevor and Clive) who run a guest house just off the North Pier. I first met Maurice in Blackpool. It was 1978. I was working the illumination season as Carmen Miranda in Funnygirls. He'd been on a scouting mission watching Albert Sprockett play for Blackpool Borough. I came across him in the toilets in the Flying Handbag and he told me it his first visit. I persuaded him to let me take him up the promenade, he loved it and the rest, as they say, is history.

On a less savoury note, I see the Warriors away support was infiltrated by Latics fans in last month's televised Challenge Cup clash away at Leeds. A TV audience of 38 million watched in horror as this thug - who'd taken the time and effort to buy this year's Warriors kit - hurled the type of box you keep sandwiches in at the Leeds players celebrating a last minute consolation try (the Warriors won the game 78 - 4). This job may have caused serious injury and I should know. It was the late 80's and Henderson Gill and Ellery Hanley - who had both started bringing their own dinners with them - decided to have a food fight. I was in the middle and somehow, I ended taking the full force of Ellery's enormous lunchbox square in the face. I never saw it coming. His mayonnaise was dripping all down my cheek, my eyes started watering and I came over all queer. I must have been a bit concussed because I vaguely remember it being followed up by what I can only assume, due to its size and dimensions, was a full sized thermos flask. Although my abiding memory is of it being more of a deep mahogany in colour rather than the regulation tartan.

Anyway, have a good summer and I'll catch you all again sometime in August.

Love and kisses,

Wilberforce Barrymore Philkinson.

X.

THIS MONTH WE'RE MOSTLY LISTENING TO...EXIT CALM



Have a great summer and see you in August, The Mudhuts team



mellow yellow hydro
HELPING YOU GROW



INDOOR GROWING EQUIPMENT AT THE BEST PRICES

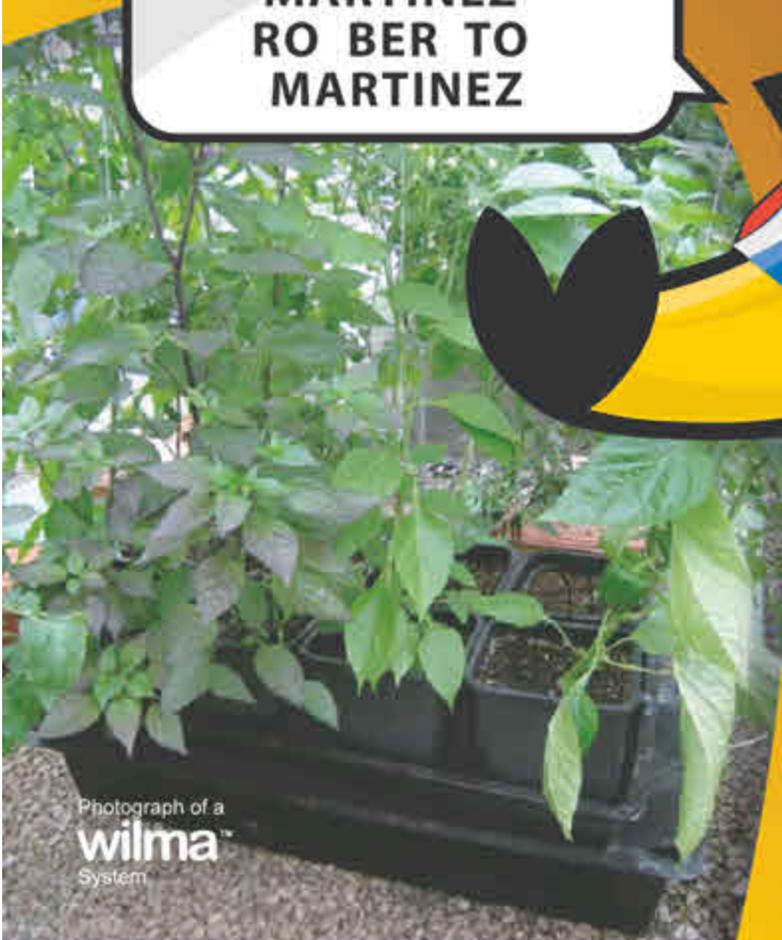
RO BER TO
MARTINEZ
RO BER TO
MARTINEZ



10%

DISCOUNT

BRING THIS AD
INSTORE TO CLAIM



Photograph of a
wilma
System

Unit B1A Towngate Works, Mawdesley, Lancs
phone: 01704 822609 Web: www.mellowyellowhydro.com

VISIT OUR
SHOP ON:



STOCKISTS OF:



AND MANY MORE