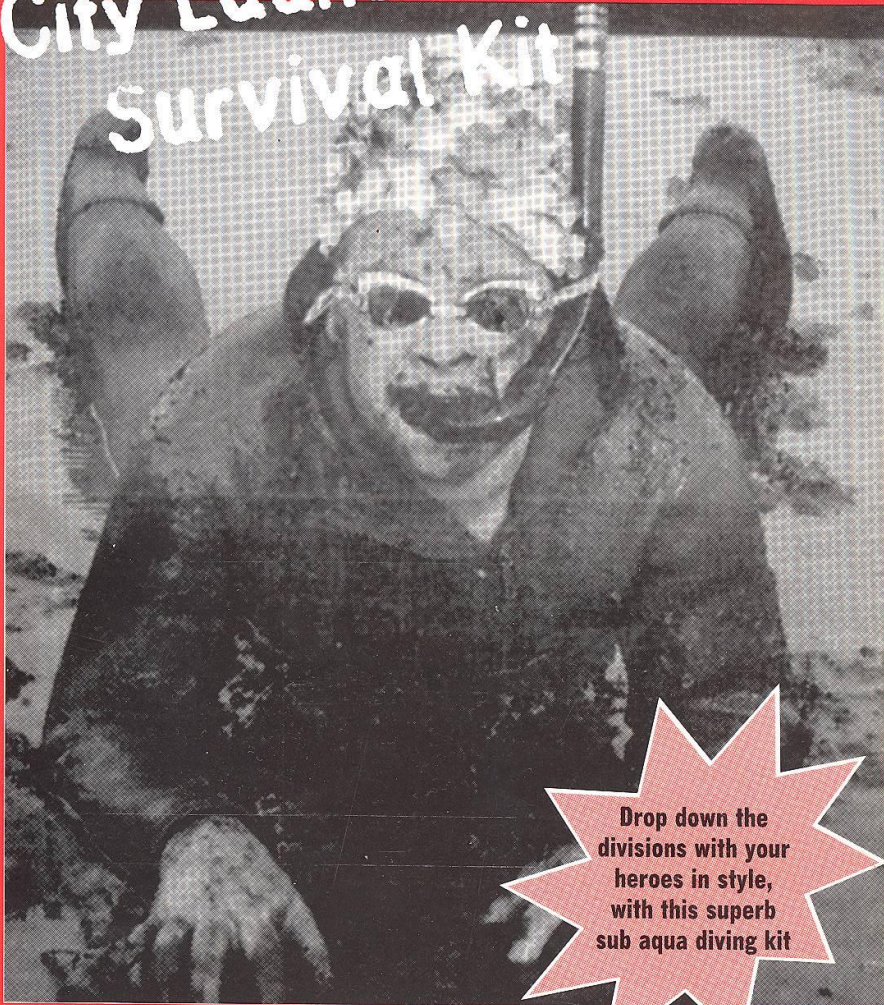


City Launch New Survival Kit



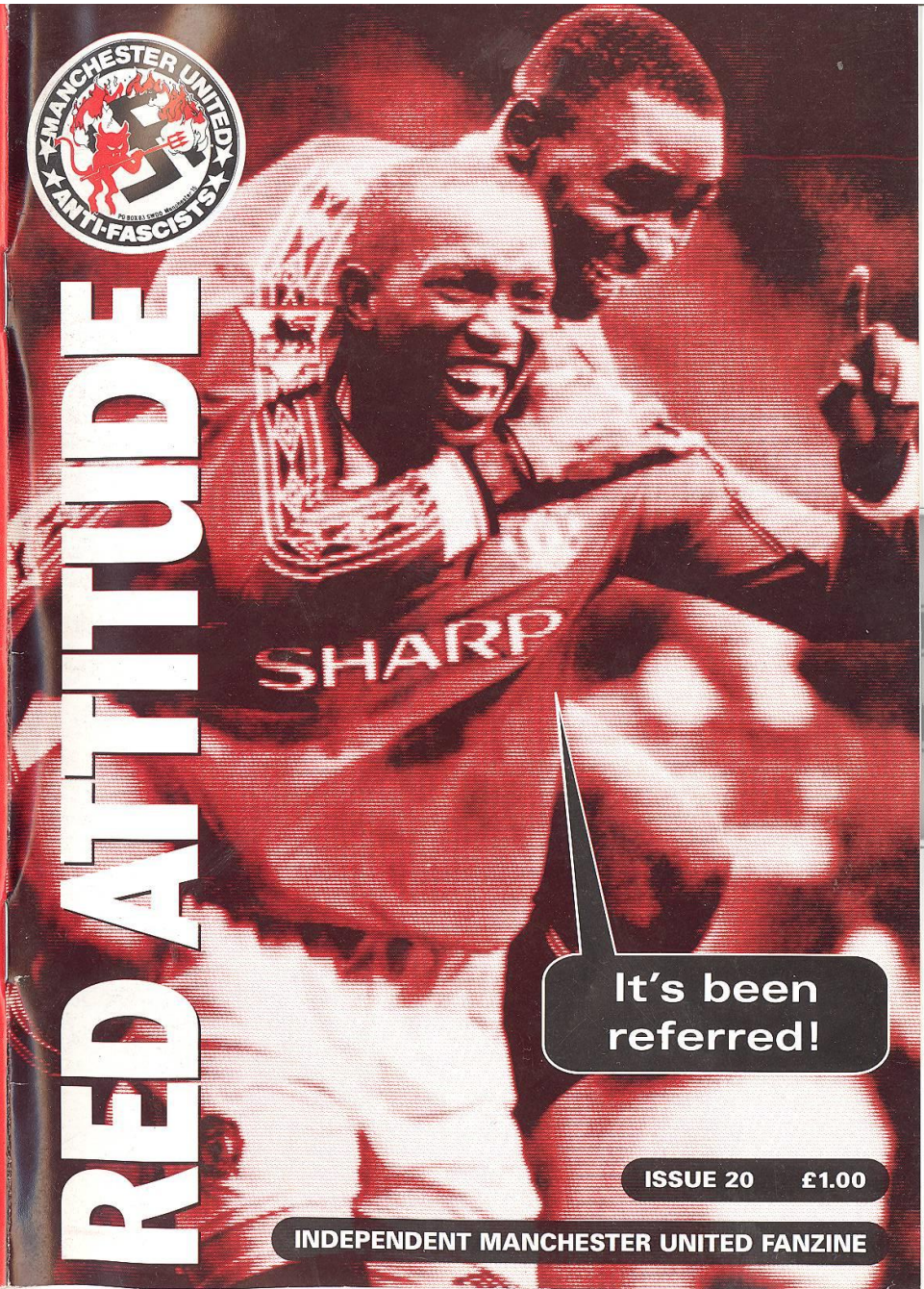
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RED ATTITUDE



It's been referred!

ISSUE 20 £1.00

INDEPENDENT MANCHESTER UNITED FANZINE

Sky's takeover bid has been a defining moment for United fans, and with no fence to sit on, supporters are having to decide which side of the fence they are on. IMUSA has articulated the position of the 90% of Reds who oppose the deal, whilst those whose support for it was based on vague promises in the Sun newspaper of Gold Trafford, Ronaldo and £623 million to spend, have either seen the light of day, or are now busily constructing their annual begging letters to Mr S. Claus in Lapland.

No mandate exists for the takeover to go ahead from the supporters nor from the shareholders, yet the board continue to advocate it. They are acting solely in their own and BSKyB's best interests

Mandelson's much welcomed referral to the Monopolies and Mergers Commission has created a window of opportunity for those who want change. United fans now have to put their money where their mouths are and buy shares in the club. To effect change, we must first empower ourselves, then we can set about democratising United. The referral holds no guarantees, and may prove to be a false dawn, but a significant supporter shareholding will in a worst case scenario, act as a bulwark against total submersion into BSKyB.

IMUSA and SUAM (Shareholders United Against Murdoch) have conducted a superb rearguard action against the takeover, moving swiftly on a number of fronts, countering PLC/Sky propaganda, and galvanising seemingly everyone but the PLC/Sky and Zoe Ball, into opposing the deal.

More importantly these groups have demonstrated that something can be done. They have earned your respect, now give them your support.

As for the City institutions who haven't backed the deal. Perhaps they have realised that whilst the Stock Market was dropping 20%, United increased in value by about 40%. In unstable times United have outperformed the market, and are almost recession proof. Why would any investment fund

manager worth his salt vote to sell an investment vehicle of United's calibre to BSKyB just before the megabucks bonanza of pay TV kicks in. I doubt such corporate egalitarianism exists.

...next March could prove to be a very interesting month, especially with the MMC due to deliberate on the takeover. Game on so to speak.

Meanwhile back in the football department things are going swimmingly. The big 'if only's' of Barca home and Bayern away may yet prove unnecessary after some good work in Brondby and a tidy result in Bayern the same night.

The latest batch of new recruits have bedded down with remarkable ease, but Wes Brown's emergence does take the biscuit. Dwight Yorke has brought an added dimension up front that has been somewhat lacking in the post Hughes and Cantona era. Even Jordi is putting it together with a couple of goals to his name in recent weeks.

The proposed redevelopment is welcome news, but one could have been forgiven for thinking it was part of the Sky deal, such was the proximity of the announcements. What it does show is the incredible forward planning that goes into United. In 1970 we had a ground that held 63,000, dropping down to 44,000, before moving back to 55,000 and by the year 2001, some 30 years later we will see a net gain of 4,000 seats. No doubt someone in planning has got a strong hunch that there's another 12,000 Reds out there to fill these extra seats.

Should we qualify for the later stages in Europe and things remain ticketyboo in the Premiership, then next March could prove to be a very interesting month, especially with the MMC due to deliberate on the takeover. Game on so to speak. United for United.

Danny



When news of Murdoch's mugging broke one Sunday morning in September, it was met with disbelief, and the hope that this was merely the financial equivalent of transfer speculation during a 'helping England' fortnight break in the fixture list.

Days later an increased bid from BSKyB, to close down the boardroom dissenters and the deal was done. Five months undercover work by the PLC was put to bed in three days flat once exposed, to present the fans with a fait accompli, or so they thought.

The Mirror went ballistic, invoking a crusade of Maxwellian proportions against the deal. Centre page protest posters were duly printed in readiness for the next home game. Spurring the fans to the very point of insurrection, the sheer volume of fan disapproval alone would without doubt force the deal to crumble like a pack of cards midway through the second half. If Murdoch was a scouser, their gameplan might have had some resonance and more impact.

A campaign based on raw emotion and anti-Murdoch paranoia, designed to peak at the outset would be guaranteed to fail.

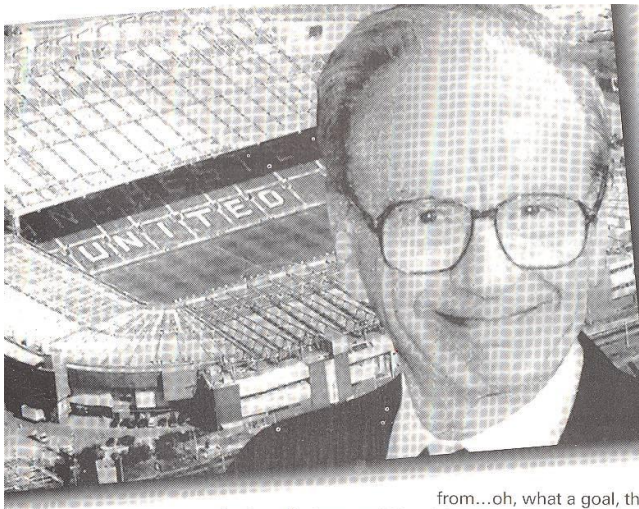
IMUSA's mandate came from the 90% of Reds opposed to the takeover. Any takeover that involved United losing their independence only to become a strategic pawn in a global TV power game would attract the wholesale opposition of United fans. Murdoch just happens to be the most virulent and malignant strain of the cancer that is eating the peoples game.

Following the massive public meeting at the Bridgewater Hotel, the campaign along with the shareholders group, SUAM, swung into action. The overriding success to date has been to convince fellow Reds, many of whom were saying 'there's nothing we can do', at the outset, that the situation can be turned around.

There have been three clear victories for the campaign. Firstly the extension of time for consideration by the Office of Fair Trading, followed by the subsequent referral by Mandelson to the MMC, and finally, the meagre 34% of shareholders (including Edwards 16% but excluding BSKyB's recently acquired 11%) who accepted BSKyB's share offer. None of these will prove to be knockout blows, but when death is administered by a thousand cuts, the first three are as vital as the last three, and IMUSA/SUAM have certainly drawn blood.

At the outset the balance of forces could roughly be categorised as follows: the PLC had 80% of the equity and 15% of supporters in favour, whilst IMUSA/SUAM had 20% of the equity and about 85% of supporters against the deal. When asked to produce, the PLC could only show 46% of shareholders in favour of the deal. Opposition to the deal has hit 96% and almost rendered further polls pointless. If President Clinton had that level of support he could have had sex in front of the Senate and come away with a standing ovation.

There are those who will say that that's as far as you go. You've had your 15 minutes of fame, the powers-that-be have gone through the motions, but that's it. Mandelson enlisted Murdoch's support to back Labour for office. Blair gets elected. Mandelson needs private finance for the Millennium Dome and Sky hand over £12 million. Mandelson will be seen to go by the book, and following a full and proper investigation, the deal will get the nod. Nowhere else for the campaign to go. No appeals and no MUFC.



Sure that could happen, if the situation were left uncontested and Sky were given a free hand. The raison d'être of the campaign is to influence and change events sufficiently to ensure that this scenario doesn't become an apathy-fuelled self-fulfilling prophesy.

Just look at how the city analysts and financial experts have got it (deliberately) wrong to date. They are about as convincing as a TV soccer pundit. "I just can't see where a goal is going to come

from...oh, what a goal, the big fella's been threatening to do that all afternoon" Cue Atkinson and Keegan equivalents pontificating on the bid. "It's down to the shareholders not the supporters. The big institutions hold 60%, the PLC board 17% and BskyB 11% which adds up to 88%. The OFT has received a poor response in terms of submissions from those opposed to the bid. There is no real basis in competition law for Mandelson to refer the bid to the MMC. BskyB's share price remains buoyant as the City believes Mandelson will okay the deal. Most big investors don't accept the first offer in a takeover bid. On the second bid, the major shareholders will accept and the small shareholders will fall into line."

This is no more than subtle propaganda from the financial pundits who want to be seen to be in the know. Perhaps if they spent a week or two on the ground in Manchester and got a taste of what the opposition are about, they may see it differently. Their opinions are about as valid as someone who has been shown only the home team score, and thinks this tells him the result. As in Brondby 2. Can't see United scoring three away from home in Europe. Home win - put your house on it. Waste of time United even getting changed!

Consider this. So successful have IMUSA and SUAM been in setting the agenda in the public relations department, that the chief architects of the deal, Booth and Edwards have been unable to counter with any conviction.

Sky have been obliged to exercise their right to silence following Mark Booth's poor show in the left back department. Edwards has offered the possibility of concessions for the ordinary fan sometime in the future or pie in the sky more likely. The inspiration for his concessions coming from IMUSA's Redprint document which has been lying on his desk for the best part of three years.

The spin for PLC/Sky should have run along the lines of 'yes of course there was initial opposition to the deal, but this has evaporated as people have got used to the idea and seen the benefits it will bring.'. Edwards was quoted as saying he was prepared to 'argue the toss with anyone', but it seems the word anyone should not be misconstrued to mean IMUSA, SUAM or any Reds opposed to the deal. As they see it, they don't need to listen to us, let alone talk to us, but they are getting twitchy and are scared to talk to us. This bit of business should have been wrapped up in September. It now runs until next March at the earliest. That's a full year spent making a pig's ear of selling United. Edwards nerve may not hold, especially against concerted and effective opposition.

For the campaign to have come this far in less than two months from a standing start is incredible, just think where we could be next March when all the wheels are on the wagon. Beware the ides of March, Martin, we're on the move.

Dish Off Murdoch

Following the IMUSA request for Reds to show their disapproval of the takeover by cancelling their Sky subscriptions for the month of October, and if necessary, cancellation if the deal went through, I duly rang Sky and did so...

On ringing Sky, and making them aware of my reasons for cancelling, I was put through to a special section where my request was further discussed. The operator took a very neutral and disarming stance in her attempts to counter my arguments.

"But isn't a pop star now trying to buy them", referring to the Hucknall/CNN fantasy bid. "No, there's only one bid on Edwards desk that's being processed", I reassured her. "But people like Fergus McCann and Elton John have bought football clubs, what's the difference?" For a blindingly obvious start, McCann and John can justifiably call themselves supporters of their respective clubs and their motivation could be construed as being football orientated. "It's the Premier League. We pay £80 million a year." "What on earth does that mean? Have you got your pages mixed up, you've answered something I've not asked you," I said as both eyebrows raised themselves simultaneously. "Your bosses must be concerned about losing customers over the deal if they have got dedicated

handlers on line such as yourself?" I asked, trying to turn the tables, "no, not really, you're only the third enquiry I've had on this matter." She politely informed me, as if somehow trying to conjure up a picture of the dusty, cobwebbed, almost forgotten room in the Carlsberg office that turns out to be the customer complaints department. More likely a whole division of Sky operators, trained to the hilt in customer service speak, have been deployed to dissuade Reds and ABU's alike, from unsubscribing. And so it went on for about twenty minutes, until she conceded defeat and told me I have to give 30 days notice. I felt like I'd just done the first fifteen on the phone.

Now cancelling is fine, but to some, whose only way of seeing United, especially away, is on Sky, doing so smacks of cutting off one's nose to spite one's face. Let's face it you can't take a dog's dinner away from him and tell him he can't eat it as a 'matter of principle' can you? He will naturally enough bite your hand off the minute you go near the plate.

What is to be done I asked myself, now that I'm £22 a month better off but I've fell out with my dealer. When I first got hooked I was only paying £7 a month, others tell me they started on £3 a month, and there are some, in the early days who were even given it free just to get the taste of it.

So off in search I went and headed first for the bright lights of digital TV, the new wonder drug for TV addicts, which has the added advantage that you don't need to use needles, sorry, I mean satellite dishes to get it. Here's the low-down...

ONdigital's equivalent of Mark Booth; Stephen Grabiner



British Digital Broadcasting was set up by Granada, Carlton and BskyB to develop the digital broadcasting format. However, the regulators ruled against Sky's involvement in BDB and they had to paddle their own digital canoe. BDB became ONdigital and Sky launched their Sky Digital service.

For the Sky system you need to fit a new dish (old one no good) and buy a decoder for about £200 plus connection fee and have to wait for someone to come round and mess with your dishes. You will get access to the Sky pay channels and also BBC and Channel 4. You can't access ITV stations (including ITV 2 when launched) through Sky Digital so you have to watch them in good old fashioned analogue, or buy a separate decoder for £200. Having looked at Sky's channel package, I have to say I can't make head nor tail of it except that you will be paying at least £22.99 a month for the minimum package containing the Sky sports channels.

For the ONdigital system all you need is a decoder costing £200 and a one-off connection fee of about £20. No dish, no cable, no hassle. You will get all the free to air channels (BBC 1,2, BBC News24, BBC Choice, ITV, ITV 2, Channel 4, Channel 5) still free but in digital format. You don't have to subscribe to any pay channels or go out and buy a new television. It comes through your existing aerial, (as long as you're not still using a metal coat hanger).

ONdigital offer a choice of any six from twelve of their pay channels for £7.99 a month. You get all 12 for the price of 6 for the first three months so you can make your mind up. On top of this you can buy the Sky sports and movie channels through ONdigital as well for the next five years. You pay £11 for one Sky channel and £15 for two. So if my maths are correct I can get Sky sports plus six ONdigital channels for £23 a month.

With ONdigital you can chop and change your package as and when you want. This could be

quite handy if the Restrictive Practices court kicks out Sky's deal with the Premier League in January. MUTV is also available, and as Granada have an involvement in that as well, for the time being, any sudden changes in January should be covered. It is well worth remembering that the decoders are not compatible. So if you buy Sky and want to change, then you have to buy a different box. If you buy ONdigital, you can access almost everything, oh except for some of the more obscure history and documentary channels.

It's worth remembering that the £200 decoder and dish hardware package offered by Sky is heavily subsidised, and the real cost is nearer £400. (Guess who's making Sky's decoders - yes Mr Sugar's Amstrad outfit. It's amazing how much business one phone call can win you!) So any short-term gains that Sky are making, having launched ahead of ONdigital, are costing them dearly. No prizes for guessing how they will be clawing that back in the near future.

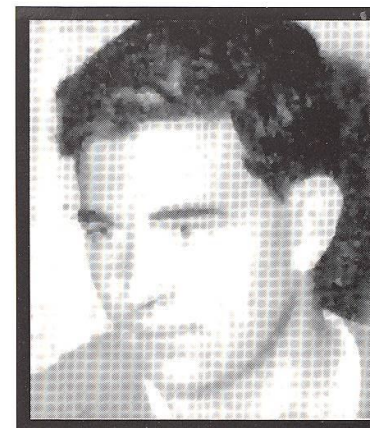
At present there are about 6 million converts to satellite TV whom Sky are hoping to upgrade onto Sky digital packages. If we assume there are at least 20 million non-satellite households, then the size of potential market open to ONdigital is about three times the size. People are unlikely to go via satellite when they can go the direct route through ONdigital. Add to this the percentage of satellite subscribers such as myself who will switch to ONdigital for the advantages outlined previously, and you begin to see Murdoch's dilemma. He has heavily invested in a niche market, which is going to come under severe commercial pressure from his rivals.

Murdoch needs a product that is exclusive to satellite TV, and this is where United come into the picture in a big way. Many of us have looked at his attempted acquisition through football eyes and seen the dangers. Look through digital eyes and you

see even greater dangers.

The exclusive product that Murdoch is chasing is European football, or more precisely European Super League. Having United and Sky will leave him best placed to tie in with his European allies. Add to this his activity in the Italian pay TV market, where he is trying to buy a piece of the action, and the picture becomes clearer still. (Oh no not the Anglo-Italian Cup again!) Presently European football is free to air and Premier League football is bought on subscription. These positions could change dramatically if Murdoch gets his way. As he no longer has exclusive distribution of Sky sports (i.e. access can be gained through ONdigital) Murdoch may not wish to pay as much for it as he has previously, preferring instead to corner the market in European football through ESL. With the likelihood that no-one else could match the premium price he has paid to date for Premier League football, it could leave the door open for him to pick up the PL TV rights for a lot less than he's paying now as well. European games will be satellite exclusive on a pay-per-view basis, probably cheap at first but rising dramatically as in the case of Premier league.

I make no apology for singing the virtues of ONdigital ahead of Sky Digital but rather than talking about boycotting Murdoch enterprises, I believe the opportunity exists in the Digital TV market for consumers to exercise choice and preference based on value, quality and ease of use. And to be quite honest if it brings that Aussie bastard to his knees any quicker, by causing such severe cash flow problems within BskyB, that he has to utilise his £623 million elsewhere then



1933-1998

Jackie Blanchflower

Since the last issue of Red Attitude we are saddened to hear of the death of Jackie Blanchflower.

Jackie, whose career was cut short by the injuries received in the Munich air disaster, died aged 65 after a long battle against cancer.

Brother of Danny, of Spurs and Northern Ireland fame, Jackie joined United in 1949 as a teenager. As one of the Busby Babes he played in midfield, attack, and central defence during the fifties. In the 1957 Cup Final, he even played in goal when Ray Wood went off injured.

Jackie was one of the guests of honour at the recent Munich Memorial match where for the last time he met up with his fellow survivors.

Rest in Peace Jackie.



As you may have noticed, United have dropped 'Football Club' from the official club emblem. No big deal says Edwards, putting it down to the marketing men and part of the ongoing promotion of the brand. Brand? But aren't we a football club first and foremost, without which the brand wouldn't exist?

There is no need it seems to state the obvious anymore and hence the revised logo.

Product differentiation it is called. This means that when you think United you don't need to be told it is a football club. Just as with vacuum cleaners you think Hoover, although Hoover is only one manufacturer. Hoover are the vacuum cleaner, and United are the football club. This analogy goes out the window if you, like my auntie Joan are still running round the house with a Ewebank, and no I don't mean that truck driver from Brighton with the lisp.

Apparently Kentucky Fried Chicken are also considering dropping the FC from their name, and will henceforth be known as Kentucky. Which is fine unless you live in Kentucky where, somewhat strangely, they will call it Fried Chicken!

The core business of the club is football; removing the name 'football club' implies that those who run the club don't see it that way. It's as if the football element is no longer central to the peripherals of the business. A high risk cost implication, which could impact negatively if results didn't go the right way.

For the marketing people it is one more restraint of trade removed, allowing them to tie the global image of Manchester United to any product in the global market without having to dovetail the deal into a football environment. Thus Manchester United can tie up with Pepsi for promotional work in the Far East where United are strong and also interestingly in places like America where football is quite weak compared to other sports. The advantage for Pepsi, apart from getting one over on Coca-Cola, is that United's popularity transcends football. Just like over here everyone has heard of the 49ers, but who, in all honesty, could tell you whether they play baseball, football or deviant sex games?

United's thinking is influenced by the basket of sponsors that the Champions League has attracted and the millions in 'money for nothing' that this has generated. So in the scheme of things United's logo will be further devalued as it jostles for recognition amongst the swathe of corporate images and sponsorships now being attracted to the club.

Brøndby 2-6!

Due to the limited availability and astronomical prices of flights to Copenhagen, we had decided on a coach trip for this one, along with about 25 other Reds, including some we'd met on the train to Monaco. There should have been three more, only they'd not been sent the earlier departure time. Instead of being at Chorlton Street for 4 o'clock, they were just round the corner, taking advantage of the happy hour in Kicks'. However much they had, I doubt it saved them the £175 it cost them for the taxi to meet us at Thurrock.

We were 'entertained' on the way to Dover by two badly chosen videos; the best of Match of the Seventies which tipped a wink to Doc's Red Army and spent the rest of the time lauding Liverpool's European achievements - I wonder if the nineties equivalent would mention the figure of 26,000? The second was the 'Titanic'; despite the obvious pluses (various bits of Kate Winslett, Leonardo Di Caprio dying) it was timed so that the film finished just before we were boarding the ferry. At least there aren't any icebergs in the Channel - as far as I know. The only disaster on our boat was that all the draught beer was warm.

Of all the things the Low Countries are famed for, one of them is not scenery on road journeys, especially in the dark. As the duty free took its toll, sleep arrived in half hour snatches, punctuated only by cramp, piss stops, the delicate sound of chundering, and the arsehole drivers finding the bumpiest bits of the autobahn possible. As morning broke we realised that almost everyone had assumed we'd be getting a ferry direct to Denmark, and like us, had no French/Belgian/German currency. At breakfast time, no money equalled no food; no food consequently rekindled memories of Super Bock for breakfast, only this time it was Grolsh.

We reached the Danish border by mid afternoon, and were board by a customs official actually looking for weapons (Christ knows how she missed the two drivers who were possibly the biggest

weapons I've met) but claiming she was looking for alcohol. Well she didn't look very hard then, almost everyone had one open, six or seven left, and the bus reeked of stale beer amongst other things). Soon we were on our way over the longest bridge in the world, and didn't we know it. Someone had put the Fugees album on, despite protestations that it was a) shit, and b) likely to send everyone to sleep - right on both counts.

We arrived at Hotel Cosmopole at roughly eightish, after a cramped journey of about 28 hours which proved that the saying 'it's better to travel than to arrive' can be a complete crock of shit. Unfortunately (er?) our hotel was situated on the corner of the Istegaade, Copenhagen's red light district. The nearest two signs to

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our hotel reception were 'Maxim strip show' and 'Exciting Sex Shop' - needless to say they might have found it prudent to install revolving doors. After taking time to freshen up (and shit, on the coach we were forbidden to shit in the toilet and asked only to piss in an emergency - exactly what constitutes an emergency I'm not sure) we headed out into the chilly, Copenhagen night.

It is a beautiful city, especially around the main squares and central shopping districts, it all seems very stylish and cultured. Except for the hotdogs, that is, served without bread, just on school bog roll greaseproof paper with a dollop of sauce.

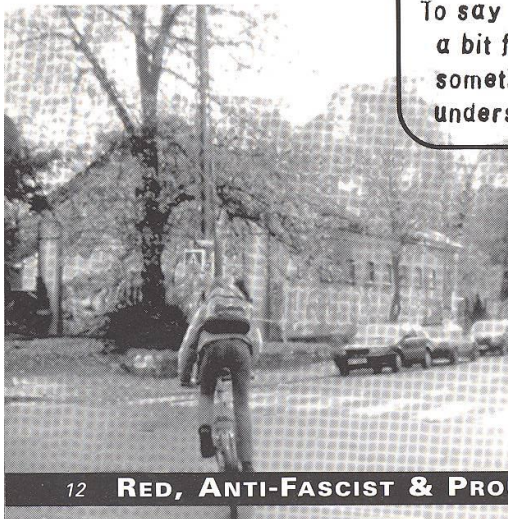
There was not any hint of the usual Red invasion, there was a reasonable presence, but it seemed quite low key. Perhaps everyone was holed up in the various bars, it was probably a bit cold to be bugging about singing in the streets. We found warmth, Reds and beer in the Dubliner, a tasteful Irish bar which was showing the Liverpool match, with almost as many of us watching it as there were at Anfield, the part-time scouse bastards. Drink did not come cheap, it was the equivalent of £3.90 for a pint of Tuborg (a basic but nice lager). I must point out that I've just this second been sick whilst writing this, I'm not sure if the week has just caught up with me or if it was the thought of paying that much for a pint.

After the game and a couple more, we headed off to find somewhere else, and ended up in Burger King followed by McDonalds, followed by bed. One a.m. seemed a little early considering most of the bars had a license till at least two, but we had started drinking at half eight that morning, so we'd had a decent day's worth - and, of course, there was the promise of more to come on the Wednesday.

After such an early night, we managed to make breakfast for a change. We met up with a group of reds off the coach and decided, for the time being, to take in a bit more of Copenhagen than just the city centre bars. Options were split between the Tivoli gardens, which were closed; the Little Mermaid, which was miles away and when it comes down to it, is just a statue of a mermaid; and Christiana Park.

Not a lot of people know this (well I didn't), but Christiana is an independent free state at one end of Copenhagen with its own laws, etc. Essentially, it's a hippy commune, but it sounded a good laugh so off we went, actually paying onto the bus. It's in the run down area of Copenhagen, surrounded by rubble, graffiti and shite. The actual entrance to the park is like one of those wild westy bits in a theme park, and it's only about the size of a couple of football pitches. Aside from the odd mangy dog wandering around, there's just a few shacks selling their 'merchandise'. We made our way to the Woodstock Café, and found the bar eventually, you couldn't see it for all the smoke, then sat near the windows at the back. To say it all smelt a bit funny was something of an understatement.

Christiana Park...
To say it all smelt a bit funny was something of an understatement.



Having done a bit of cultural discovery, we went to the pub, this time the Shamrock, near all the cinemas. There was quite a few United in there; only about half of them spoke English though, you wouldn't believe the amount of

Danish Reds who had congregated in Copenhagen, singing songs in a bizarre mix of Schmeichel's English and their own Danish. After this, we decided that still paying the best part of a fiver for a pint made no sense when we'd brought with us a bottle of vodka (70% ABV no less) that we'd got on the way back from Lodz, which had cost us four quid. Even when mixed heavily with coke, it was described variously as 'U-boat fuel' and 'fuckin' 'orrible' depending on who tried it. No one denied that the rest of the afternoon was a bit of a blur. I vaguely remember searching for souvenirs,



**wet, cold and bedraggled...
 - but we were still buzzing
 off the whole thing**

someone having an obsession with buying a plate, and the smell of vodka.

As the game drew nearer, we began to make our way to the Parken (national) stadium, eventually finding the right bus, and there was no need to even attempt a jib as the driver waved us all on for free. Our tickets were for the Brøndby end, so we made our way there, pausing only to buy a scarf for at least £12. The seller told me anyone singing 'Crash Boom Bang Munich' - obviously the Scandinavian equivalent of 'Munich 58' - was scum and not a real Brøndby fan. No arguments there but I must admit I never heard it once; in fact we were treated with nothing apart from courtesy, amusement and bemusement, even after the sixth went in.

The ground itself was pretty tasty, as far as I can remember. We were right at the back row, centrally placed. I'm not sure if we were meant to be there, but that's where we ended up. Behind us was a metal grille, ideal for banging on to create that authentic continental sound. Before I realised that I'd lost my lucky badge we were two nil up, proving that superstition isn't all it's cracked up to be, although it's possible I lost it celebrating the first. I can't remember a game like it, every time we got the ball in their half I thought we were going to score.

Apparently in the season we lost to Dortmund, UEFA did an analysis of shots to shots on target. It seems we were shite on that score, according to the official report, but we only had about two or three that missed in Brøndby, I think. I wouldn't want to single out any particular goal, they were all great examples of counter-attacking, but maybe two deserve a special mention; Andy Cole's (surprise!) which showed the Yorke-Cole combination at its best, was almost a replica of the first against Wimbledon, and because it showed Brøndby's big mouthed keeper that, as they say in the films, talk is cheap. Also Solskjaer because it was pretty fucking deadly for a first touch, and because it made us the first side to score six away at the top level in Europe since the great AC Milan side.

After the game, we made our way out with the Brøndby fans, credit to them, they were still laughing and singing 'always look on the bright side of life'. Not really having a clue where to go, and having less than an hour to get back to the coach, we decided to follow everyone else, just hoping that they were heading towards the city centre. It was absolutely pissing down, I lost count of the number of times I did a Dr Gloucester. Turns out everyone was going to the nearest train station, and the staff were really helpful, directing us to the right platform and train, without enquiring vis-à-vis tickets. Maybe they couldn't imagine anyone not having one; maybe they just didn't give a shit; maybe they felt sorry for us considering what we looked like - wet, cold and bedraggled - but we were still buzzing off the whole thing. I'm glad we had another performance to be proud of, of Busbyesque brilliance as opposed to the Shankleyesque stagnation in Monaco and Lodz.

The bus journey back was more low key than a 6-2 merited, maybe we just couldn't believe it, or perhaps everyone was more intent on drinking themselves into a stupor. A special mention here to the big lads at the back who got 40 bottles of Carlsberg and a crate of Fosters for the return

**Before I realised that I'd
 lost my lucky badge we were
 two nil up**

I was relieved to find they were only going to rifle through our bags. Doubly so, as at least one Red had bags full of sicky clothes in his...

journey and were onto everyone else's beer before we were that far into France; they started caning double brandy and ports on the ferry as well. It might not be big or clever, but if you're going to do something you might as well do it properly, and they did. My own personal highlight was a stop at a service station somewhere in Northern Germany. My German vocabulary only stretches as far as 'danke', 'ja das is richtig' and 'kuken' - 'thanks', 'yes, that's right', and 'cake'. Fortunately all I wanted was a bit of cake so I was sorted, even if I felt like a twat buying it on Visa.

As we approached a cash and carry at Calais, the drivers repeatedly warned the entire coachload of us not to take any unusual souvenirs of Christiana back into Britain - although they put it differently, the humourless bastards. Most Reds who had invested in such a manner got rid of theirs before boarding the ferry, with a definite proportion opting to eat theirs.

This decision, combined with the rough seas (it was that rough that by the time we got to Dover we had to wait half an hour for a berth because no-one wanted to get on out there) led to some amusing scenes on the ferry crossing. Staggering from side to side and going glassy-eyed seemed to be the order of the day, but I reckon even the soberest, straightest, salty sea-dog passenger might have felt a bit dodgy. Especially when on take-off from Calais the boat spent five minutes shuddering in a manner more akin to a Challenger rocket, or one of the toys from the

Istegaade shops.

Stripping Off with Sarah

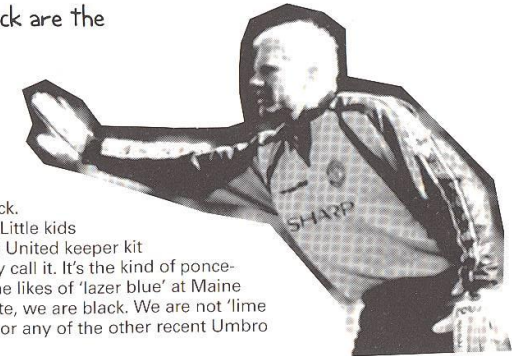
We all know that red, white and black are the traditional colours of our great club, but do Umbro?

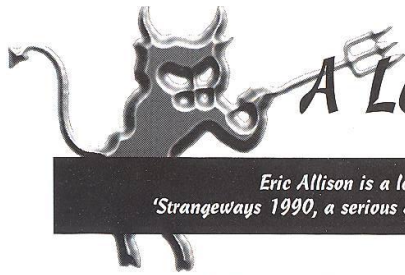
The number of atrocious strips our players are forced to wear nowadays is beyond a joke. The current home keeper kit is a good example. Fluorescent green may look right at home at White Hart Lane, but it makes Schmeichel look like a right prick. Has anyone bought one of these atrocities? Little kids maybe but I'm yet to see an adult wearing a United keeper kit and who can blame them? 'Lime green' they call it. It's the kind of ponceified colour you'd expect to see alongside the likes of 'lazer blue' at Maine Road, not at United. We are red, we are white, we are black. We are not 'lime green', nor are we grey, yellow, green, blue or any of the other recent Umbro fashion disasters.

A few years ago they released the horrendous blue and white striped effort, marketing it as a 'replica to the kit Newton Heath used to wear'. I, for one, have never seen pics of Newton Heath in this strip, but you can bet your life on it that if they did it would be free from advertising and criminally modified club logos. Like all early United shirts there was no advertising tarnishing the club's colours. They were classic shirts, whether they were just a plain red tee or embroidered with an old style United logo. These were the classic United kits because, after all, we support United, we don't support Umbro or Sharp, so why should we walk around advertising their products? We have had some good kits though, the Admiral one's from the Doc era and some Adidas ones, like the early 90s home top and the victorious plain white Rotterdam '91 away kit. These were great kits worn in the days when the wearing of a United kit actually meant something and gave you an identity. The successor to Adidas, Umbro, have given us only a handful of decent kits like the white '96 effort, the all black '94 away kit, and the recent champions league home kit. But for every decent kit they give you half a dozen vomit-inducing 'fashion items'. First example, drawstring shirts! They may well have coincided with our first title win in twenty odd years but they made our lads look like extras from an old school Robin Hood film. After this, the bad kits came thick and fast with the infamous grey kit the worst of the lot.

We've heard people say Sheringham isn't a United player, well the grey kit wasn't a United kit. It was absolutely hideous and I was embarrassed to see our lads wearing it. Umbro seem to have had their day at United and thankfully their deal with us runs out in a couple of years time.

The ideas they have introduced to hike up the replica kit prices (vapa tech, anti-locking zips) have only succeeded in making our players look stupid. Lets see United return to the classic red shirt with the only marking being the proud logo of Manchester United Football Club (none of this Manchester United crap we have now). Lets have none of this Umbro and Sharp shit tarnishing our club's proud colours and lets see a return to the United of old with quality United shirts worn by quality players showing the spirit of Manchester United Football Club, with no sign of money grabbers like Edwards and Murdoch out to sell and destroy our very soul.





A Letter From Eric...

Eric Allison is a long standing United supporter and co-writer of the book 'Strangeways 1990, a serious disturbance'. Eric is currently residing in HMP Sudbury.

Do you remember me telling you about that good pal of mine, the Londoner, the rabid Arsenal fan? Well, he finished a ten stretch, just before the end of last season, when his mob were looking good for the double.

He'd been talking for a while, in letters, about how disillusioned he was by the way that Sky had taken over the national game. Talked about giving up on the Gunners and going back to football's grass roots, in his case, on Hackney marshes. Give him his due, as a man of principle, gave the glory a body-swerve and hasn't set foot inside the Marble halls since his release.

Supports Fisher Athletic now, across the river. He'll feel at home there mind; the manager, half the team and 90% of the fans, are all pals of his, from the exercise yards.

Anyway, the day after the Murdoch/United story broke, I phone this pal, knowing that he'll sympathise. We talk about the bollocks and come around to Edwards. My mate says that the chairman's behaviour, in letting Sky in, surprises him. 'It doesn't surprise me', I answer. 'The man would sell to the Devil, if the money was right.' 'That's just what he's done Eric', the lad replied.

I tell you my heart is bleeding. Manchester United, the club that rose from the industrial streets of the city; supported, through thick and thin, by working people (I've seen tens of thousands of them, still in their overalls, at night matches, in the past), being taken over by the biggest enemy of the working class in my time.

The circulation of this bastard's publishing flagship, 'The Scum' was 3,707,471 at the last count. (August.) Virtually all going into working

class homes. They say, the readers, when challenged, that they only take the rag, for the tits and the sport. It's the greatest act of infiltration the class war has ever known. The day of the Barca match, the leader column poured scorn and vitriol over the attempt by the TUC to increase the proposed minimum wage. Nearly 4 million workers bought the message.

This is the paper, which presumably we will be associated with, that spoke of the bravery and dedication of the police, following Hillsborough. No mention of the incompetence, brutality, cowardice and sheer panic of South Yorkshire's finest.

This is the paper, which presumably we will be associated with, that spoke of the bravery and dedication of the police, following Hillsborough. No mention of the incompetence, brutality, cowardice and sheer panic of South Yorkshire's finest. No the fans, and the fans only were to blame. A lot of football fans, out of the 3,707,471 readers still buy the message. It's by far the most read paper in this and every other prison, despite the headlines calling the Strangeways rioters 'scum' and imploring the Home Office to send in the SAS.

Where will we go from here? As I write, I hear that counter-bids have gone in and I know that a meeting of staunch Reds has been called. I'd like to believe that Murdoch and his mob can be beaten, but his track record suggests otherwise. I'm sorry to sound negative, and it isn't like me; I'm usually the optimist on the firm, but this has been a right kick in the bollocks. If the dogs do win the day, then I can't see how I can ever go through the turnstiles of the Citadel again. To do so would be to put money in Murdoch's pocket and I think I'd sooner put money in the Police Benevolent Fund.

I'd sooner see us propping up the Vauxhall Conference, with a United board, than be on top of the world with the scum who are trying to buy our soul.

"There's no going back!"

Do you remember the self-validating logic
And closed frame irrefutability
Of SkyTV's early football advertising?
Do you remember the Parklife matiness
Of Murdoch's pretence

That football was his religion too,

How,

He,

A billionaire

Was just the same as us

(Whilst simultaneously stealing our People's Game)

"There's no going back!"-

It's a subtle phrase,

It implies a change beyond our control,

A change leaving us as objects not subjects,

Hard up spectators of life,

Unable to control our destiny,
Incapable of action.

But we can control our lives,

We can go back,

And,

In so doing,

Get our own back

And change the future;

We can remember Billy Meredith

And play The Peoples' Game

By forming our own Manchester Uniteds.

With coats for goals and public land for a pitch

And principles for politics;

And when we pick our teams,

One by one,

We can leave the Murdochites,

Shivering,

Right unto the end;

And when they all look up,

Expectantly,

We can tell them all to just fuck off,

Because

It's our ball now.

Stroud Football Poet

MR MURDOCH AND BSKYB



Pinochet... The General From Hell

General Pinochet's arrest at a London hospital recently came as a surprise to many, not least Pinochet himself, who has visited the country many times before without any problems. He is now wanted by the Spanish for the alleged murder and disappearance of Spanish citizens.

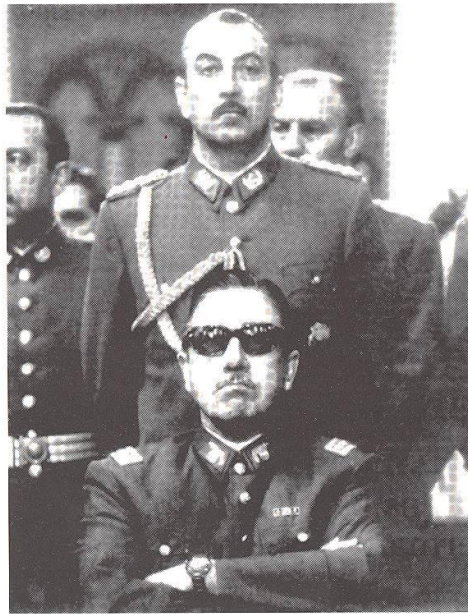
Pinochet is the Chilean army general who, backed by the CIA and the Nixon administration, overthrew the democratically elected Communist government of Salvador Allende in 1973.

In the aftermath of the military coup, supporters of Allende along with trade unionists and opposition leaders were rounded up. They were held at the national stadium where many were tortured and executed.

In the years that followed all working class opposition was crushed by the use of such terror tactics and anyone brave enough to oppose Pinochet simply disappeared.

With all opposition eradicated, Chile became a perfect environment for the American backed junta to experiment with the economic theories of Milton Friedman, the right wing economic guru.

What happened in Chile was studied closely by Margaret Thatcher, who in later years followed the same monetarist policies here in Britain. Thatcher's ruthlessness in dealing with opposition from whatever quarter, was a political



Pinochet... with shades

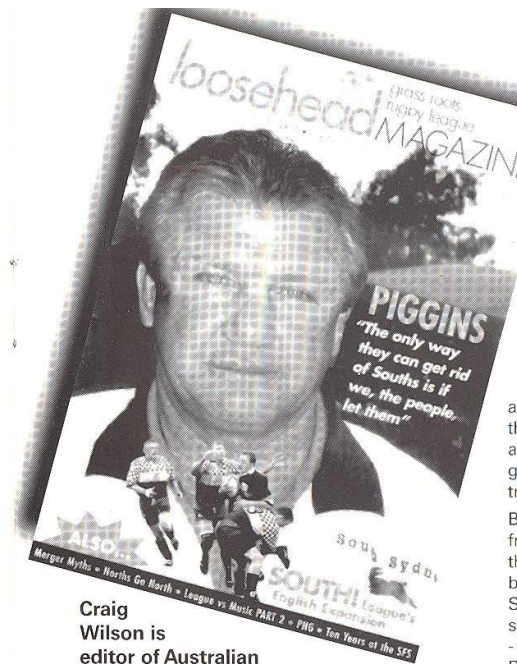
managed to corral the Anti Poll Tax movement into Wembley Stadium and let loose on them with machine guns. That's the Pinochet way.

But brutal as he was, Pinochet was only a puppet, following a well prepared American plan of destabilisation, military coup and eradication of opposition. All done with the help of weapons supplied by the British armaments industry.

Pinochet should be brought to justice and held to account for his atrocious human rights record. But how do you punish a man of his years for past crimes. How about throwing him into the sea from a helicopter, but not before slitting his stomach wide open to ensure he sinks, and let him lie with his victims who met their deaths in this way.

necessity she learned quickly from Pinochet. The image of the Iron Lady was cast in the mould of a brutal dictator. Brutal indeed, but for good reason. To stamp on the working classes, render them unable to organise to defend their rights, and thus allow big business to control wages, exploit labour and increase profits.

Small wonder then that Thatcher should be first out of the blocks to demand Pinochet's release claiming what a great friend he was to Britain during the Falklands war. No doubt he would have been an even greater friend if he'd



Craig Wilson is editor of Australian Rugby League fanzine Loosehead who are currently fighting Murdoch over the changes that his involvement in their sport is bringing. Here Craig gives us some background and an update on the situation.

I became involved in the fight against Murdoch and News when I started publishing Loosehead Magazine, a rugby league fanzine that covers political and historical issues in rugby league from a supporters perspective. I'm originally from England, a member of both the Football Supporters Association, and the Rugby League Supporters Association. I'd been involved in the Labour Party, moving the first ever Conference motion on soccer, and also in the fight against ID cards, back at the end of the eighties. I moved here with my Australian wife, and I go to watch South Sydney play in the Australian rugby league competition.

Souths are a bit like Manchester United, or at least like Manchester United were when they slipped into the Second Division. They've fallen on hard times, but they've won more Premierships than any other team, and you just know that they will be up there again. They are a team with a strong working class following from

Different Ball, Same Shit

a strong working class area. This is reflected in their nickname, "The Rabbitohs" (a rabbitoh was a bloke peddling rabbits outside the football grounds). South Sydney is industrial, and traditionally has been the poorest area in the city.

Because many migrant families settled there from all over Australia, from Europe and Asia, that is reflected in the players - from many backgrounds, but decidedly proud of their South Sydney roots. Souths also have a strong relationship with the Aboriginal communities in the area - Redfern and La Perouse - and consequently the Rabbitohs have always had many fine Aboriginal players turning out for them.

They have one of the strongest junior networks in rugby league, breeding generation after generation of gifted young players, most of whom, in recent years, have moved on to more successful clubs and won Premierships. In short, without Souths, rugby league the world over would be a poorer and devalued game.

But Souths are not 'sexy' enough for people like News. We are too gritty, too Old Skool. Crowds are small due to moving to a new Stadium some years ago, and the kind of people that go to Souths don't sit in the executive boxes and drink champagne. They don't come along for entertainment. They drink beer and sit on home made cushions, and they come because they have always come and because their parents and

Souths are a bit like Manchester United, or at least like Manchester United were when they slipped into the Second Division

grandparents came to Souths. They don't even necessarily care if Souths win, but they do care when they see bad football. An unimaginative coach at the beginning of this year raised hackles - it wasn't that we were losing (although that was part of it), but that we were losing playing badly.

When News took over our game, they insisted that the present 20-team competition be cut to 16 teams by the year 2000. To do this they aim to cut the number of Sydney teams. Being unsexy and working class, with poor crowds and poor results, South Sydney are seen by many as being certainties for the kill. Our supporters group, formed by fans using an internet mailing list, has collected signatures for a petition and generally raised the issue with fans - we have said that if our team goes, our way of life will go with it. Jobs related to football will go, as will trade at local pubs, and the community to which we belong will lose another asset it can ill afford to.

We have instituted a letter writing campaign and asked supporters to send the issue with candidates in the recent election.

It's not easy here. Supporters are notoriously unwilling to get involved in actually getting off their arses to do anything. And with even less newspapers than the UK (and in fewer hands!), supporters rarely get a mention at the best of times. With the club administration too lethargic and unimaginative to back us either, we have been left to fight the battle largely alone. However, we are starting to form links with other threatened clubs, and international links with supporters organisations in similarly endangered sports. In the next few weeks there will be a meeting of the first Australian Rugby League Supporters Federation, modelled on the FSA and RLSA in England. It's an important step. We know that we will not lay down and die. We will not fill Murdoch's pockets while our own lives are stripped of all the things we love.

Craig Wilson

Loosehead Magazine. Available at Sportspages in London and Manchester or from PO BOX 10441, London E14 0SB

imusa update

Since the last round of fanzines, IMUSA has continued to work full-time campaigning to stop the takeover of the club by BSKyB.

The fight took a group of supporters to the very heart of government: The trip to Westminster was a sure success as we outlined our case inside the Houses of Parliament to a group of MPs from all parties who themselves are doing everything to put pressure on Peter Mandelson to stop the takeover.

Irrespective of The Decision - whether or not the takeover is to be referred to the Monopolies and Mergers Commission - it is important to hold on to your shares. Whatever the outcome of this decision, the deal is far from done and dusted and every share counts.

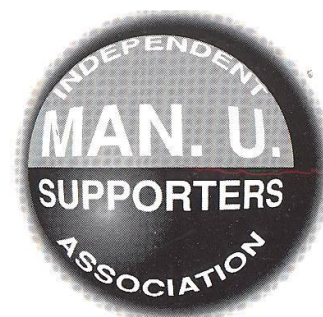
To keep up to date on the campaign call the IMUSA office on **0161 839 9941** or better still log onto our new web-site at **www.imusa.org** (generously provided by local firm XTML) and watch out for future campaign updates.

On a different note, can those supporters ejected from the home games against **Coventry** (North Stand) and **Wimbledon** (East Lower) please get in touch with IMUSA.

To join IMUSA and the fight against Murdoch. Please send £5 (£10 overseas) to PO Box 69, Stretford, Manchester M32 0UZ for twelve months membership. Donations to the campaign can be sent to the same address.

**Next meeting:
Thursday November 12th,
O'Brien's, Stretford 8pm**

campaign news



What we have done so far...

Organised the Bridgewater Hall Rally

When the takeover was announced, IMUSA hired (with the generous backing of Queen drummer Roger Taylor) the biggest available hall in Manchester. On a wet Tuesday night, sandwiched between two home games over 700 people attended - the largest ever such gathering in Manchester. Not one person who attended that evening supported the takeover. Jim White and Michael Crick - who formed Shareholders United Against Murdoch (SUAM) in response to the deal - spoke and a 'battle plan' was drawn up. The first target agreed on was to try and stall the decision making process.

Stalling the decision

We succeeded in making sure enough pressure was applied on the politicians to make sure the deal couldn't just go through "on the nod."

Despite the timing of the announcement, the OFT received an unprecedented number of so-called 'submissions' written largely by United fans.

Opposition has also been voiced by the FA, the PFA and the Premier League, to the bid.

That worked - the OFT have had to delay their decision making to take on board the comments of the fans. Peter Mandelson now has to decide whether the takeover is to go to the Monopolies and Mergers Commission for further investigation. We believe that, if he decides to refer the bid, BSKyB will withdraw their offer. That's how close we are to stopping the deal.

Gained support amongst politicians

We have written to MPs around the country and have so far received over 100 letters of support -

MPs from the Conservatives, the Liberal Democrats as well as the Labour Party have pledged their support, from Redwood to Skinner.

It is now very difficult for the Government to be seen to be giving Rupert Murdoch favours, but the pressure must be kept up.

We intend to do that by going down to Westminster later this month and talking to MPs face-to-face.

Put forward the counter view in the media

Stacked against the might of The Sun, The Times and The News of the World, (not to mention the Manchester Evening News, who are too frightened to defend Manchester's most famous institution) a massive media campaign has been waged to get out our message: That being taken over by BSKyB is bad for the club and CAN BE STOPPED.

Martin Edwards says he is willing to "argue the toss" one minute but the next refuses to discuss the takeover on air with us, with SUAM or indeed with any concerned supporters.

Channelled public support

The campaign to stop the takeover is as global as Rupert Murdoch's own business empire.

IMUSA has co-ordinated and conducted the campaign. Hundreds, if not thousands, of Reds worldwide have made a contribution - either giving up time or donating cash to the campaign, seeing the impact the deal will have on the club in the long term.

IMUSA have been to visit banks in the City of London, politicians and legal advisors. **All say the deal can be stopped - we are close, and with your support we WILL stop this takeover.**

Why we oppose the takeover

Murdoch and United are a 'Marriage Made in Heaven'. Right?

Murdoch has gone on the record as saying sports is the "Battering Ram" with which he can sell his TV services. We will be nothing more than a convenient tool. Does Rupert Murdoch support United? Will he listen to the views of match going supporters before making decisions? Will he be more concerned with the football or his business? Will decisions about the Club be taken in Manchester or a plane somewhere between London and New York? Murdoch has claimed the deal will be self-financing in only three years. Money goes out of the Club now - but at least we can voice our opinions to the board, in Manchester, at the AGM. Alex Ferguson already has one arm tied behind his back in the transfer market. Don't let the money men tighten their grip.

We would have the money to buy the best players in the world...

If only this were true! Murdoch owns almost 800 different businesses. To avoid paying tax, company funds are shuffled from tax-haven to tax-haven. United profits, your Sky subscriptions (like everybody else's) will end up not in Manchester, or even London, but being moved into offshore accounts in Mauritius, Fiji and Cuba. Has BSkyB told supporters what share of the profits will be kept by United? Don't be fooled by the extent of Murdoch's empire. Murdoch's business interests are, by the admission of his own executives, a complex web of financial transactions. Already there is an embargo on transfers over £1 million.

But with Murdoch's wealth backing us and United's support, the club can't lose, right?

We know that News Corporation, Murdoch's parent company has as much as thirteen billion dollars in outstanding debt and other liabilities. We also know that Murdoch has taken out a line of credit to help pay for buying United, the interest on which runs to £47 million per year. In the last recession the company nearly went bust, this time around he's already scrapped plans to sell shares in Fox.

United generate cash. Murdoch's other activities - set top boxes, satellites and satellite dishes, cable networks in China and the Far East use cash. Just put two and two together...

Surely Murdoch will want a successful United to sell his TV dishes and set top boxes?

That's what they also said in Los Angeles when he bought the Dodgers. He then promptly sold a star player to a team in Florida, whose owner also happened to run a TV station Murdoch was interested in...

That's what they also said in Australia when Murdoch cashed in on the boom in Rugby League - by pulling the sport apart and driving supporters into the arms of Australian Rules Football.

Vic Wakeling, Managing Director of Sky Sports, has already been quoted as saying it would not be good for one club to become too successful!

What if the deal is blocked? Won't that damage United in the long run?

Manchester United ARE already the biggest sports attraction in the world. Do you think that he wouldn't be interested in showing United games because he was stopped from buying us? Do you think he would refuse to broadcast United games in a fit of anger? All he wants to do is expand his business and make money - he can and will still make money out of United, whether he owns us or not.

The message is clear...

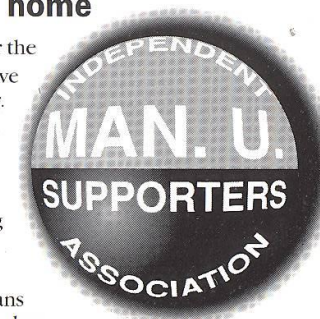
**Murdoch needs United.
United Don't need Murdoch.**

United fans who follow the team home and away

will spend upwards of £2,000 a year for the privilege. A shareholder paying £2.40 for a share will have more say in how the club is run than the loyal supporter. Stopping this takeover isn't just about keeping Murdoch out, unwelcome though he is, but bringing the supporters in. Democratising United. Whilst Murdoch's bid presents the greatest threat to United's independence and existence as a football club, stopping him could present the greatest opportunity for supporters to change the way United operate.

The Club is up for sale, Edwards wants to sell-out. The fans should have been given first refusal, not Murdoch, instead we weren't even consulted.

If Barcelona can operate so successfully and attract the world class players who snub United plc, with a system of supporter democracy and boardroom accountability unheard of in this country, then we as supporters must raise our expectations off the pitch, to match our expectations on the pitch.



T-Shirts

The shirts will be on sale for £6 each from several different stalls or from IMUSA direct.

If anyone overseas is interested in ordering please contact through the IMUSA list: imusa@egroups.com.

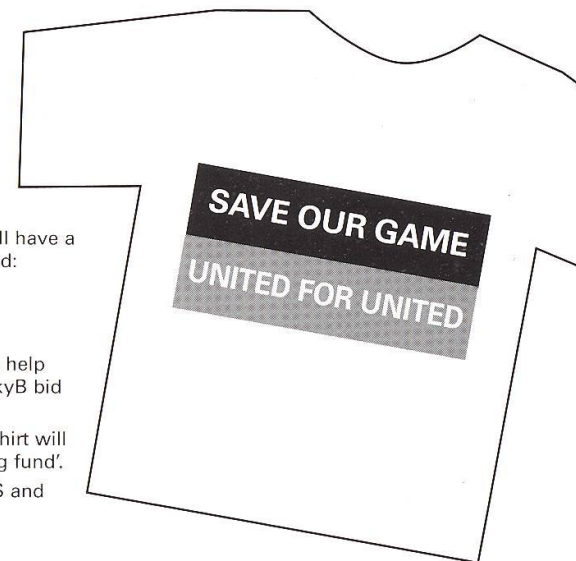
Each stall selling the T-shirts will have a leaflet to display which will read:

IMUSA
SAVE OUR GAME
UNITED FOR UNITED

These T-shirts are being sold to help IMUSA's action against the BSkyB bid to take over 'our' football club.

Profits from the sale of every shirt will go towards the IMUSA 'fighting fund'.

So please BUY THESE T-SHIRTS and help fund the fight.



United For United

For UK reds interested in taking a stake in their club.

United should be owned by it's supporters - there are enough reds in the UK, let alone the world, to buy the club many times over - it's just a matter of coordinating our efforts - and quickly. If we can buy more time we could actually control our own club so that it's run the way supporters want it to be run - not pension funds or TV broadcasters. But we've got to act now.

We will save costs (= more shares) and get more shares in friendly hands if we group together with reds we know in our local areas. What about your local branch? The current share price is still below the bid offer so you can still buy shares at a price lower than the offer on the table. This price will rise as we mop up more loose shares. Our strength is in numbers.

For those in the UK there are at least two simple options

1. NatWest bank Instant Dealing

2. Wise Speke Stockbrokers Manchester

1. NatWest bank Instant Dealing details:

You can deal 'on the spot' at 280 NatWest Branches. This service is available from Monday to Friday, until 4.15pm, and you do not need to bank with NatWest to use the service.

If you don't bank with NatWest: You need to take some form of identification, showing your signature

and address with you when you want to deal.

A full UK driving licence is sufficient, or a current utility bill AND something showing your signature such as a credit card

Buying shares

If you are a NatWest customer, then the amount of your deal will be debited from your bank account on the appropriate settlement date. This is normally 5 working days after your deal.

If you don't bank with NatWest you will have to pay for the shares you have bought by cheque, at the time of your deal

Where to deal

You can find your nearest Instant Share Dealing Branch by calling 0345 224488, Monday to Friday 8am - 8pm, Saturdays 9am - 6pm.

Dealing charges

Normal fees consist of a basic commission of 1.5% with a minimum of £20, up to a transaction value of £10,000.

2. Wise Speke Stockbrokers Manchester:

You can also buy United shares through Wise Speke in Manchester.

You need to get an application form. If you have a fax machine they can fax one to you and you can fax it back.

Call them on 0161 953 9700, or fax: 0161 832 9092

You then need to make payment before the deal goes through.

Save Our Game

sign the e-mail petition against the takeover
www.manchester.com/guest/guestadd.html

IT'S WHO YOU KNOW...

Paulo Di Canio's infamous push on a referee will go down in the annals of football history alongside Cantona's infamous kick at a spectator.

But hold on a minute, how come Batty's push on a referee towards the end of last season passed off without half the hullabaloo. Nothing to do with the fact that the World Cup was almost upon us and the Batty one was, as we later found out, pivotal to England's chances of success. Without the benefit of Andy Gray's computer technology, the power of the push, and the speed of the shove seemed identical to the untrained eye, so the severity of the crime appears to rest solely on the dynamics of the fall. Di Canio's victim fell to the floor reminiscent of the style displayed by

Neil Kinnock on the beach, which was made famous in the opening credits of Spitting Image. Di Canio's lawyers

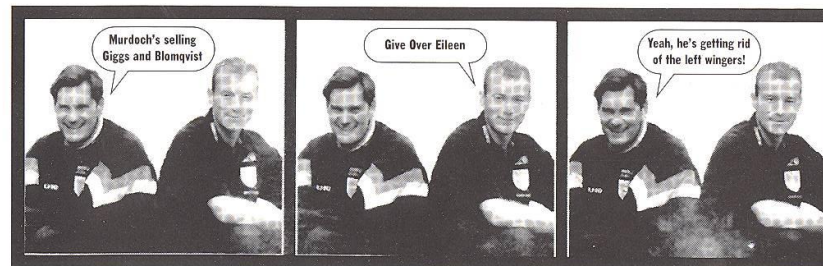
have asked us to point out that he was nowhere near the beach that day.

If you think shoving refs is bad sport how about head shots, as in Hartson's attempt to link Berkovich's head up with the Space Shuttle. Now that was a violent crime, captured on video, in front of witnesses, but no police charges. Essentially it was a domestic, as Harry Redknapp duly informed the FA, and quite often in these situations what you actually see with your own eyes isn't what happened at all. The FA were quick to agree. Why only last season they had a case where millions claimed they saw video evidence of Shearer kicking Lennon in the face by the touchline. But with a World Cup coming up, Martin O'Neill was promoted to TV pundit and Leicester City's Lennon confirmed that no such incident took place.

So if Eric played for England it's a strong possibility that no-one would have seen his over exuberant leg stretch or would they?.

For Eric they would explain it like this; kicking players is one thing, pushing refs is another but kung fu on a fan? Don't you know that they're a protected species. Under no circumstances must you touch the paying customer regardless of what he does.

But if the bastard won't sit down, it's okay to bounce him out the door and confiscate his season ticket, and rest assured the FA definitely won't see that.



Match Reports

Arsenal 3 United 0

Humiliated away.

So totally beaten that I am not physically able to describe the carnage without feeling sick. Beckham excused from all blame. Fergie's tactics straight from the school of shit tactics.

United 2 Liverpool 0

Winning the league is very cool. The European

Cup? A pipe dream maybe, but I imagine that it would be like almost nothing else. The FA Cup is always a favourite, given the history and the day out of the occasion. But what is it I crave more than anything? Which single match really matters? Answer - home versus the scousers, followed closely by away versus the scousers.

I loath them. The originators of the glory hunting fan. Home of the thief. Adopted home of such twats as Steve Macmanaman, John Barnes and Graham Souness. Only in Liverpool could David Speedie be accepted as a member of society.

We won two nil, and Scholes scored a magnificent goal. They bleated, they moaned, they cheated and they lost. Paul Ince got the big time charlie jip he deserved, and I hope it made Fergie smile.

Before the game, trouble outside Hanrahans. The scousers decide to slash open a Salford face, and in return the culprit gets dealt with in a similar fashion within seconds. Here follows a true story. On my recent travels down under, I met a bloke in a bar. He said to me:

"I am a sailor in the New Zealand Navy. My parents live in the suburb of Seatoun and one of my sisters, who lives in Palmerston North, is married to a guy from Liverpool, England. My Father and Mother have recently been arrested for growing and selling marijuana and are currently dependent on my two sisters, who are prostitutes in Auckland.

I have two brothers, one who is currently serving a non-parole life sentence in Mt. Eden Prison, Auckland, for the rape & murder of a teenage boy in 1994, the other currently being held in the Wellington remand centre on charges of incest with his three children.

I have recently become engaged to marry a former Thai prostitute who lives in Christchurch and indeed is still a part time "working girl" in a Brothel,

**Only in Liverpool
could David Speedie
be accepted as a
member of society**

Match Reports

however, her time there is limited as she has recently been infected with an STD. We intend to marry as soon as possible and are currently looking into the possibility of opening our own brothel with my fiancée utilising her knowledge of the industry, working as the manager. I am hoping my two sisters would be interested in joining our team. Although I would prefer them not to prostitute themselves at least it would get them off the streets and hopefully the heroin.

My problem is this: I love my fiancée and look forward to bringing her into the family and of course I want to be totally honest with her.

Should I tell her about my brother-in-law being a Scouser?"

Southampton 0 United 3

Twenty years without a victory, ten years without a

woman, never had a kebab, Lord Lucan didn't do it etc etc. No excuses this time - Southampton shitter than shit and bottom of the league, players and fans in tatters. United, £30 million's worth of new talent on display. No contest in theory, and no contest in practice.

After about 10 seconds Howells managed, reversing all the laws of physics in one go, to miss a completely open net. Once Van der Wow got over that, an excellent performance from himself and most of the other 10 on the pitch.

Talking of new talent, that lad Andy Cole looks like he could go a long way. A superb goal that only Michael Owen scores, sandwiched nicely by setting up Yorke and (in a roundabout way) Cruyff. Simply no complaints. Crap journey back, but after that performance, who cares.

United 5 Wimbledon 1

Oh the mighty Dons,
plucky south

Londoners afraid of no-one. United due to be turned over by in form Wimbledon at the silent Old Trafford.

Bullshit .

Best football I've seen in ages. Barca was a better game, but it has been a while since I've seen us really turn a team over in such style. Champagne football all the way - even the Holmes Chap lot staying until the end. A long overdue start by Andy Cole was rewarded with two superb strikes, and particularly importantly the first goal. I think my facts are correct in stating that Cole only scored first on five occasions last year, and this is why so many of the 'Cole is shit' rumours abide. First goals count, and your number 9 needs to provide.

Match Reports

Dwight Yorke had another blinder (yawn), but who didn't - Wes Brown stuck out, but only because of his shite

Why oh why oh why did they miss the chance to give him number 69 as his shirt?

hairpiece. He's obviously good, I'll cheer him all the way, but he's far off polished. Moan bloody moan. Giggs was in a 'scored with header again' shocker, and Yorke was involved in the cheekiest goal of the month comp of his own. There is no doubt in my mind that whilst the others are getting a roasting from Fergie, Yorke's giving a blond a good spit roasting with Brian Lara in the toilets - why oh why oh why did they miss the chance to give him number 69 as his shirt?

Huge night after the match. Now the Stage door has sacked the happy hour, its shit and empty (good thinking, bar owner) and so Hanrahan's or the Pitcher and Piano seem to be the shout (Whetherspoons if you fancy a bit of trouble). New club called Berlin is open in the village and it is sorted. We were all there, trying for a bit of Dwight Yorke, but ending up by the end of the night a bit more Teddy Sheringham (bitter, empty-handed). Bollocks.

Funny

Isn't it funny how Peter Mandelson, or Mandy to his friends, has been 'outed' as a homosexual on the same day as he referred the Sky bid to the Monopolies and Mergers Commission.

As if that decision didn't get Rupert's goat up, Mandy also came out with some choice words about General Pinochet travelling under diplomatic immunity as 'gut-wrenching'; a comment which the Labour Party were quick to distance themselves from.

Now this again may seem like co-incidence, but the global de-stabilisers know how to counter-attack almost as good as the class of '94. Hence they are unlikely to attack on the issue that concerns them, but on one which ultimately can be developed to bring down their target.

So in the space of a few weeks, he has managed to upset Pinochet's cronies who include the CIA and the armaments lobby as well as a certain Mr Murdoch. Suddenly there's a puff in the cabinet.

There are some in the USA who believe that President Clinton's current dilemma stems not from his wanderlust, but actually has its roots in Hilary Clinton's attempts to reform the American healthcare system. The big bang of the Clinton administration was to have been the introduction of a National Health Service along the lines of the one that we take for granted. In America this idea hit the corporate panic buttons of both the medical insurance industry and the military establishment. They were firmly of the view that you pay insurance if you want healthcare and if you can't afford it you die. Taxes were raised solely for the benefit of the defence industry to squander on protecting the population from invasion (and occasionally bombing Libya).

Clinton has seen more investigations than a gynaecologist's fingernail, and is arguably the straightest (and possibly the homiest) President on record. The original investigation into the White Water land deal involving the Clintons, has undergone a politically motivated

Old World...

change of remit, thus allowing it to produce grounds for impeaching the President for extra marital activity. The healthcare reforms have gone out the window, Clinton is politically impotent, and the best he can hope for is to string out the impeachment process until his term in office expires. Job done for the destabilisers. Look at what happened to our own John Stalker. He was sent to Northern Ireland to investigate allegations of a shoot to kill policy by the police and army. When he found evidence of shoot to kill and secret intelligence involvement, and was prepared to include it in his report, he was suspended by the Greater Manchester Police on trumped up charges. Stalker was too honest for his own good and paid the price, but more importantly what does it tell you about his accusers? Does anyone believe that Stalker was bent?

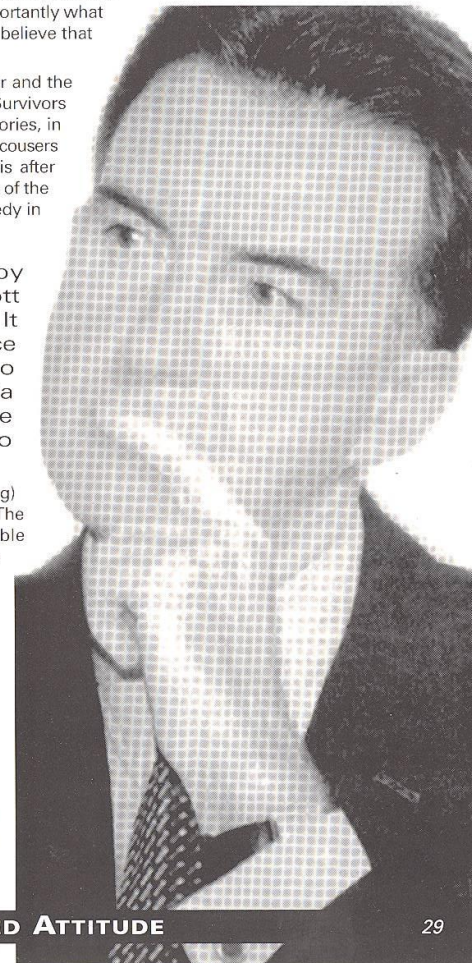
Cast your minds back to the Hillsborough disaster and the ongoing campaign for justice by the Hillsborough Survivors and Relatives group. Everyone remembers the stories, in the immediate aftermath of the tragedy, of drunken scousers pissing on the bodies and robbing the dead, this after drunken, ticketless fans had stormed through one of the gates at the Leppings Lane end to cause the tragedy in the first place.

These stories were carried by Murdoch's Sun and led to a boycott of Murdoch titles on Merseyside. It later transpired that six senior police officers had formed a Liaison Unit to orchestrate a black propaganda campaign aimed at deflecting the blame for what happened on to anyone other than themselves.

The damage was done. The scousers (and terracing) were in the dock and the police were off the hook. The Home Secretary refused the relatives justifiable demands for a public enquiry into the disaster for fear of the truth coming out. Of collusion between the police, the media, and possibly some people further up the food chain, to propagate the despicable lies that were told when 96 innocent people lost their lives.

Mandelson knows how the game is played at the top level, and the experience of Welsh supremo Ron Davies will be proof enough of how sudden the fall from grace can be. If the MMC ultimately floors the Sky bid, he can expect a whole host of kiss and tell stories in the News of the World from his ex-loverboys complete with spunk stained trappy bottoms. But he'll still be a popular lad in Manchester.

The Kerry Recruit



Matty's Mutterings...

Murdoch and Munich

At the end of the testimonial, I felt as bad at Old Trafford as I ever have. Not only was there all that Munich emotion, but that was it, Eric was gone for good, right or wrong. There was a strange kind of emptiness, or finality that probably only happens with the end of an era. An era of breathtaking football, of real Red attitude; eyes narrowed, chest out, collar up. There will never be another Eric, simple as that. Other players (Giggs and Beckham) may be as naturally gifted, some (Schmeichel, Stam, Keane) as hard as nails. Whatever Cole does, I'll defend him to the hilt. But with Eric, there's something about the man that is unique; the only word I can use to describe it is 'Eric-ness'. Now either you know what I'm on about or I'm fighting a losing battle as the Stone roses said

The harder I try to paint a picture
Of the way it used to be
The more I miss the good times baby
Let them roll again

My point is, that it's gone forever, it won't be coming back.

And now with Murdoch, our undefinable, or indescribable but very tangible sense of what it is to be United, our United-ness, that is what is at stake.

Now, imagine for just one second that Murdoch doesn't just see United as an open piggybank to shore up his whole bent empire. Imagine that he doesn't need to extract around £60 million a year (£30 million more than current profits) a year from us, not just to break even, only to pay the interest on the whole deal. Imagine that whatever cash he makes from us won't just be transferred to his nearest tax haven. Imagine that it is in Sky's interests for us to be the dominant, and I mean dominant, force in English football.

Imagine that, rather than being the bestest, dirtiest, lying, cheating, swindling, corrupt, greed-obsessed megalomaniac bastard around, Rupert Murdoch is actually an alright bloke.

Imagine that he grew up in an ordinary working class neighbourhood in Oz, has made good by honest means, and is determined to keep his feet on the ground. That any racist or anti-football fan

stories from his media group have been published behind his back, while he was engaged in negotiations with those concerned to limit his desire to make the world a better place. That he's been a fan since 1958, can do more keepy-ups than Michael Knighton, and is actually a mate of Fergie's not his nemesis. That he wants to build a team to take on the world.

Okay, maybe that's all bullshit, more preposterous than John Gregory going on about shooting Dwight Yorke when people are being blown to bits all around the world, and the FA going "disrepute- er, yer what?"

Just be a bit gullible, then, and believe the pro-Murdochisms, don't read the Mirror (incidentally, does anyone believe they really give a fuck about us and not just themselves). Let your eyes glaze over whenever anyone mentions Ronaldo. Imagine no more than that Murdoch reckons it's in his financial interests to have this United side win the European Cup Final in May; Schmeichel, Thuram, Maldini, Stam, Desailly, Keane, Zidane, Beckham, Giggs, Batistuta, Ronaldo.

Is that what you want? Ever seen Devil's Advocate? Are you really ready to sell your soul - our soul - our Unitedness - to the devil for that? The above is the best case scenario. But that team isn't United. It is the footballing department of News International. It's made with Rupert Murdoch's money. The club's current wealth, or at least a significant percentage of it, comes from the fans. Our money (tickets, merchandise, whatever). Our support (although that's not that encouraging these days) which during hard times keeps the club going, footballing wise, which ensures that United are a profitable commodity or whatever you call, on the plc front. The fans are part of the tradition of the club, its unique history; maybe we're being forced out anyway, but never let go.

Don't be apathetic, assume it's a done deal, sit on your arse saying "there's nothing anyone can do about it, just accept it". Don't just sing about keeping the red flag flying high, fucking well do it or we will die.

I started by blathering on about Eric's uniqueness, that we'd lost forever. Sometimes when

something you love leaves your life there's jack shit you can do about it. This time be inspired by what you've lost to keep hold of what you have; no-one assaults racist twats at Selhurst, gets banned, comes back, leads a team of kids single-handedly to a second double, scores a late winner against your most hated rivals to secure that double. Eric did. No one builds potentially the best club side ever, sees it wiped out, comes back to build another one to take the European Cup. Sir Matt did. No one can fight Rupert Murdoch and his millions. We can.

In case you just think I'm on one, that you say I'm a dreamer and I am the only one, then think about this. I was a bit surprised that we got more attention on Newsnight than the stuff in Russia - think nationalism, nuclear weapons, growing worldwide economic panic; I hate the Shanklyisms about life and death. Now, I don't like relieving what is essentially private grief, but hopefully the end justifies the means. As I was leaving the Munich testimonial, an old Irish fella started talking to me. He'd been coming since the year dot, and had never seen anyone like Eric; neither had I, I admitted. Then he told me that a year before we won the title, his son who always came with him, drowned. He never got to see Eric, or a Title. I stammered something about him watching it all from 'up there'; he turned round, tears in his eyes, and said, "thanks son, that means a lot", and walked away.

That's what's at stake. Are you willing to just let that go? If so, you're almost as bad as Murdoch. Incidentally, if I said 777 Piccadilly, would you know what I mean?



a word in your ear...

the noonan column

So what's all the fuss about this takeover lark then. No one's bothered are they? Only 700 at the protest meeting, (Juventus would be glad of a crowd like that at their Cup games), and only 300 complaints to the Office of Fair Trading. Bit of a drop from 50 odd thou innit? Even the shareholders don't give a toss. Only 33% bothered to vote. What a waste of Murdoch's rain forest. He does own Brazil doesn't he? Is Edwards right when he says we should give the deal a chance before passing judgement. In ten years time if it goes belly-up you can string him up he said. So switch off, sit back and wait ten years. That's what Fergie did when he missed out on Berg first time round. And if you see a bunch of grey haired men with IMUSA t-shirts on, ten years hence, chasing him up the road, you'll know what it's about.

Funny how they use the magical figure of 55,000 as the yardstick to judge the level of opposition, and ignore all the opinion polls isn't it? Do they really think we would struggle to raise a 55,000 name petition? How about a million names. They'd just claim it's the work of jealous ABU's and City fans who can do joined up writing.

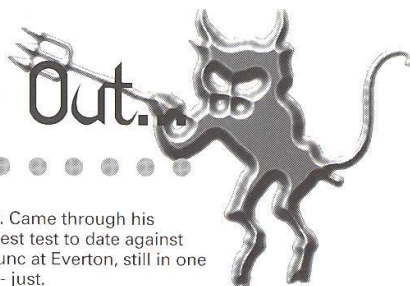
Murdoch is a clever old trout. When all the smart money was pouring into Russia, the last frontier for venture capitalism, Murdoch was quietly beaver away in China, or he was doing something with Chinese beaver according to my briefing notes. He's managed to resolve China's human rights issue by dropping the BBC news channel from his Asian satellite operation and now nobody gets to hear about them. Tiannaman Square, Times Square, Albert Square, what's the difference?

Nice to see Wes Brown taking his chance in the first team. Looks like he's been there for years. Fergie's got a thing about playing centre halves at right back and vice versa hasn't he? Wes has fortunately not suffered from the same traumatic experience that befell David May when forced to undergo this particular initiation ceremony.

Anyone read about the alleged 4,000 City fans in with Bury the other night. Apparently it's true. There was another 4,000 at Leeds in with the Bradford fans, and about 6,000 at Anfield in the Fulham end. It's all part of City's training programme for supporters called 'Preparing for the Premiership'. By the time City get back every ground in the country will have been either rebuilt or relocated. This is what City fans mean when they refer to the Millennium Bug.

Later, Dessy

The Devils Ride Out...



Schmeichel

People have been questioning the big man's form this season. Obviously not at his best, and been injured, but the only real bollock came in the last minute in Germany, when I think even he can't explain what he was doing.

Gary Neville

Superb start to the season. Has recently moved to central defence and looked the complete article. Against Liverpool was his best performance to date. Reads the game very well and has helped bring Stam along.

Phil Neville

Decent run of form from Phil, but will come under increasing pressure from a fit again Denis Irwin and the emerging Wes Brown.

Denis Irwin

This man, now 33, has had a good innings for United at full back but it doesn't look like he's finished yet. Was eased back in as sub against Everton, with one eye on Europe in midweek.

Wes Brown

Another Red hot youngster off the OT conveyor belt that Fergie set up when he first arrived. He's fast, can use both feet to some tune, makes intelligent forward moves, can cross a ball and is as strong as an ox. Performance in Denmark was faultless, and will be playing for England before too long (who they?).

Ronnie Johnsen

For me Ronnie's injury was the main reason we didn't beat Barca at home and Bayern away. He's our most cultured centre half, and I can't wait till he's fully fit. Only leaves the question of who to put alongside him.

Jaap Stam

World's most expensive at £10.75m, leaving Holland to play for his heroes, been labelled a donkey following the World Cup and his early games for United. Neither Bruce nor Pallister started like a house on fire either so no need to

worry. Came through his toughest test to date against big Dunc at Everton, still in one piece - just.

Roy Keane

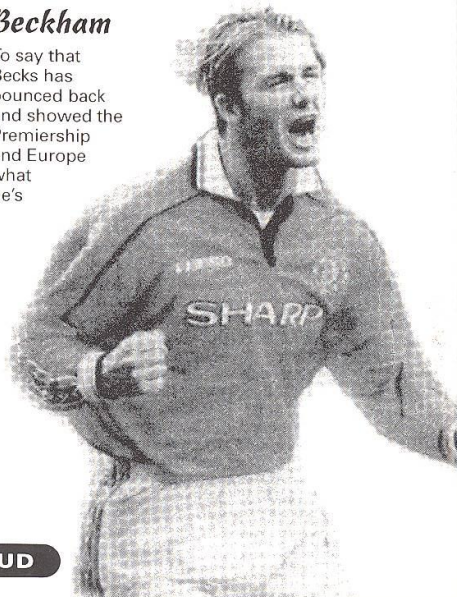
Last years silverware shortage has been put down to Keane's injury lay-off. Initially he wasn't missed, but when Butt and Scholes started to struggle we were found wanting and leaderless in the centre of the park. This season he's back with a vengeance, Arsenal apart. He's popped up with a couple of international goals whilst dominating Croatia, and turned in commanding performances against Wimbledon and at Everton.

Nicky Butt

Poor old Nick must have thought the world was against him when he sacrificed himself against Barca and was sent packing 4 days later at Highbury - wrongly in my opinion. Not that this has affected his fine form this term.

David Beckham

To say that Becks has bounced back and showed the Premiership and Europe what he's



capable of, is something of an understatement. He's been brilliant. Despite the heckles of the Premier's mindless minorities, and the lack of support from Hoddle and the England camp, after kicking the diving Argie, he has shown himself to be above them all.

Ryan Giggs

Another flying start from Ryan, despite playing out of position on occasions. Worrying news that he'll be out for a month with a broken bone in his foot means he'll miss the crucial game in Spain, where his new found aerial power will be missed.

Dwight Yorke

Like many, I raised the proverbial eyebrow when we broke our transfer record for the second time this year to buy Dwight. Why didn't we get Salas or someone else with proven European or world credentials in a £12 million package? I don't doubt Yorke's ability, but is he any better than what we've already got?

Andy Cole

Well hands up if you like Dwight Yorke. Andy Cole does. They've certainly hit it off somewhat. Fourteen goals between them with barely a quarter of the season gone. Andy has carried on where he left off last season. The goals and confidence are there, and he has a partner to supply the ammunition. It sounds perfect and looks bloody good so far.

Ole Gunnar Solskjaer

And again, hands up if you like Dwight Yorke. Ole is also hitting it off with the new boy. Ole was unlucky to lose his place at Arsenal, and as if to prove it combined well with Yorke to score with his first touch against Brondby. Striking for once, doesn't seem a problem, long may it continue.

Jesper Blomqvist

Jesper on the wing has a familiar ring to it. Has started well and offers another dimension to our play when both he and Giggs play, and provides invaluable cover on the left when Giggs is injured like now. Comfortable and confident in his own ability - just the qualities you want to see on the wing for United.

Paul Scholes

Performance against Everton was the best from the pocket rocket for some time. Unlucky not to score in the last minute of a game that he and Keano had dominated. On the downside,

and at the risk of repeating myself, are the silly bookings he keeps picking up which lead to time out through suspension.

Henning Berg

Has had an indifferent start to the season, maybe not helped by Stam's uncertain start. That said, he was making noises, following Stam's arrival at not being happy as a squad player. Don't think he'll figure too much when it matters during this campaign.

Jordi Cruyff

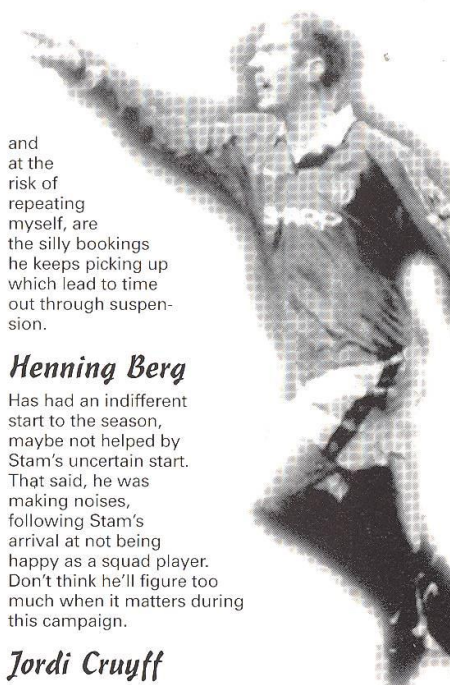
Jordi has stated that he is not ready to give up on his United career, and he's putting in sufficient effort to make sure it is not ended for him. Scored two from the bench, including a point saver at Derby. He's got the talent but still looks far too brittle for the rough and tumble of the Premier.

Teddy Sheringham

Seems to have disappeared of late, after a fairly competent display against Bayern. More likely to be heard bleating about winning his England place back than seen in the first team at the minute. Should still be turning out for his night clubs though.

The Best of the Rest

The game against Bury saw some more young Reds making their debuts in front of a near full house. Jonathan Greening was the pick of the bunch for me with a tireless display. David May moved closer to first team duty with a steady game at the back, and Eric Nevland got his first goal for United. Clegg, Curtis, Wilson and Mulryne remain names that will, no doubt figure more prominently on these pages in years to come.



HARRY'S VIEW

Hail Hail

Well what a start to the season! Who would have predicted this proposed take-over by BSKyB or what the possible outcome will be? For years the fans of football stay loyal to their clubs only to see their loyalty repaid by PLC's who only think of profit.

Celtic are going through a similar turmoil, only our board are refusing to buy players. They received £17 million in season ticket revenue alone and have not added to the squad since last November.

Fergus McCann leaves the club in March 99 and his shares will be up for sale to the highest bidder, which at the moment could be anyone.

On the football front, I'm glad to see that Dwight Yorke can score on the field as well as in the bed. I think United should be encouraging some of the other lads to take part in his home videos. It would certainly brighten up some of the pre-season training.

Surely now the Beckham incident will be laid to rest after a certain Mr Ince not only kicked fuck out of Henrik Larsson of Celtic and Sweden, but also brought the game into disrepute by pulling his hair and swearing at the referee. Obviously mad at not being able to pull his hair, Ince gave him dogs abuse. I watched TV to see Hoddle make him apologise but I couldn't find it on any channel. I also read all the press cuttings but found no death threats or messages from the Church or Tony Blair. So what the fuck is going on Mr Hoddle or will we have to buy your new book to find out? Your last book was packed with shite about Gazza and the priceless little gem of regretting not taking Eileen Drewery to France. What position does she play Glen? Or maybe you thought Dwight's training sessions on home video could be copied?

Tony Adams certainly didn't mince his words and I give him ten out of ten for reversing the tables on Mr Hoddle by backing Becks in

his book.

Some people have no sense of humour and the idiots from Scotland who object to Andrew Cole being the new St Andrew patron saint of Scotland are wankers. I for one welcome the idea and I think David Beckham should become the new patron saint of Wales.

Well up here in Scotland the behind-the-scenes dispute at Celtic is sorely affecting the results on the park. The team lack spirit and leadership and this showed up prominently when we lost to Croatia Zagreb who are no more than a decent team. We are now in the UEFA cup, but we won't last long there either, as we have no striker because of the money grabbing antics of McCann.

The only consolation is the huns are shite as well and they have spent £27 million. There is a strong rumour up here that BSKyB will be showing their games on Cartoon Network. Amarusso says he spent a fortune on learning English only to find that nobody in the dressing room speaks any. It is even worse at supporters' functions he says, as they only speak 'sectarian bile and bigoted

shite'. Funnily enough there seems to be a whispering campaign to remove the Italians from Ibrox because apparently they have too much dress sense and style and it's got nothing to do with the fact that they're all Catholics. Colin Hendry must be wondering why he signed for this mob as he has spent most of the time sitting on the bench, being kept out of the team by Australian superstar Craig Moore.

Hopefully something can be done to ensure that United stay free of BSKyB and remain a club for the fans. Murdoch has good friends in this government so I don't hold out much hope from Peter Mandelson who is reportedly very close to Murdoch's daughter.

Glory Glory
Harry Conaghan

On the football front, I'm glad to see that Dwight Yorke can score on the field as well as in the bed.



kickin' in

Still getting over the cruciate ligament injury he suffered last season, let's hope the loan deal has the same effect as Beckham's trip to Preston.

Man United is the biggest club in the world, and Rupert Murdoch doesn't know anything about football. It's sad for the game. The Super League would be a nightmare for football, for fans and for the players. Fans can't afford to go abroad to watch AC Milan or Barcelona. Nor do they want to. Football fans want to watch the Arsenal, Chelsea and Manchester United.

Frank Leboeuf speaking at Oxford University

BSkyB now have the cheek to answer their share propaganda line as "**Manchester United Hotline**"! They don't even mention BSKyB or the fact that they'll only advise you how to sell your shares to them. You can just ignore the offer and keep your shares in your club. Who the hell do they think they are calling themselves Manchester United Hotline. They will never own Manchester United nor any other football club if football supporters have anything to do with it. It's time for all supporters to make a stand against the money grabbers that have taken over our game.

David. Irate Red

Among the two biggest holders of shares are the Abu Dhabi Investment Corporation, which invests money on behalf of the Arab government, and Marathon Asset Management, which invests the pension funds of American public service workers.

One of the pension fund managers involved made clear that the deciding factor will be the size of the bid and the amount of profit offered on the shares.

Edwards said: *I have to think about the pensioners who might lose out if I don't take up the best offer. We have to try to take*

Marc Vivien Foe, the Lens midfielder, whose broken leg scuppered a £4 million move to OT, is on the mend. Fergie has let it be known he's watching Foe's recovery, and he could be brought in once fully fit.

However Fergie's renewed interest may struggle to get past the BSKyB transfer embargo, even though the deal was technically agreed before BSKyB's involvement was known about (outside of Edwards office that is).

There's continuing media speculation surrounding **Mark Bosnich's** future at Aston Villa. Word is that he will sign a pre-contract agreement to join United next season. Fergie has made no secret of his annoyance when Bosnich was refused a work permit at United back in 1990, only to be snaffled up by big Ron for Villa a year or so later. Under the Bosman ruling he would cost United (or any interested Seria A outfit) sweet FA, so it will come down to wages in the end.

Apparently **Marcello Salas** is not a happy bunny at Lazio because players like Vieri are on more money, and he feels badly done to at £2 million a year. Cheer up Marcello. You could have been on a lot less if you came to United. That is, if we had a chairman that didn't put pre-conditions on the deal like selling Cole to pay for it.

People laughed when Fergie paid £1 million for **Dion Dublin**, but not me. He sold him to Coventry for twice that and people laughed at Coventry, but not me. Blackburn offered Coventry £6.75 million for Dion and the classy striker knocked them back. Now I'm laughing. Nice one Dion.

Terry Cooke has gone on loan to Wrexham.

emotion out of this and look at the decision in purely business terms. We cannot afford to have any pangs of conscience about this - we have to look to maximise profits.' He insisted: 'We think it (BSkyB's offer) is in the best interests of the club, the fans and the shareholders of Manchester United

Thursday October 15, 1998

A dozen top clubs yesterday faxed Uefa asking for closer co-operation in the organisation of the Champions' League and more input in the financial matters of its competitions.

The 12, who met in Milan yesterday - **Ajax, Barcelona, Bayern Munich, Dortmund, Internazionale, Juventus, Liverpool, Manchester United, Milan, Marseille, Porto and Real Madrid** - issued a statement saying that they share the same opinions, interests and intentions with respect to Uefa. "While acknowledging Uefa's authority, the clubs express determination to be involved in all decisions pertaining to activities concerning the format of the Champions League, the exploitation of television rights and the advertising activities associated with events," the statement read.

Murdoch is probably the only mogul of his stature to be an actual wanted man. A warrant for his arrest was issued in New Delhi in July, after Murdoch failed to appear in an Indian court to face charges that his **StarTV** broadcasts material that is deemed "vulgar" and obscene

Rupert **Murdoch** has had a pretty smooth ride on this planet. Apart from the occasional glitch, the tycoon's plan to dominate the world's media has encountered few earthly impediments. But now the mogul of Oz is about to face an extraterrestrial challenge of enormous proportions

My Nasa sources tell me that **comet Leonid** is about to unleash a shower of **meteorites** into the atmosphere on 17 November. Last time Leonid had a close encounter with our skies, in 1966, it knocked out a few spatial probes.

Scientists believe that this time the tally is going to be worse due to the rise in the number of capsules orbiting the earth. Mr Murdoch's Sky TV satellites could be in Leonid's firing line, raising the frightening prospect of a **blackout** of the all-important **England -Czech Republic Under 21 game**, due on Sky Sports 2 on the evening of 17

November.

If the Manchester United affair is anything to go by, Mr Murdoch will try to avert the threat by taking over the comet and persuading it to avoid the earth for another 32 years. The phone of some Martian merchant banker is probably ringing as we speak.

Independent 30.10.98

Media magnate Rupert Murdoch has described the Government's decision to refer BSkyB's bid for Manchester United to the Monopolies and Mergers Commission as "politically motivated".

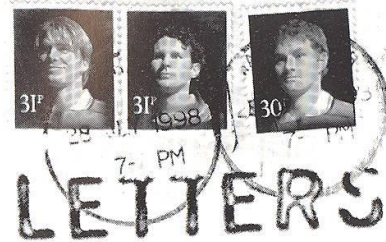
Mr Murdoch, whose News International group owns 40% of the broadcaster, said there were "no competition grounds" for the £623 million bid to be referred and the decision was penalising investors.

"It is very hard on the small shareholders of Sky that they should be punished for the fact that we supported the Government during the last election," Mr Murdoch said.

17.9.98

Manchester United were in London yesterday trying to persuade the **Office of Fair Trading** that Rupert Murdoch's planned

**TELETEXT
Channel 4
Tune into
page 171 every
Wednesday for
two pages of topical
football comment as
seen through the eyes
of Red Attitude**



Dumb

I'm a Stretford born Red currently resident in London. After eight years of living here, watching and playing football I have to conclude that cockneys are by and large not suited to the game. Reading your last mag was like talking to myself and put a fantastic spring in my step.

In short good work.

I think really that Man Utd are in a sense chosen and different and will always suffer from prejudice and animosity. We have to accept this (like say the Jews) and not bother reasoning with the unreasonable.

Football is about glamour, entertainment, fun and unusual things. True Reds admire this in whoever (almost). Remember Dunc Fergies goal against us a couple of years back during a great battle with Pally. His superb and ridiculous celebration almost deadened the pain (well I thought so anyway!)

Cockneys miss the point, especially the pseudo intellectuals of Highbury who sit silently through matches waiting eagerly for the chance to abuse their own. Trying to get Ian Wright arrested for showing some spirit was awful and are they completely unaware that football is a two way emotional exchange.

Here's a short selection of cockney crap that I have heard:

You can't go round kicking fans.

MUFC new away kit has got nothing to do with their history.

Cantona let United down.

Cantona left because he couldn't take the pressure.

MUFC are a money club (i.e. all others are charities).

Write to us at
Red Attitude
PO Box 83 SWDO Old Trafford
Manchester M15 5NJ or
e-mail us on:
fanzine@redattitude.demon.co.uk

P.S. Wouldn't it be nice to have no Team England, no Europe (or at least not every year) and just concentrate on the pure joy of shitting on those who base their whole success/failure ethos on beating us.

Keep it moving

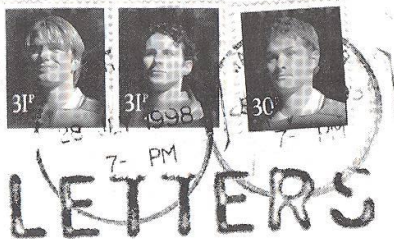
Via e-mail

The Hillsborough Survivors, Relatives and Supporters for Justice Campaign

This new group has a number of specific aims, the main one being to increase public awareness.

The 'Hillsborough Family Support Group' has for the last nine years gone down the legal road with what can be described as 'Quiet Dignity'. However, that 'Quiet Dignity' has not been without cost. Unfortunately that cost has been a serious decline in public awareness. The Survivors, Relatives and Supporters group intend to redress that situation. This time though the public will be made aware of the real facts about the Hillsborough tragedy and not just the facts that the Establishment and the Media choose to tell them.

Secondly and equally important is that the public will also be made aware of the plight of the 'forgotten people', the survivors of Hillsborough. Those who were seriously injured, not just physically, but mentally as well. Those people, some who, during the course of the tragedy, were crushed and presumed dead, but survived to tell the truth about how those who were lost suffered terribly before they died, and didn't as the Establishment would have us believe, pass away 'as if they were going to sleep'.



Further, it is the intention of this group to encompass and welcome all those affected by the tragedy of Hillsborough. Not just Survivors and Relatives, but Supporters both of the Hillsborough cause and social injustice whenever it may occur.

All of these people are welcome to join us and they can do so by contacting our office at 134 Oakfield Road, Anfield, Liverpool L4 0UG or by ringing 0151 260 5262 for details of how to become a member and assist us in achieving what we believe is our basic human right... Justice...

We have searched for the truth about Hillsborough for nine years now, only to find that each time we get near to it, someone has been there before us and hidden it inside the legal framework. It is now time to shine a

light into the murky corners of the legalities where that truth is hidden.

Dear Red Attitude,

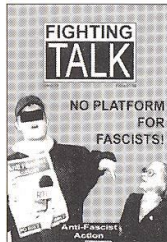
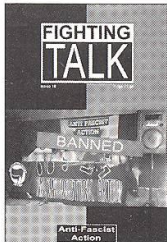
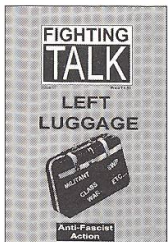
As in previous seasons the FSA will be monitoring the treatment of the supporters of English club sides playing in Europe, so that if any problems occur we can make representations to the authorities on behalf of those fans affected, as well as offering assistance through our legal network of solicitors with experience of dealing with football-related matters. At the end of the season we will write a report to recommend how things could be improved in the future.

It has fallen to me to co-ordinate this exercise on behalf of the FSA national committee, so can you please put my address in your next issue so that fans can write to me if they think they have been badly treated on their travels or if they have been forced onto an expensive travel package in order to buy a match ticket, when independent travel would have been much cheaper.

Yours in sport,

Tim Whelan
FSA National Committee
Football Supporters Association
PO Box 11, Liverpool L26 1XP

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ANTI-FASCIST ACTION
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 AFA NATIONAL PHONE NUMBER 0976 406 870

Manchester United Anti-Fascists

Red Attitude is written, produced and distributed by Manchester United supporters who are opposed to the spread of racism and fascism in football and elsewhere. Red Attitude is endorsed by Anti Fascist Action, a national organisation who promote the ideological and physical confrontation of fascist groups like the BNP and C18. Manchester United Anti-Fascists are determined to ensure that Old Trafford remains a fascist free zone.

Historically, the fascists have seen the football terraces as a way of reaching disaffected white, working class people. In the seventies and eighties, the NF and the British Movement made inroads at a number of clubs, most notably Leeds and Chelsea, along with many other lower division teams like Millwall and Rochdale. Manchester City also had a clique of supporters who were highly active in National Front politics in the early eighties.

The British National Party and, more recently their splinter group Combat 18, have continued this trend of trying to recruit football firms to support Nazi politics. The role they envisage for football supporters is as foot soldiers, recruited to do their fighting for them, and eventually discarded when the dirty work is done. Fascist leaders promote racial hatred and incite violence. Guess who they've chosen to put their ideas into action, ie to carry out the race attacks and arson attacks, do the time and also take the flak from the opposition? That's right, the football recruit.

Left unchallenged, the fascists will seek to impose their political agenda on those around them. The fascists of the BNP have a political programme which goes beyond racism, and leads to misery for all working class people regardless of colour or nationality.

Manchester has a long and proud tradition of total opposition to fascism and its promoters. Over the last three decades, United supporters have made a telling contribution to this proud anti-fascist tradition, with initiatives like Reds against the Nazis. Red Attitude is a development of this tradition by those United supporters committed to opposing racism and fascism.

Join Red Attitude

Membership of MUAF's is now free and is open to all United fans who want to have an input into the work of Red Attitude and MUAF's. Red Attitude now meet regularly in Manchester, to co-ordinate the work of Red Attitude and Man United Anti-Fascists. Anyone interested in getting involved can do so by writing to Red Attitude at PO Box 83, SWDO, Old Trafford, Manchester M15 5NJ.

Anti Fascist Action

Anyone who wants to get involved in the fight against fascism can do so by contacting AFA. If you have any information on fascists in your area, then AFA would be very interested to hear about it. Any information can be sent either to Red Attitude or direct to AFA.

Manchester AFA
 PO Box 83, South West PDO, Manchester M15 5NJ

London AFA
 BM1734, London WC1N 3XX

Red Attitude Merchandise

T-Shirts
 In Black and Red - X-Large, 2 colour design as shown - £6.00 inc Postage

Stickers
 Design 1, In Black and Red - 20 for £1.00 + SAE

Badges
 'Man Utd Anti-Fascist' button badges available at 50p each plus SAE.
 Please make cheques and postal orders payable to Red Attitude.
MUAF badge available in three colour design (red, yellow and black)