

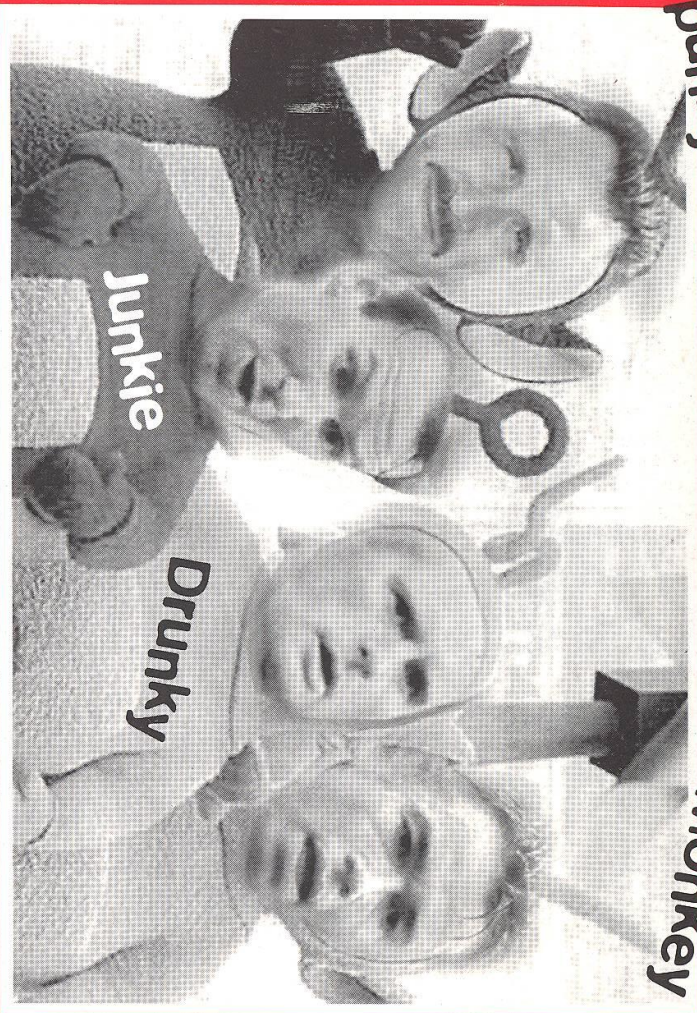
RED ATTITUDE

ISSUE 17
£1.00



INDEPENDENT MANCHESTER UNITED FANZINE

Spunky



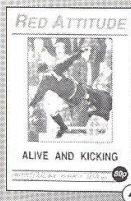
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FA LAUNCH WORLD CUP MASCOTS

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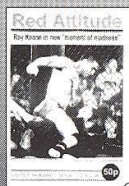
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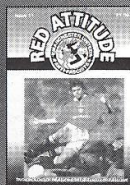
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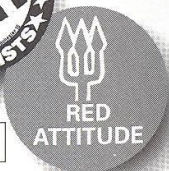
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Mole, Dessy, Spiderman, Matty,
Marky B.

RA CASUALS

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Football Poet, Mikey, The printers.

WITH THANKS TO

Action 135, The Valley Party.

RA DESIGN

Debs.

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The views expressed in this fanzine
are those of individual contributors
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United F.C.

CONTRIBUTIONS

We always welcome contributions
from readers. The more controver-
sial the better, and as long as the
lawyers are happy, we'll print.

REDS IN PRISON

We send free copies of Red
Attitude to Reds in prison. If you
know anyone who would like to
receive Red Attitude, then send us
their address and expected release
date, and we'll do the rest.

MEETINGS

Red Attitude now hold regular
monthly meetings in Manchester
for anyone interested or daft
enough to want to get involved
with writing, producing and selling
Red Attitude.

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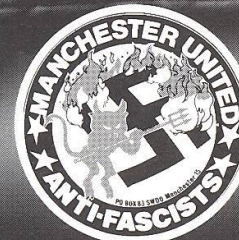
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AFU UPDATE



INDEPENDENT
MANCHESTER
UNITED FANZINE

E-MAIL US NOW ON: RedAtt0083@aol.com

Monaco it is then for the quarters in March. We couldn't have wished for a better draw, away leg first and all that, but it doesn't make it any easier. Last season we must have looked a soft touch for Porto, based on Champions league performances, but that all went out the window. Monaco are there on merit and so are we.

Juve and Dortmund we know all about, and watching how they fare against their respective quarter final opponents will give us some insight into what to expect, should we get past Monaco.

Before that of course, we have to put the Premiership beyond reach. Last year we were told we wouldn't win the league because of Fergie's obsession with Europe. This season that we wouldn't win the FA Cup because of Fergie's obsession with the League and Europe.

The bookies have already made their minds up, with United quoted a ridiculous 7 to 1 on! Second placed Blackburn were 40 to 1 before beating Villa 5-0, which saw them come in to 25 to 1. All this on the strength of a lead averaging six points. Blackburn, despite their odds, are possibly the danger team. Definite dark horses, whose manager, whilst not rated in this country does have a bit of pedigree on the European coaching circuit.

Perhaps the biggest threat to United will come not from the top six, but from the bottom six. Reverses at

Coventry and Southampton show that those fighting for survival and to protect Premiership pay rates, will give us more trouble than the likes of Liverpool and Chelsea, whose well paid stars see no need to prove themselves week in and week out. Thankfully, through Fergie's careful nurturing of his protégés, we've managed to avoid the worst excesses of the Spice boy syndrome, and build a

squad whose collective hunger for success is the dominant culture. Anyone seen Fowler score or Ince dictate a game lately. Top lads them two.

If we do have a weakness, then it's the lack of midfield cover in this allegedly big squad we've got. With Keane out for the season, Poborsky (bless him) now gone and Butt, Beckham and Giggs collecting yellow cards like air miles, there's a definite chink in the armour. Poborsky never filled the gap left by Kanchelskis, and whilst Beckham has been more than effective on the right, the arrival of an out and out right winger would free up a lot of options in the middle of the park. With Butt now suspended, the sight of McClair (bless him) or Cruyff (sell him) in the starting line-up does not fill me with confidence. Time to wipe the dust off the cheque book.

On a more serious note, events at recent home games, especially Everton brought matters to a head between fans and stewards over standing up in parts of the ground. Only the diplomacy of IMUSA and the intervention of United director and solicitor, prevented an escalation of the problem at the Spurs game. Watkins seemingly over-ruled

Merret and Roberts to pull the SPS out of the front-line in what has become an undeclared cease-fire. Left unchecked the antics of the SPS, could have led to injuries to fans and stewards alike. This, in the post-Taylor pursuit of safety would have demonstrated the fundamental design fault in the club/council approach to the issue. Safety at football, of necessity,

Anyone seen Fowler score or Ince dictate a game lately. Top lads them two.

Confrontation and intimidation have failed. East and West Stand Lower have faced down the SPS to telling effect. Respect due.

involves common sense and consent. It cannot be imposed by crowd control measures alone; witness Hillsborough.

If people insist on taking their football standing up, then surely the answer lies in developing safety strategies to accommodate this. Confrontation and intimidation have failed. East and West Stand Lower have faced down the SPS to telling effect. Respect due. The Kelly, Roberts, Merrett, 'drastic action' philosophy is not only antagonistic and counter-productive but also entirely redundant if safety is the objective. Consultation with the fans on standing and related issues has to be the way forward for the club

With European success so much to the front of our ambition, and with the 40th anniversary of Munich on February 6th, it is important we take time out to remember the Busby Babes who died at Munich in 1958, trying to fulfil the European dream. They are always in our hearts.

It is only fitting then that the club should honour the occasion with a testimonial game for the benefit of those who survived and the dependents of those who didn't. This should be good news for players like Dennis Viollet who is seriously ill in America and for Elisabeth Wood, wife of fellow survivor Ray Wood, who has been lobbying United.

Real Madrid have been touted as possible opposition, but surely a team from Munich should also be considered. After all, their doctors, nurses and emergency services fought to save our players lives, and the people of Munich shared our grief and sorrow.

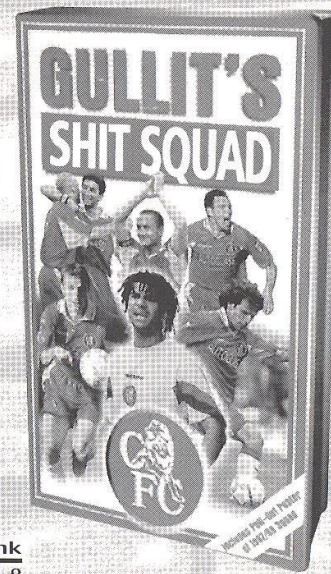
Danny

Q: what has 64 legs, dreadlocks and is going to win sweet FA

A: Gullit's Shit Squad

All the latest action from Chelsea F.C.

Available on video from 8th December in the Chelsea Megastore and all good car boot sales



BateWank
video

The Taylor report placed the blame for (the Hillsborough) tragedy fairly and squarely on police handling of crowd control at the event. The police have admitted fault and paid compensation. The Attorney General in a statement to the Commons on 26 October 1994.

'In an ideal world, those responsible would have stood trial. That didn't happen in spite of numerous opportunities: the Director of Public Prosecutions backed off, the coroner was a callous coward and the police couldn't bring disciplinary action against somebody who had conveniently retired due to ill-health.' wrote Alan Cookson in the Liverpool fanzine, 'Through the Wind and the Rain'.

The police were kept out of the dock, and in their place the terraces themselves, were held to account, duly tried, and found to be unsafe. A decision which was about as rational as banning air travel following a plane crash. Statistical evidence shows flying to be the safest form of travel, in spite of the number of crashes. Hillsborough and Ibrox can no more be used to damn terraces than Munich can be used to damn air travel.

It was somehow the terraces, which after being in use for over a hundred years, that had become increasingly unsafe, and this, paradoxically, at a time when the police's ability to control the terraces had never been better. All ticket controlled entry, saturation policing, segregation, CCTV monitoring, penned terraces, could control a crowd but sadly, not ensure it's safety. Those who died in the crowd at Hillsborough were monitored on CCTV whilst police officers manned locked gates, watching fans being crushed against high railings, with other officers turning away ambulances. They were controlled until they were dead.

Police crowd control would have been shown to operate at the expense of crowd safety, and this in part explains why the powers that be were unwilling to put the 'controllers' in the dock, and have the relationship between control and safety examined. This should have been the starting point if anything was

CROWD CONTROL IS IT SAFE?

to have been learnt from Hillsborough. Instead the Government and its lackeys all ran with 'unsafe terracing' as being the culprit and in consequence the introduction of all seater stadia was sold as a safety issue.

With the abolition of terraces and the all seater environment at Old Trafford, it could be argued that whatever the threat posed by terraces, it had at last been put to bed. Perversely then, as if to reinforce the correctness of ending terracing, the 'safety risk' has transferred itself to the act of standing up (and vocally supporting your team).

So just what is the safety risk in standing up. Any effective safety measure starts by defining the risk, followed by an assessment of that risk, followed by measures to reduce or better still, eradicate that risk. Apply this to the act of standing up and immediately you see the difficulty. If the act of standing up, in and of itself, is either an unsafe act or a risk to safety, please would someone enlighten me as up until now, I've spend much of my life taking un-necessary risks!. For argument's sake let's assume it is a safety risk, so why then are we allowed to stand up whilst entering and leaving our seats. Even more ludicrously, if we accept there's a risk, then whatever that risk is, surely it will be greater if we start doing it during 'brief moments of great excitement.

If common sense is the best safety policy, then the absence of it from the club and the council so far on this matter has in fact led to a situation which has created it's own safety risks for fans.

Teresa McDonald (Red News Vol.9 No.5) spoke to David Arrowsmith of Trafford Borough Council who deals with the General Safety Certificate issued by the Council for Old Trafford. He said, "...not punishing spectators for standing but because they are contravening the GSC and causing concern for the safety of spectators which could have serious consequences if not controlled.' And there you have it straight from the horses mouth: effective safety from an undefined risk can only be achieved through crowd control.

The club's solution to standing up is to introduce more effective crowd control. Somewhat ironically United appoint as their stadium safety officer, an ex-Chief Superintendent who retired from the force due to ill health to escape disciplinary proceedings. A private security firm, SPS, under the leadership of ex-SAS man Ned Kelly are enlisted to exert the control required to force fans to comply with the requirements of the General Safety Certificate. A confrontational approach to the problem, sanctioned by Merret and implemented by Roberts and Kelly has led to ejections from the ground, abuse and assaults from SPS thugs, and season ticket confiscations. Far from creating a safe environment in which to watch football, these actions have created a climate of fear and intimidation in certain parts of the ground. This culminated in ugly scenes against Everton

following the latest 'show of force' from Kelly's hardmen. With feelings running high in the build-up to the Spurs game, coupled with national media uptake on IMUSA's standpoint, (not to mention rumours of reprisals against SPS thugs), Maurice Watkins pulled the plug on the 'controllers', confining the SPS to barracks, and in essence left the crowd to steward themselves. Common sense had entered the equation, 'crowd control' was reduced, and for the first time this season in sections like 135, a serious risk to safety had been removed.

No doubt lawyer Maurice Watkins would be well aware of the awesome legal implications for the clubs' directors, had matters come to a head between stewards and fans against Spurs. Injuries to fans and stewards alike, in the pursuit of 'post Hillsborough' safety would have blown the lid off the whole issue.

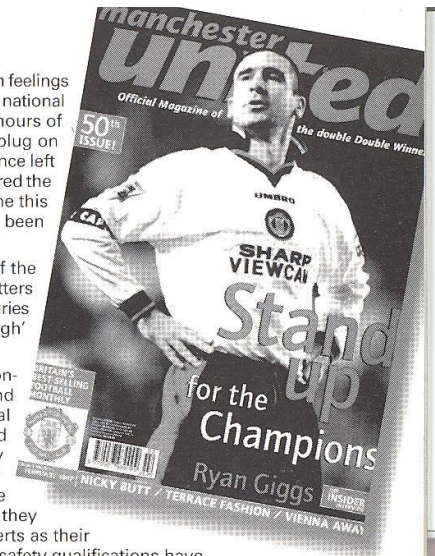
Whilst the club, don't make safety policy, the directors personally, are legally responsible for its implementation, and perhaps Maurice is more aware than most of the potential liability United are carrying. They have introduced crowd control techniques disguised as implementation of safety policy. They have stood down the police and brought in (or even manufactured) a private security firm at a considerable cost saving. United would get laughed out of court when they produce convicted criminal and disgraced ex copper Roberts as their stadium safety officer, followed by Ned Kelly's SPS. What safety qualifications have the stewards got? What's their criminal history? What vetting procedures do stewards go through? What provision is there in the General Safety Certificate to ensure safe stewarding? Do we have to wait till someone gets seriously injured before we find out the answers.

If the council are that concerned about safety, then they will be equally concerned with the deteriorating situation between club and fans This issue will not go away and recent talk from IMUSA about 'standing' candidates in the Council elections in May will put the issue firmly on the political agenda and open up this and related matters for further debate.



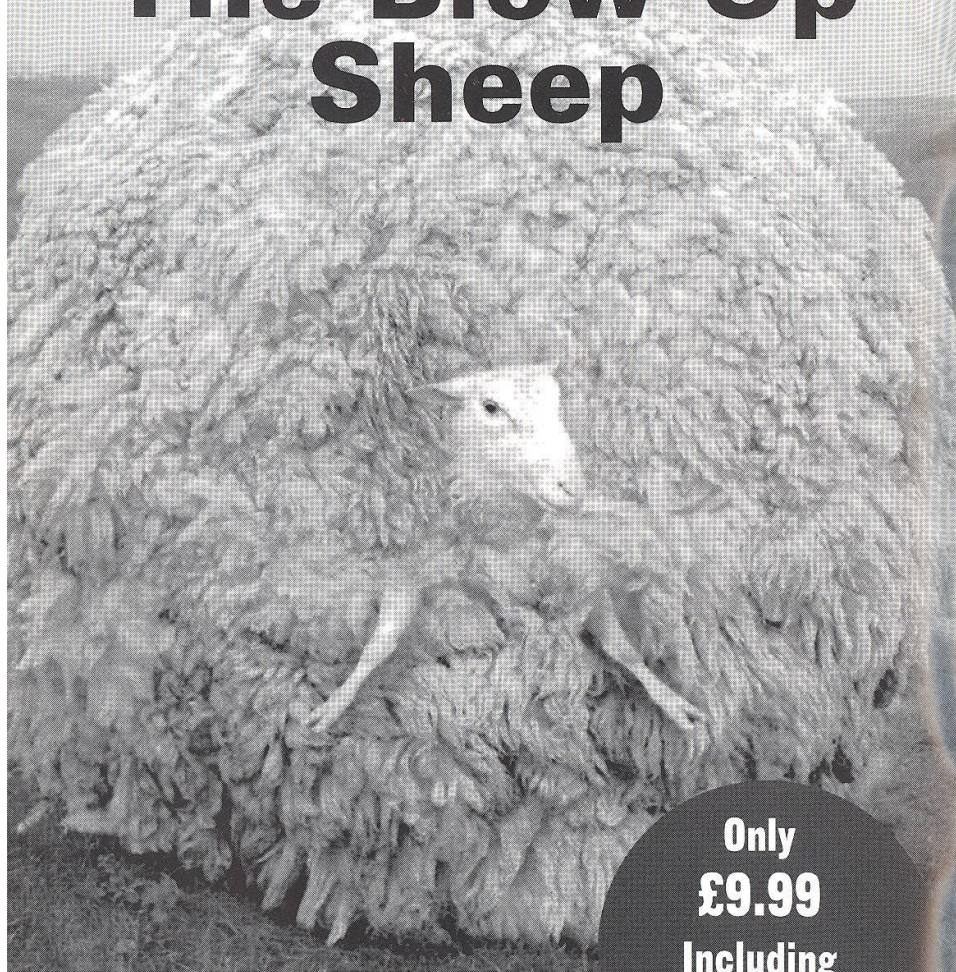
Finally for those who still aren't convinced on the safety versus crowd control argument, read Geoffrey Greene's Official history of the FA Cup Final. The 1923 final at Wembley, with an official capacity then of 127,000, had an estimated 200,000 people in the ground. The crowd spilled onto the pitch as pressure built up but people were able to redistribute themselves and be absorbed by the terraces around the ground. This incredible feat was overseen by a single copper (PC Storey) on a white horse (Billy). Now the police horse was clearly a gifted organiser and great communicator, and has claimed the credit for this event for the past seventy years. However if ever conditions were ripe for a major sporting disaster, then this was it. At least fifty per cent over capacity, no crowd control whatsoever and terraces aplenty. Perhaps if there was an inquest in to what might have gone wrong but didn't, then the safety benefits of terraces would have got the credit they deserve, instead of a copper on a horse who on this occasion had no need to retire on the grounds of ill-health.

Danny



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a word in
your ear...

the noonan column

John Motson put his foot in it with his comments about having trouble distinguishing between black players. Racist, insensitive or just plain stupid. That he is guilty of using an offensive racial stereotype to mask his own shortcomings as a commentator, there is no doubt. The World Cup (oh shit I've got Nigeria versus Cameroons to do) must be a definite no-go area for him. He'll have to switch to a 'safe' sport like horse racing - they don't look similar do they!

Did David Coleman have this trouble with Brazil in the 1970 World Cup, confusing his Jairzinhos with his Rivelinos and his Peles. Of course not - and why? Because he saw them as footballers first and foremost. It was their shirts and not their skins that were colour coded.

Now if people look alike, they look alike, regardless of race, colour or country of origin. (PC or what) What about some of these east European teams, full of ovanovich's or something olovak, every one of them six foot two with seventies haircut and five o'clock shadow. No problem there for Motty. It's just those notorious lookalikes, the

"Who scored that goal then John?" "That big black lad did officer." "Right then, he's nicked." "Hey, but there was three of them in the box at the time, and they all look alike." Pleads John. "We're talking conspiracy then - nick 'em all." "But they're only playing football," "with intent John, with intent. And one of 'ems not even black." "How can you tell officer," inquires John amazed at such fine detective work. "Because he just spat at me, the name's Milosevic and he's got previous."

However, for George Lewis of Birmingham it was no laughing matter. He spent five years in prison after being fitted up by the West Midlands Police. In the eyes of the police, being black meant he was guilty. Despite receiving £200,000 compensation, no action was taken against the police because of insufficient evidence. Hardly surprising when the police are left to investigate the police. As John Motson didn't say, 'they're all the same really, aren't they?'

Later.
Dessy

It's just those notorious lookalikes, the second generation Afro-Caribbean players in the premier that trouble the man. Worry not though, John. Virtually every single policeman, magistrate and judge in the country suffers from a similar condition.

MANCHESTER UTD ACTIVE AFTER BLOCK TRADE

Jan 16 (Reuters) - Shares in Manchester United Plc were active on Friday as a block of 7.7 million shares was dealt by the company's broker Merrill Lynch, dealers said. The stock gained 1-1/2p to 158 by 1215 GMT in volume of 16.7 million shares - making it the second most active stock in the UK equity market at that time. Dealers at Merrill Lynch declined comment on who was behind the trade. Separately, a spokesman for the soccer club dismissed talk of a 50 million pounds sponsorship deal with Ford Motor Co, that helped lift the stock on Thursday. He said Ford had denied reports of a deal with the English league champions. The current deal with Sharp Corp, which expires at the end of the current season, is worth more than one million pounds a season to United and the club has said it aims to treble its receipts when it renews the deal.

'EastStanders'

The Soap Opera Rumbles On...

In the latest issue of Red Print, IMUSA's newsletter, we update readers on the unfolding soap Opera, set in Old Trafford, which is now dubbed 'EastStanders'. Matchdays at Old Trafford are now becoming grimmer than even the omnibus edition of the BBC drama.

Following the Everton game, IMUSA held an emergency meeting and issued a press statement in line with the growing media interest in both the standing-sitting issue and the actions and behaviour of the SPS themselves.

As a result, IMUSA's press officer spoke directly to his counterpart Ken Ramsden, followed by conversations with Ken Merrett and Director Maurice Watkins.

As a result of these conversations, the club pulled SPS out of the East Stand for the Tottenham game, where we all now await their next move...

With this temporary victory, attention now switches to Trafford Borough Council where we hope the threat of putting up candidates on a 'Standing Ticket' at the forthcoming local elections is enough to help them think again about enforcing the all regulations to the letter.

Meanwhile the campaign to bring back terracing goes 'national' - IMUSA began this as a lone voice but, as recent coverage - not least by MEN's Paul Hince and several national dailies - shows, support is growing. We hope that those who back our campaign will attend one of the Task Force meetings over the next few weeks. IMUSA and 135 Action are also planning a more 'local' event - watch out in the next issue of the fanzine for further details.

Finally, IMUSA are considering setting up a 'Support Fund' for fans wanting to seek legal redress against the club or SPS - including the return of confiscated Season Tickets. Benefit gigs, whip-rounds in local boozers etc etc, are all on the cards. Any help or advice will be gratefully accepted.

Guest Evening

On a lighter note, IMUSA has lined up a guest who has a small but perhaps significant, always to be remembered place in our history. Yes, IMUSA presents Michael Knighton and his Amazing Juggling Balls! Like him, or loathe him you must admit that a headmaster able to blag his way onto the MUFC Board of Directors will undoubtedly make for an enjoyable, entertaining and maybe illuminating evening - perhaps you should invite those mates of yours who insist United are a professionally organised and well run outfit headed by a set of business masterminds.

Joining IMUSA

IMUSA has again shown that, through its efforts, the plc can be halted - even if only temporarily in its tracks. For all the criticisms of the organisation, remember that without us there would no focus for discontented fans, nobody putting pressure on Trafford Council and nobody able to put the SPS situation into the national papers or organise appeal funds for those ejected and banned from Old Trafford. IMUSA cannot run on fresh air and above all needs your support to give the organisation credibility with the club. Please join IMUSA to stop the plc walking all over you.

Send cheque/PO for £5 to IMUSA, PO Box 69, Manchester M32 0UZ

Forthcoming meetings

Public Meetings (Members only: Join on the night)
29th January • Special Task Force meeting
26th February • Guest: Michael Knighton

Committee Meetings (all members welcome)
• 10th February
• 10th March

All meetings 8pm start, O'Briens, Stretford Arndale



RED MOLE

uncovers...

Mark Hughes MBE.

So Hughesy goes to Chelsea, the club with more politicians in it than a Soho brothel, and ends up on the Honours List. With Major, Blair and Mellor, to do the lobbying, then it's hardly surprising that a Chelsea player would appear on it. But Hughesy? I reckon they must have offered it to him as part of his signing on deal. After all what else did they have to offer a man who's won almost everything with the Reds, apart from the chance to miss out on back to back championships.

Judging by the way Hughesy put himself about against the Reds, MBE probably stands for a bad case of Mad Bull's Envy.

Jack and the Beanstalk

Recent press hysteria over which Cabinet Minister had a drug dealer son, was finally ended when Jack Straw, the Home Secretary was named. Blackburn Rovers supporter Jack Straw, who is opposed to legalising cannabis (by the masses), is a firm advocate of Labour's middle-class vote -winning 'Tough on crime, Tough on the causes of crime' platform. Will he now put his money where his mouth is and demand the full rigours of the law be brought to bear on the drug dealer and of course his socially irresponsible parents? Or will father and son sit down together, skin up and have a good laugh about double standards and insider dealing?

Right wing mystery: No. 1

December press speculation that United are prepared to offer Brian Laudrup forty grand a week to secure his services in the summer, followed by an unsolicited offer from Keith Gillespie to sign up to Newcastle for life, even though such a contract hadn't been offered to him, got the old conspiracy theorist in me going. With Laudrup almost certainly going to Ajax next season, or even the highest English bidder, Gillespie's offer strikes me as being about as sincere as George Graham's interest in managing City. A week later, the great under achiever Poborsky gets offed by United to join the Souness 'revival' at Benfica, adding weight to my suspicions. Perhaps only a ridiculous fee stands between Gillespie and his old team mates, or is it just wishful thinking on my behalf?

King Prat

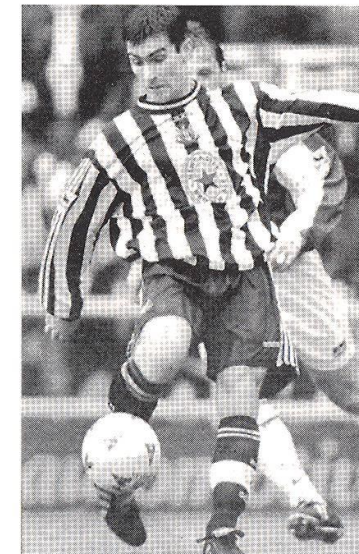
Gasgoigne's untimely antics in the recent Old Firm clash, when he was caught on camera, for the second time, playing his imaginary flute, have earned him a hefty fine from Rangers and possible action from the SFA. He claimed that it was in response to (well deserved) taunting from Celtic fans over his assaults on his (soon to be ex) wife. Last time he was caught, he pleaded ignorance to the relevance of the gesture. This time though, with Celtic winning two nil, Gazza's 'old orange flute' did not play a happy tune; perhaps there was a dead rat stuck in it?

Right wing mystery: No. 2

Former Ku Klux Klan leader Andrew Frain of Calcott, Berkshire was found hanging from a rope in his loft by police at new year. A detective claimed it was suicide, although Frain's legal representatives had asked for an investigation, and there would be a post mortem and inquest.

In 1996 Frain was jailed for 6 months at reading Crown Court for possessing racially inflammatory material with a view to stirring up racial hatred. Frain had admitted being a member of the Klan, holding the title of Grand Knight Hawk.

Was it something we said?



Foxy Edwards

Leicester City fanzine, the Fox, informed its readers that none other than Martin Edwards is the proud owner of £100,000 worth of shares in their club. Investing in less well off clubs, no doubt is the business equivalent of 'charity work'. Doesn't it make you feel humble?

Nervous Ned No. 1

Rumour reaches the ears of the Mole, that fearless fighting SAS trained Ned Kelly has taken on a minder! Nothing to do with the reaction from the Reds in East Lower to his presence against Everton was it?

Or was it the realisation that Kelly's 'firm' only operates for two hours on a Saturday, there are seven days in a week, and Manchester is full of Reds, some of whom don't like to be told to sit down. Scary isn't it.

Wembley of the North

Strong hints are coming from the FA that OT will be used as the national stadium, whilst Wembley undergoes a two year rebuilding programme. Now this is good news for United fans. FA Cup finals and Charity Shields on our own doorstep, not to mention the chance to see United in disguise (England) and have some fun and games with England's ABU and C18 followings as well!

Nervous Ned No. 2

Ned Kelly's front line appearance during skirmishes at the Everton game indicates a smart tactical move by his boss Arthur Roberts. Any flank resulting from the day's events would land on Kelly's desk rather than Roberts' desk. Ned Kelly would be well advised to have a chat with ex-Chief Inspector Peter Jackson. He will, no doubt enlighten you as to the meaning of the word scapegoat, and the nature of the man Roberts.

A Letter From Eric...

It's not very often that I find myself in happy agreement with the mutterings of my fellow hacks, in the more, shall we say, mainstream area of the sporting press. By and large, I see them as a bunch of free-loading arse-lickers who, if they ever had to buy a ticket for a game, would see less live football than your correspondent - who sees fuck-all at the moment. Today however (two days after the game in Turin) I fell upon the words of a particular football correspondent with both rapture and relief. You see, up until this morning, I thought I'd seen and listened to a different match entirely, from the rest of the people that I'd spoken to since Wednesday night. And I'm not just talking about the anti-United mob. (Though if just one more of them tells me that Juventus will come back 'haunt us', I swear I'll strangle the prick there and then!) I'm on about my fellow Reds as well. It's been, "We shouldn't have played him; we should have played so and so; the tactics were all wrong; what was Fergie playing at?" A right fucking wake it's been, I can tell you.

My opinion, for what it's worth, at events in the Stadio Delle Alpi, is that we bossed the first half, looking a class above the opposition at times, then lost the plot after half time. I think that the score was 0-1? Which means that we lost one game, away to our strongest opponents by far, by a single goal. And we easily won the group. Some funeral!

Lest I should be accused of plagiarism, at this embryonic stage, of a promising new career, let me quote Paul Hayward, of the Guardian, in full, on this point; "The most lasting impression in a generally misleading encounter was that, in their best passages, the United players controlled and passed the ball with more dexterity than their supposedly more skillful hosts" (Couldn't have put it better myself lad)

What is the problem with the knockers on our side? On the pitch, at all levels of the playing staff, this club has never been near the position we're in now - certainly not in the forty odd years I've been a Red. We are totally dominating the domestic game with more power, skill and consistency than the likes of the scousers ever dreamt of, even in the best of their glory days. And the very best of all, is that we're only getting into our stride at the moment; this is a 'taster', the feast is still at hand. If we don't become champions of Europe this year, (and my dough says we win) then it will be next year, or the year after. Then we will go on to dominate Europe (and my name's Eric, not Malcolm!). So get on your knees you Red doubters and thank whatever fortune sent the blessed St Alex our way.

I'm glad that Juventus are still in the competition. Personally speaking, I'd like to meet them in the final. When we do get our name on the Champions Cup again, I'd like it to be by virtue of beating a team with a recent history of success, not some has-been or might-be great team.

The distinction, by omission, between the playing staff and the powers-that-be at OT is both deliberate and pointed. I get

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 Risley.

more depressed by the day at the cold hearted commercialism surrounding the temple at which we worship. I was discussing this, in a letter, with one of my brothers. He's turned sixty now (though he doesn't look a day over forty. The bastard! Must be the Holt's Tom!) and started watching United as a schoolkid and then as an apprentice engineer. There aren't any apprentices left in Gorton now of course (no jobs to train up to), but if there were, the only chance they would have of seeing their heroes in the flesh - as our kid and later me, saw the likes of Carey, Mitten and the Babes - would be when one of today's crop opens up another fucking megastore.

Those fat cat bastards in the boardroom are deliberately attacking the club at it's very roots. By segregating the team from it's natural bedrock of support - the young working class of the area - the board are denying those kids their heritage. The fact that the young in Manchester have, generally, got fuck-all else going for them serves to add insult to injury. These corporate gangsters must not be allowed to get away with their plundering of our assets.

As I see it, the independent supporters association remains easily the best hope of stopping the rot. The organisation is growing in numbers and influence. I urge all readers to join in the fight to get our club back.

To go back to the Juve game for a moment; my betting-book was only slightly dented on the night, I'm happy to report. The enemy has little ammunition, and even less stomach, for a gamble following our annual goal-fest on Merseyside. Having said that, my haul, from the Liverpool game, was considerably lower than after the corresponding fixture in the Spring. The scousers were eyeing the Title then and I won the equivalent of a month's wages. This

time, I had to work very hard to get half a dozen phone-cards on. And, would you believe, such is the shame and degradation we've heaped on them of late, one or two of them actually asked for the draw! At home! Bill (This is Anfield) Shankly must have been spinning away like a whipping top! The scousers present a pitiful sight now; they're starting to acquire that pallid hang-dog expression, usually to be found around the confines of Maine Road. I think it's time we put them out of their misery and relegated the fixture to it's deserved status of just another game.

My word! How time flies when you're having a ball. Can it really be a year since I wrote about not being too put out, when we were put out of the Cup by

Wimbledon? (Apart, that was, from losing a few phone cards and a couple of ounces of snort on the event.) Happy to record that I more than recovered losses at Stamford Bridge, this time round. Saw a lot of the game live as well. A rare treat! Were we not truly majestic! And did you cop the look on Ruud Gullit's boat? I've seen happier-looking men leaving Crown Court, in prison vans, having had a ten stretch stuck right up their arses.

No reason why we can't go all the way. As I was saying to a Wythenshawe blue, the other day; it must be all of a two-stretch since we've been to Wembley, not counting the Charity Shield. We don't want the Red Army forgetting how to get there. Funny enough, he's not the happiest of men either, the blue!

My appeal hearing was postponed in November, by the way. You may recall that it was pencilled in for the Friday before the Arsenal game. The Commissioner of the Met said something about his force being unable to cope with hordes of invading mancs twice, over a long weekend. (Our kid was planning to stand in the Strand, holding the 'free the Gorton one' placard) Up in January now.

Mind how you go.

**And did you cop
the look on Ruud
Gullit's boat? I've
seen happier-
looking men
leaving Crown
Court, in prison
vans, having had a
ten stretch stuck
right up their...**

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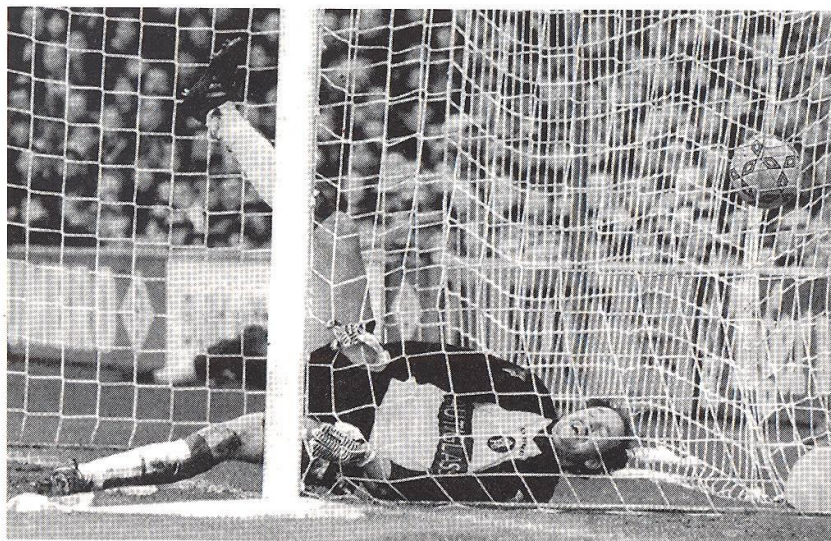
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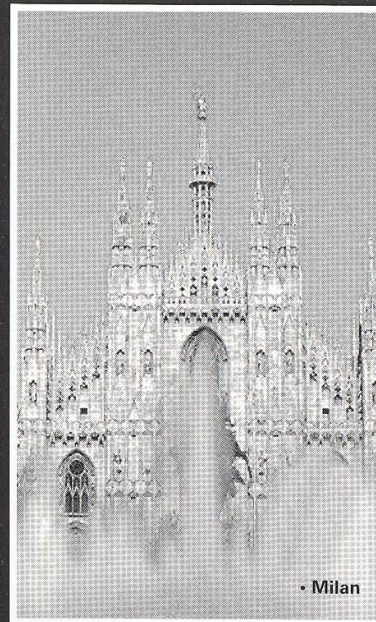
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• Milan

Just as Amsterdam was 'near enough' to – as in miles away from – Rotterdam, so it seemed Milan was going to be 'near enough' to Turin for us to stay there, on the basis that Milan is supposed to be a bit nicer (but more of that later). Two big, industrial, relatively close Northern cities – so Manchester/Liverpool comparisons are inevitable. On a footballing front, you'd struggle to find a more convincing parallel than Manchester equals Turin, and Milan equals Liverpool.

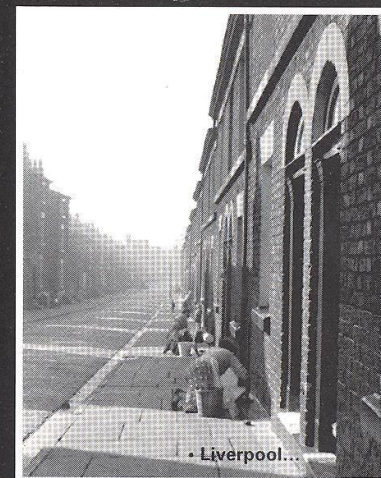
Turin has a once half decent side now on its knees, in the financial shite, suffering from a procession of pishy managers (such as Graeme Souness, there's a man who can spot a player) and pisher players, whose fans maintain that everyone in their city supports them. Juve, on the other hand, are one of the biggest clubs in the world; it took a Frenchman (Platini) to lift them from a period of mediocrity; in the nineties, despite selling world class players (if you think Ince, Hughes, Kanchelskis was drastic imagine Baggio, Viali, Ravanelli, Kohler, Moller and Vieri,) they have gone on to win league after league and taken that form into Europe (more than we have) with a mix of home-grown talent

a tale of two cities

(Del Piero) and astute big signings (Inzaghi). They have a glorious past and have fans from all over Italy and the world as well as Turin; they are, as a result, the most loved but also the most envied club in Italy. Also, they aren't keen on scousers.

Milan has two clubs who are still both big clubs, if you do AC equals the bastards, Inter equals Everton, it's a bit harsh on Inter but it's probably the closest. AC Milan have won the league a lot, sometimes by playing great football, more often by being lucky and boring. They have done better in Europe than their rivals would like to admit, and at the minute they have enough good players to make an impressive side but oh - so - sadly aren't doing as well as they might.

Inter play in blue, more or less. But they're not shite, and do not make a habit of trying to improve that by signing Sheffield United plodders; instead they've got the brilliant Djorkaeff and the useful but over-rated Ronaldo. I can't think of many ways that they're like Everton really, which is a shame, because it was going quite well up till now. On the other hand, Milan is a beautiful city and has an air of real class; in no way do most of its residents 'look in the dustbins for something to eat.'



• Liverpool...

RED ATTITUDE

Match Reports

United 1 Villa 0

15th December... Aston Villa are the used car of the Premiership; it all reads very good in the advert, but you know that in reality you don't get what you pay for.

Apart from Taylor, Villa were pony. They'd come for a point and as anybody knows, it doesn't work out like that. United themselves were almost stifled by Villa's negativity, but there was one Red on the pitch who stood out from the other 21: Ryan Giggs.

But more of Ryan Giggs later; let's talk meeting the stars. We had our football team Christmas bash on the Friday evening, Sawyers Arms then on to the Fantasy bar, (excellent value - ask for Sally from Hale, stick £20 in her thong, sit back and relax. It might be a while before you can stand up again though...) then on to Barca.

All 15 of us right on the piss, birds with short dresses everywhere, Fantasy Bar fantasies just starting to cloud the judgement as far as quality of bird is concerned when... Teddy and Becks stroll in, prop themselves up against the bar, and turn round wide as you like "Love us, for we are they" ...fucking magic.

One by one, myself and the Holmes Chapel regulars approach the two of them ("Are you a god? May I call you Zeus?") and they turned out to be two totally sorted geezers. Respect is due.

Being Red is all consuming, style, swagger etc... come on Giggysy, let's see you sleeping with...

Much more interesting, of course, than Giggs. Whilst Peruvia isn't the place that I would smack my bitch up, that little incident doesn't make Giggs anything like as interesting off the pitch as he could be, and in my opinion, should be. Being Red is all consuming, style, swagger etc... come on Giggysy, let's see you sleeping with sisters, fucking goats and all that.

On the pitch, however Giggs has few equals. Now in his early twenties, (yup, ten years left at least) Giggs is performing at 8 out of 10 levels for every match. He is one of the reasons that we won the league last year, and in him we have one of our keys to success in Europe and beyond (eh?). He totally dominated a match where other players were slightly below par, tackling back, breaking down the left, running through from midfield, and after a lay off from Cole, sweeter than the inside of Kylie's thighs, Giggysy strode forward and buried it. I thought that the keeper should have done better, but who cares? God bless Ryan Giggs.

Spiderman

Newcastle 0 United 1

21st December... Controversial points? Batty's studs into Neville and followed up on Johnsen, Peacock attacking Andy

Andy Cole, pitch invasion by a Geordie fuckwit, Albert doing his hamstring kicking at Cole, Butt getting booked and giving away a free on the edge of the box for one of the best timed tackles of the game, Neville the younger and ex-Red Gillespie giving each others shinguards some serious indentation, oh and a superb AC goal, are just a few that spring to mind.

Were we watching the same game then as the Dalglish inspired sports hacks who only took issue with Beckham for allegedly feigning injury following a head high tackle from Pissed Tony.

Beckham's face is worth almost as much to him as his feet, so he has every right to react

Match Reports

dramatically to an Italian size nine heading for his laughing tackle.

As for the game itself, Dalglish fielded a team of tacklers and defenders in an all out push to secure a scoreless draw. A cunning scheme indeed! No doubt when Dalglish has his BT sponsored after-match ring round with the fans, he'll be able to explain how Andy Cole ran rings round his gameplan. Newcastle are clearly a team in transition...they're going from bad to worse! After match comment from Sir John (won fuck) Hall, "At this rate we'll have to bring back Keegan and Beardsley...as players!"

As for United, well we did the necessary, avenged last years result, took three vital points and probably killed off Newcastle's ambition for another year. Men of the match. Schmeichel, for stopping two unstoppable and Cole for scoring the winner and for creating a chance and a yard from nothing, only to be denied by the goalie's knee.

The Kerry Recruit

Match Reports

United 2 Everton 0

26th December... Welcome to your past, blue shite. Your future

is very very much a la Notts Forest - too good to go down? Get real.

What happened in this game was, as Kendal said' "men against boys". No Giggs, no Teddy, no problem. So bad were Everton that after United went 2-0 up, the match was over. In fact the only highlight of the match was seeing Poborsky make his last fleeting appearance for United. I still hold the belief that he was misused by Fergie, that at Benfica he will be superb, and that he may come back to haunt us. The other belief is that he is a long haired poof, cunt, lazy bastard, shit fool.

Berg scored the first goal, a six inch tap-in, and his second goal of the season (for us anyway). Not exactly a snip at £5 million, but totally solid and there's a lot more below the surface. (Ha ha ha. Can I write for RI or UWS now please?) The second goal was Cole class. Unlike Matty's mutterings! I don't think it is unfair for those critical of Cole to bask in his glory now. Let's be honest, he had some shit periods. And what did we all do during that period? Sang our fucking hearts out for him. So Matty if I put you on the Live! TV lie detector, what would your feelings about the wing footed wonder have been during those dark days?

Anyway, the second goal was class, pure class, from the Premiership's best striker chipping four Everton players to score his 17th of the season.

The second half was, genuinely, too shit to talk about. Let us leave this match together at this point, with the speed of tall Indians.

Spiderman

at Benfica he will be superb, and that he may come back to haunt us. The other belief is that he is a long haired poof, **, lazy bastard, **** fool.**

Match Reports

Coventry 3 United 2

28th December... Arguably the worst day of the season so far, apart from

the scum away. Talk about frustrating; over four hours on the M6 going, and about the same coming home again. As well as not having a single pint all day, we somehow managed to lose a 2-1 lead with five minutes on the clock.

Coventry opened brightly, then we took a hold on the game with Giggs and Solskjaer making inroads down the right. With Johnsen bossing the midfield, it looked only a matter of time... That said, Coventry, always a threat at Highfield Road up front, and Noel Whelan emphasised this very point.

United had already done enough to suggest the score line wouldn't remain the same, and Ole duly obliged with a cheeky solo effort, turning Coventry's last man to slot home from an acute angle. United finished the half well on top, and the chants of 'can we play you every week' coming from our right, when 1-0 down, barely a memory.

During the half time break, with one food outlet closed and the other swamped, the day was beginning to draw out. Chants expressing our displeasure at being in an all seater stadium broke out, and whilst I support the return to safe terracing, blaming 'other' fans for our current predicament is a red herring!

The second half started as the first had ended. United cleared the ball deep into the Coventry half down the left. Then after brilliant chasing and working of the Coventry defence by Scholes and Beckham, the ball was crossed for Sheringham to convert with a low header. Plain sailing from now surely. In truth it was until the last ten minutes. Although Coventry were down they weren't out, and showboating instead of chasing the killer third goal, left us to pay the price.

If we were to be troubled, it was going to come from Huckerby and Whelan down the right. Sure enough, Huckerby ran from the touch line, where he should have been felled, into the box where he was felled, leaving a quietish Dublin to score from the spot. I was happy enough to learn the lesson and settle for a draw, but not Coventry. Cue Huckerby again. The geordie reject got the ball, thought he was George Best, and with a little help from Whelan's block on Butt's attempted challenge, sailed through United's defence and put the ball past Pilkington. A goal worthy of winning all three points.

The turning point for me was the substitutions made with about twenty minutes to go; both Scholes and especially Johnsen missed in the midfield.

The only good point was finding a MacDonalds easily enough in Walsall. Oh and thanks to the boys for helping out in a ticket crisis.

Michael Palin

Chelsea 3 United 5

January 4th... This was a game of two halves. The first half lasted 78 minutes and saw United romp home five nil, followed by a 12 minute second half which United conceded three for the second time in a week. In fairness the game was all but over; mentally Pally and co. were on their second pint when Chelsea's revival took place

However, any hopes for a Chelsea miracle were not shared by their loyal fans, who had left the stadium in droves at four and five down. Whilst conceding three late goals is no joke, the fact that most Chelsea fans missed them and went home with five nil stuck in their heads is funny beyond recognition.

Match Reports

Sad to see Hughesy resorting to the type of display that only a has-been with a grudge would be proud of. As they say; you can judge a man by the company he keeps!

Rumours (probably started by Fergie) that the FA Cup had taken on the importance of the Coca Cola were firmly quashed by half time, with United galloping into a three goal lead. Sheringham's assist on Beckham's free kick and Cole's superb (where's he going?) solo effort, both needed the benefit of Sky's 4 o'clock highlights to be fully appreciated!

Sad to see Hughesy resorting to the type of display that only a has-been with a grudge would be proud of. As they say; you can judge a man by the company he keeps!

Second half, Chelsea re-organise and United carry on where they left off. Andy Cole does another 'has he pushed it too far' teaser before beating the hapless De Goofey.

Four nil down, United corner, Beckham with the ball, "does she take it up the...." Beckham cross, Sheringham Goal!.. Not arsed or what!

The Kerry Recruit

Match Reports

United 2 Spurs 0

10th January... After the dizzy heights of Stamford Bridge, we

had good reason to anticipate another goal rush against London opposition. Or so we thought. Giggs apart, United hardly broke into a sweat, collecting the three points with a minimum of fuss. A game perhaps more relevant for events off the pitch, with the apparent cease-fire brokered between club and fans by IMUSA and Maurice Watkins, than anything on the pitch. The intervention of Maurice Watkins, appeals from Fergie and the withdrawal of the Sad Pricks in Suits (SPS) did much to defuse a situation that had reached boiling point against Everton. If nothing else it demonstrated that the presence of the thuggish SPS only serves to inflame the situation.

Spurs (or Sol Campbell to be precise) played well considering their situation, having a Swiss fundamentalist coach whose training methods have generated an injury list of 'Newcastle' proportions. Funny how United are referred to as 'full strength' regardless of injuries (Keane, Irwin, May, Solskjaer, Johnsen, Cruyff), whilst other teams are referred to as being minus six 'internationals', or in Barnsley's case minus six!

Jurgen Klinsman welcome back to England. Get your shirt off and wash Mr. Sugar's car, after all, you won't catch him doing it!

The Kerry Recruit

Funny how United are referred to as 'full strength' regardless of injuries

The Devils Ride Out...



Peter Schmeichel

Again it seems we are a little nervous when the big man isn't in goal. Losing the lead at Coventry however wasn't down to Pilkington who had done what was asked of him during his two matches in goal. It was a case of showboating, something that happened again a week later at Stamford Bridge. At least this time we were more than one goal up. On a brighter note, those two saves by the Great Dane had the Geordies in tears (again) and earned us three points.

Kevin Pilkington

Done what was asked of him, which against Everton wasn't much but... not to blame for any of the three conceded at Coventry. The experience won't do him any harm.

Gary Neville

Continuing good form from the England right back. Didn't look too comfortable at Coventry, but was steady as a rock at Newcastle.

Philip Neville

Has acquitted himself well in the absence of Irwin, which is what you expect from Neville the younger, but seemed to pick up enough bookings to warrant a ban, a little too quickly for my liking.

Denis Irwin

Pressed into service against Chelsea, he played like he'd never been away. Unassuming and consistent, let's hope he's got his injury quota out of the way for this season, if only to take penalties instead of you know who.

Gary Pallister

Having a great season, apart from the Chelsea 'misunderstanding'; he seems to build at least one deliberate error into every game. Give me the 'telling through ball at Anfield' any day. Must surely get the nod from Hod for France next year. After all Tony Adams is still a few pints short of a full recovery!

Henning Berg

Has been gazumped in the rankings of late by his compatriot Johnsen. Henning now stands victim to Pallister's record breaking injury-free run, and is more likely to get his place back when Johnsen gets drafted into a midfield weakened by yellow cards.



Ronnie Johnsen

This man should figure highly in the United player of the year polls, with outstanding performances at Coventry and Chelsea. He shadows and stalks opposing strikers out of games, and seems to take the ball off their feet in the box with consummate ease. It will be interesting to watch how Ronnie and Henning fare against football's elite this summer for Norway.

Nicky Butt

Delivered against Chelsea with Keano sized proportions, the full repertoire of tackles with both feet, sometimes simultaneously. His form all season will put Ince and Batty in a permanent cold sweat.

Paul Scholes

The goals have dried up for the ginger prince, but hardly surprising as he drops off deeper. Always makes himself available to receive the ball in the middle, and play others in. Deserves best supporting role for playing Nicky Butt to Nicky Butt's Keano. (If that doesn't make sense, write in and I'll fax you an explanation)

David Beckham

Becky turning Spice abuse into goals is anger management at it's most potent and productive. Makes you wonder what Dalglish said about Ketsbaia's old lady dunnit.

The crafty cockney free kick routine, with a helping hand from partner in crime Sheringham, unlike previous curlers and benders, was straight and to the point; yes variety is the spice of life.

Teddy Sheringham

Not everybody's cup of tea, but his partnership with Andy Cole is going from strength to strength. His vision and unselfish play have helped Cole and likewise the whole team. Teddy is also keeping up his own scoring with a respectable tally for the season to date. This puts him on a par with Alan Brazil's career total at United, so those who moan about him all the time should take a closer look. Mind you, I take your point about the penalties.

Oh Andy Cole, Andy Andy Andy Cole.

I'm sick of this bastard. I've made an art form out of defending him through thick and thin

and look what happens. He goes and scores 28 goals in about 7 games, completely annihilating his critics, and leaving me to find some other lost cause to champion.

Jordi Cruyff.

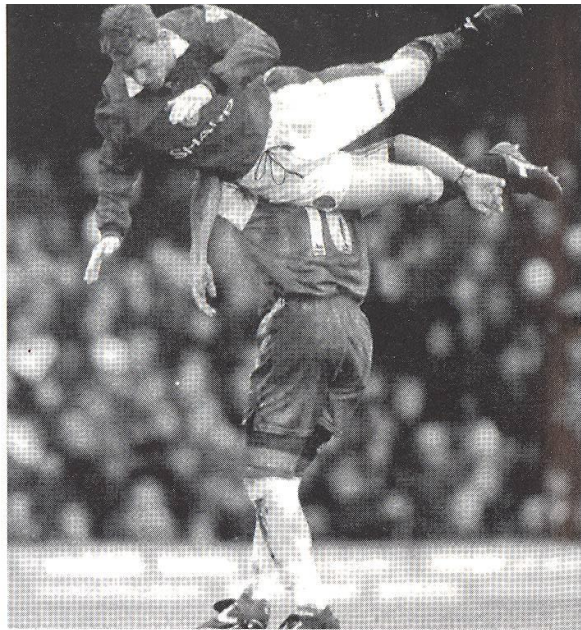
Found one. The biggest problem I have with Cruyff is remembering whether the y comes before or after the u when spelling his name. The biggest problem that Cruyff has got, apart from being injury prone, anaemic, living in the shadow of his famous father, unsure whether he's Dutch or Spanish, and reminding me of a girl I once knew called Shirley Floyd, is that he can no longer have 'what are we doing here' chats with Poborsky. Does anyone think lightning could strike twice?

Ryan Giggs

With each passing game, the evidence mounts to support the case for this being Giggs' best ever season. Tackling back, headers in both boxes, dribbling, crossing, scoring, and a lot less disappearing when things are not to his liking. Has learned to roll up his sleeves. It's amazing what they teach them at United nowadays!

Ole Gunnar Solskjaer

Having to play second fiddle to Cole and Sheringham, following his return from injury. Has struggled to deliver the electrifying form of last season, but what a player to have on the bench. It's early days, and he would benefit from a run of games to clear the cobwebs. But with Cole the way he is at the moment.....



SAD PRICK IN A SUIT

A short story

I'm Yorkshire through and through, nine years in the army and proud of it. Struggled a bit when I left, what with no-one to tell me what to do. Can't think for myself but I can obey orders. Not very bright but I can lift heavy objects.

Anyway got a job with this private security firm called SPS. Good types they were, like myself, who can handle themselves a bit. Started at the cricket in the summer. We were itching to get into them. No problem, they were all pissed by the time we steamed in. A load of them got nicked, just proves they were up to no good.

Next job was security at Old Trafford. Fuckin hate Man U, so this should be a lark. Great stuff, Kelly gave us the off and we were dragging them out left, right and centre. All trouble-causers we were told. There I was, Man U hater, getting paid to fling their fans out of the ground, with the blessing of the top brass to boot.

Gave them loads of verbal every chance I got. Brilliant. They didn't have the balls for it. Red Army my arse. They were more interested in the football. So we kept winding them up some more.

After the first game, the bosses got a bollocking because it was

all over the papers. No-one told us they had to be standing up before we threw them out. It's all to do with safety you see.

As the games went by, the fans got more and more uptight so we gave them more grief. It was my job to put the netting over their seats after they'd been banned, should've seen their faces when they tried to get to their seats. Ticked me, I can tell you.

We were told to put our foot down against Everton, but they started getting bolshy and shouting about their rights. We dragged a few out but it was getting hostile out there. They didn't seem interested in the football, and there was a few new faces in my section. One of them said he was going to pull my windpipe out and spit in the hole. Another said he was going to pull my arm off and belt me with the soggy end.

I went and stood with the other lads, Ned was there, everything was okay again. We were in control. We had back-up from the boys in blue.

Then someone walked past who knew me, he used to live on our estate years ago. I never liked the bastard, went to college, probably a social worker. Never thought much about it at the time, just told the twat to sit down with the rest of the wankers. He gave me a knowing look, and walked off with a smirk on his face.

Next game, we had been stood down, too many complaints and the papers were kicking up about it. One of the lads showed me one of these fanzines they sell outside the ground. It had a thing in about naming and shaming the thugs and underneath was my name and address right down to the post code. I didn't know they could do that.

It started with phone calls, giving me and the missus loads of shit down the phone. Day and bloody night, every bloody

Gave them loads of verbal every chance I got. Brilliant. They didn't have the balls for it. Red Army my arse. They were more interested in the football. So we kept winding them up some more.

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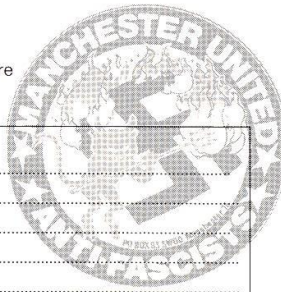
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RED ATTITUDE

night. Different people every time. Half of Manchester was ringing up. Then I started getting taxis turn up at the house followed by pizzas and then every other kind of delivery you can think of. If I could've got me hands on them, I tell you. Any road, three days after that, I went down to sign on as usual, and I got called into a side room.

My missus went spacca when I told her and said that if I didn't sort it out, she was back to her mothers

They said they'd received information that I had been working on the side. At first I denied it, but they said they would be stopping my benefit while they made enquiries. My missus went spacca when I told her and said that if I didn't sort it out, she was back to her mothers. That night the bastards poured brake fluid over my car and slashed my tyres. Things were getting out of hand. What had I ever done to them? All I was doing was my job.

I spoke to the boss and told him the score, and said he'd have to take me on full time as my social had been stopped. He said he'd let me know after the game.

Went to get me money and he pulled me to one side, told me that my services were no longer required, said there had been a number of complaints from the punters and that I was giving the SPS a bad name. But I was only carrying out orders I pleaded. Besides he said, the social are on your case and it could come on top for him for doing me a favour in the first place. I could see his point.

I was pissed off to say the least, but there was worse to come. I got home to see the fire brigade packing up their hoses. A copper came over and told me he thinks it was attempted burglary and arson. What do you mean you think. It seems, he said, "that someone has forcibly entered your house, removed all your furniture to the back garden and set it alight."

Where would it all end? I walked back inside and there was two letters in the kitchen. The first was from the missus telling me she'd left me as I was a good for nothing bully, and that I'm shit in bed. How can she tell after two minutes I thought to myself.

I opened the other letter and it said; 'Now you know what it feels like to lose your seats. Stand up you piece of shit. Greetings from K stand and East Lower. Reds are here, Reds are there, Reds are every fucking where.'

I'd had enough, why can't they just leave me alone?

Had to stay in a bed and breakfast as none of me mates would put me up. Said someone might put their windows in or something daft. Got a letter from the social saying I had to go to Manchester about this benefit enquiry. Turned up, and they knew everything, times, dates, what I was paid. Bang to rights as they say. Working whilst in receipt of benefit. Pleaded guilty and they said they'd let me know if I had to go to court or not.

It was a relief to get out of their office, felt like interrogation, I needed some fresh air. Stopped on the corner near Albert Square for a smoke right by the bus stop. Never heard

Two of them held me up, and the third one said sarcastically, 'where's your season ticket', before he butted the face off me.

a thing, three of them on me before I realised it. They twisted my arms up my back, while another one dragged me along by the hair and bounced my head off the wall. Two of them held me up, and the third one said sarcastically,

'where's your season ticket', before he butted the face off me.

I came round in the MRI. If I had any sense I'd have come round months ago. Didn't think it would end up like this.

HARRY'S VIEW

Hail Hail!

"Jingle bells, jingle bells, jingle all the way, Oh what fun it is to beat the Huns on New Years Day."

What a weekend! I hope everyone watched us demolish the Sons of Satan on Sky TV on 2nd of January and then sat back and laughed at Gazza spewing sectarian bile by playing his imaginary flute. Suspend him? Fine him? No way! This crackpot is value for money. Where else can you see a football match and get a clown thrown in as entertainment? Off the park, former Huns striker, Bo Anderson has alleged that Gazza pissed on him when he was at Ibrox. The Man Utd boys better wear waterproofs in France.

I was still laughing when (according to the pundits) Chelsea trooped onto the pitch to give United a good seeing to. Dream on all you ill-informed masters of technology. It was five going on ten before United fell asleep and lost three silly goals. Is this the title challengers I ask you?

Andy Cole gets better and better every time I see him play as I firmly believe his goals will win the European Cup this season. I must give credit where credit's due. Confirmed Hun, Bobby Maxwell has been saying this about Andy Cole all season.

Paul Scholes, even at this stage of the season, must be a contender for player of the year. He has been immense and leaves me saying, Eric who? Gazza must be shaking in his boots with young Scholesy breathing down his neck and turning in quality performances every week, and for England also.

I've read that Adolf Roberts and his storm troopers have kept up the campaign against the fans who stand up during matches. I don't

understand why the board allow this thug to continue to harass United fans. Anyway I won't waste ink on iffy ex-coppers, who have previous for being economical with the truth!

Racism has reared its ugly head again in Scotland, with the Huns fans barracking Regi Blinker. Similar incidents have been reported concerning fans from Airdrie, Thistle and Motherwell. Religious bigotry was highlighted when a Rangers fan screamed "ya fenian bastard" at Porrini who happens to be one of his own players and missed a chance to score. Because porrini is Italian the moron obviously assumed he was a Catholic.

Jamsy Trotter, a local Combat 18 thug has recently been assessed by the Scottish Prison Service for a place in Carstairs, the State mental hospital. He was found wandering about in a deranged state singing "I love to see the lassies with their blue skirts on." The mind boggles.

John Motson. What a wanker! So John it seems you have difficulty telling coloured players apart. Do you mean like Emerson and Cole? Surely John, they wear different tops when they oppose each other. Oh, you mean Villa players John? Yorke and Collymore is a difficult one mind you. Let me help you there, Collymore is the big wanker, who only scores with Ulrika.

All the best in 1998 to all Man United and Celtic fans and to everyone at Red Attitude.

Glory, Glory

Harry Conaghan

P.S. A big thank you to Alan Green (great name), Radio 5 football 'expert' and commentator. "Liverpool to win the cup and Chelsea to beat United" Great tipping Alan, keep it up! You don't half talk some shite!

Fulham fans welcome Mohamed Al Fayed to Craven Cottage



UP until now the arguments over safety and standing have manifested themselves in the ugly confrontations between fans and the SPS. With the SPS temporarily stood down, the time is ripe for United fans to broaden out the issues, address the causes rather than the symptoms, and change the arena of conflict.

In essence the club sits behind Council safety edicts to explain its course of action, and whilst the fans have no direct leverage on the club, as the club is accountable to shareholders and not fans, this is not the case with the council.

The council are accountable to the electorate at the ballot box. Elections are held in May when roughly one third of seats will be up for re-election.

There are growing concerns over the council's involvement with threats to close down sections of the ground, and an acute lack of information on existing agreements between club and council. Equally there are concerns that the legitimate interests of the fans have been left out of the equation

If the council put pressure on the club who then put pressure on the fans, then we need to explore avenues of exerting pressure on the council. If our concerns are not addressed through the elected representatives, we have the opportunity to vote for an alternative party. If the main parties hold similar positions, then standing our own candidates to promote our demands is the only viable alternative. IMUSA are currently giving consideration to such a step. We are being repeatedly told by the Mellors, Blairs and Banks that issues such as safe terracing are not even on the agenda. They will be, but only if we put them there.

So what is the aim and what is the benefit in such a course of action? The aim is simple. To make a difference to the established political order and put issues such as safe terracing back on the political agenda. A maverick single issue campaign with the potential for broad support, impacting on local government will force many to sit up and take notice.

Winning, at this stage, isn't critical, but making a difference is. Local government elections, historically, have low turnouts, with candidates being elected with majorities barely reaching their hundreds in most cases.

The ability of a single issue campaign to take votes away from the established parties and at the same time mobilise its own voter support will put slender majorities under severe pressure. In effect, although unlikely to win, you can damage or even dislodge key political figures, and it is very much within the range of possibilities to affect the balance of power in the Town Hall. Any councillor unwilling to listen to United fans now, would effectively run the risk of being challenged by IMUSA standing against him and his party in May.

If you add to this the disillusionment with Labour that exists in working class areas, after only seven months in government, you will see that Labour run Trafford Council

have very little to be complacent about. Facing a challenge from IMUSA on the ground, Labour would struggle to compete. Labour has given up door to door canvassing in working class areas, preferring instead to rely on media sound bites from high profile politicians and glib propaganda to get their message across. Added to their 'Tory in disguise' policies, I doubt if they would be exactly welcome anyway. Challenging Labour in working class areas will pay big dividends, and Labour know it. May could prove to be 'a very merry month' indeed.

Red Attitude spoke to Charlton Athletic fans who when faced with inertia from the council over their move back to the Valley, formed the Valley party. Likewise, Highbury residents, angry at not being consulted by the council over plans to extend Highbury football ground are taking a similar course of action. (See next articles)

So what is the aim and what is the benefit in such a course of action? The aim is simple. To make a difference to the established political order and put issues such as safe terracing back on the political agenda.

WHEN Charlton Athletic fans formed the Valley Party to fight the local elections of 1990 the Anti-Poll Tax Campaign was at its height. The local Labour Party with its eye on a forthcoming General Election were not in the slightest bit concerned about the interests of football supporters. As far as they were concerned the issue was a minor one, football supporters were an irrelevant constituency and nobody in the borough would take them seriously.

After the local elections of May 3rd 1990 those same politicians thought differently. They had openly derided the Valley Party right up until polling day, but when the counting was over it was the mainstream politicians that were having to regroup. The Valley Party had clocked a massive 14,838 votes and the Labour Party's Chair of Planning, Simon Oleman had lost his seat.

If the local politicians had taken a greater interest in their own working class constituency instead of being consumed by their own careers and the machinations of other, equally self-indulgent politicians they would have foreseen their own disaster. Football is a major part of the fabric of working class culture yet because these self-opinionated people had locked themselves away with their academic friends they did not believe that football fans could be self-organised and efficient. When the warnings were being given they believed it was bluff. The truth of the matter is they were lucky. The Valley Party, with its deeper understanding of the working class, could have ended up running the council if they had added to their 'Back to the Valley' slogan the rider 'and no Poll Tax.'

The story started in 1985 when another bunch of businessmen, who were running Charlton Athletic thought they could just up-roots and move the club round the south circular to Crystal Palace's Selhurst Park ground. Effective by boycotting of 'home' games and an imaginative campaign, run through the fanzine Voice of the Valley kept the issue in front of the local media, the club and the council. Finally the club were forced to look at a return.

By that time the local council had decided that they were not going to give planning permission. With

no real roots in the community their decision was based on nothing more than a vague idea that the return of the club might be unpopular with those living round the ground. They believed that such a move would be controversial and in true Labour Party style they did not want any controversy. Never mind the wishes of the community all they wanted is to keep things quite and ensure they could hold office.

The Valley Party was eventually set up as a single issue organisation. With no understanding of what was going on, the local Labour Party accused the organisation of being a Tory front aimed at splitting the Labour vote. In fact the titular head of the Valley

Party and the main driving force behind it were both card carrying Labour members who simply knew more about local politics than the 'politicians.'

Getting as many people involved in the campaign as possible the Valley Party could tap into the imagination and energy of the real working class of the area: a poster campaign was devised with such logos as "Let's send the council to Croydon and see how they like it" and "Sam Bartram can't save Charlton this time. But you can," this accompanying a photo of the famous keeper in action. Local papers were kept informed of the situation and links were established with both sports and news editors. For the raising of both funds and profile Charlton supporters enlisted the help of celebrities to do fund-raising gigs.

In this way people like Frankie Howard and Cheryl Baker got involved.

The big lesson to be learnt from Charlton's battle to return to the Valley is the power of the fans. Football authorities and local politicians have always seen football fans as an amorphous mass with no real identity and no way of expressing their desires. At Charlton we proved them wrong. Football is an important part of working class culture and it is worth fighting for. Scrapping with other football fans is a pointless exercise. The real enemy are those that bleed us dry and think they can run the game by taking our money and ignoring us. We are the majority, we have the spending power, we can make the most noise and we are of the people. Manchester United fans, STAND UP.

Dan Todd

The Valley Party had clocked a massive 14,838 votes and the Labour Party's Chair of Planning, Simon Oleman had lost his seat

Residents' poll threat to 27-year town hall reign

LABOUR councillors face the red card over their backing for Arsenal's controversial expansion plans.

Furious Highbury residents, worried that their homes are at risk, are threatening to field their own candidates in May's municipal elections. The move could end 27 years of Labour rule at the town hall.

Although the residents - members of the Highbury Community Association - are not expected to win any wards, their intervention could result in Labour losing seats to the Liberal Democrats.

With all parties predicting a close finish on May 7, the "Highbury factor" might tip the balance between a Labour council and a hung council.

Alison Carmichael, publicity officer for the Highbury Community Association, said: "A lot of people, including long-standing members of the Labour Party, are angry that council leader Derek Sawyer is determined that Arsenal should be given whatever it wants, in spite of residents' concerns."

"It is a definitely an election issue and there is a feeling we have to make a stand."

Councillor Sawyer played a key role in the decision of the council's development sub-committee on December 11 to approve a planning brief for Arsenal's plans to increase the capacity of Highbury Stadium from 38,000 to 50,000. The sub-committee was split four-four on the issue. The Labour chairman, Councillor Neil Mercer, then gave his casting vote in favour. 'The association believes that if Councillor Sawyer who became a member of the sub-committee a few weeks before the crucial vote, had not been present the planning brief would have been rejected decisively. Councillor Sawyer said: "The council has not taken a Final decision. All we have approved is an outline planning brief. We have taken into account the views of residents as well as those of the wider community"

Important Notice

Football Task Force

Manchester Town Hall

5th February '98, 7pm

Take the opportunity to make your views heard on the state of the game.

All Welcome

SECURITY ALERT



Shamed cop

I don't care who she is... If she gets 'em up singing again, she's out!



PEACE IN OUR TIME

Or... Does this mean everyone gets back in now?

SPS may have gone, for now, but it is still far too early to say if it is all over. Certainly there has been a sea change at the club, and with luck there will be constructive dialogue instead of insults. After all, when the club describe the paddock as 'full of troublemakers we don't need', you don't hold out much hope for your season ticket renewal.

The talks process (hey, sounds like Northern Ireland) is all good, but the first thing the club must do is return every season ticket, and remove all green netting. If this is not done within two games, 135 Action will reconsider its position on the peace process. After all, we cannot forget overnight just exactly how the board have behaved on this issue. We need guarantees concerning tickets and their future conduct. Nevertheless, we must widen the debate to include those bodies who have the power to influence the law, such as the FLA, the task force, and so on. Getting embroiled in a 'them and us' scrap with the board is not constructive. If the talks are a sham, there will be hell to pay. If they are not, then the influence of the club can be brought to bear on the wider world. Could you hope for a more powerful ally?

This wasn't about anything except the right of the fan to support the shirt properly. It's turned over a big stone and found all sorts of slimy bugs underneath. Why were people consistently misinformed as to the law? Why did it take fans groups to point out what would be common sense anyway? Why are the powers that be in football and government so opposed to terracing? Because of the control factor The Taylor report highlights the maxim 'a controlled crowd is a safe crowd.' They have never listened to the fans on any issues, they do not care about our wishes, or needs or our concerns. They have only seized upon the tragedy at Hillsborough to place chains on the soul of the game. The entire final conclusions of the Taylor report are listed in a book from 1982 as ways to 'pacify' football. Hopefully this will all blow up at the Football Task Force meeting on the 5th February. (Town Hall, be there to voice your concerns.)

With the withdrawal of SPS, 135 Action can be well satisfied. What was done was done for the fans, and not for the personal glory of anyone. We will

Some said
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if people
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That's something
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all still be around if they decide to come back again,) our original statement still stands. The club should back us, its loyal supporters. If they would pay only a little attention, we could all work together to create a better atmosphere. Everyone would then love them, instead of thinking they're a bunch of shortsighted greedy (insert expletive of your choice). Its shown yet again that people can stand up to what, on the surface, is overwhelming force. All that is required is will, passion, and a persistence to gain the knowledge that will bring success. Everyone involved with 135 risked their season tickets distributing leaflets, carrying out other activities and just plain standing firm when the heat was on. They did so willingly not just for themselves, but for others too, because how it was, was an insult to the shirt. Some said nothing would change, but things only remain the way they are if people accept them. That's something everyone could do with thinking about.

So it is with guarded optimism we go on, trying to find that balance in the paddock, watching to see if the club are serious in their negotiations with IMUSA. All that green netting is insulting to your eyes though, and a serious fire hazard I shouldn't wonder. Some of us are disappointed we didn't get to use the photographs, but there will no doubt be another day. Hopefully the misrepresentation of the law in 'Fergie's' programme notes will be rectified as well, because it has never been illegal, unlawful or any of that to stand. There are questions over the safety license, but that is a very grey area, and one that we are going to deal with (more details later).

This is not the beginning of the end, it is only the end of the beginning. Classic Churchill, but true in our case. Diplomacy is war by other means, and we must wage it effectively. We are fighting for the soul of the game. It's not a fight we can afford to lose. Peace to all who helped out.

135 Action.

UNITED NATIONS OF FOOTBALL

He was a working class boy from
Camberley,

Did well at school and went to
University,

To study for a lucrative career
As a mechanical engineer;

He travelled down the M4 corridor,
Researching west of Heathrow's
engine - roar,

Researching what he liked researching
best

Looking at steel and all its consequent
stress

When it explodes right on requisite
time

Through a foot disturbing subter-
anean mine;

But he met this girl, cultured, middle-
class and nice

Who showed him theatre, books,
cinema and twice-

Weekly tantric sex - but what he liked
doing best,

Better than all the recreational rest,
Was playing football in the Sunday
League,

He played mid-field for the I.T. team,
Then had a few pints and then would
try

To watch the football match on Sky,
But on this special day March the
21st,

Nigel's shot made the football burst -
"I missed a sitter in the 1st half, Lucy,
I wanted the ground to open up and
swallow me,

But when I scored, I hit it like a
rocket,

It nearly took the goalie's fingers out
their socket,

It literally exploded into the net,
I held my arm aloft to celebrate"

She lives in a corrugated shanty shack
in Angola,

Never went to school, it was
destroyed by U.N.I.T.A,

So she hoes the ground and cuts the
weeds from the desiccated soil

And plants the seeds and nurtures the
leaves in unremitting toil

In a frantic bid to feed those
increasing hungry mouths -

And so the village took on extra
ground,

Another field to feed the hungry
throng

Who watched and waited as she went
along,

Hoeing and weeding and slaking
foliage thirst

Until that eventful March the 21st,
When Nigel celebrated his most
important goal

While she scoured the crop-field
surface with a trowel

And touched his steel case landmine
band

Which blew off her arm and her right
hand

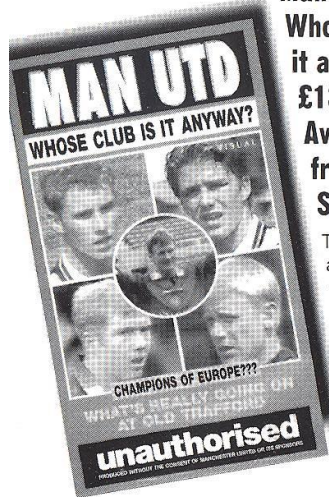
Nigel had a few more pints and an
alcoholic rest

Then went to work on Monday to test
Steel and all its consequential stress,

Dreaming of the ball as it hit the net,
But, in Angola, she'd have been better
off if dead

Stroud Football Poet

REVIEWS



Man Utd.
Whose club is it anyway?
£13.99
Available from Sportspages.

This one isn't available through the megastore, and if you feel the need to ask why not, then this video would go a good way towards enlightening you.

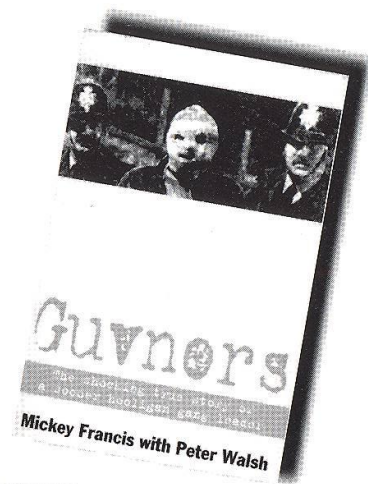
By far the most interesting and controversial United video of the year; made by United fans for United fans, outspokenly critical of the PLC, Edwards and his pursuit of wealth, it addresses many of the issues which have led to concern and disquiet amongst the United faithful in this, their most successful period since the sixties.

My only criticism of this video however, was the unexpected shock of being confronted by the ugliness of one Alan Green. His looks are similar to his football analysis - distorted! Up until now it had only been my misfortune to hear him, not realising what a benefit in disguise that was. In an instant you understand the necessity for screen tests on TV; to filter out the little Green monsters! It's the kind of face that gets you banned from going near school playgrounds and guarantees an automatic place on the sex offenders register.

On the plus side, there are interviews and discussions with Reds from the fanzines, mulling over the departure of Eric; hopes for

European success, along with contributions from Michael Crick and Jim White. A well written documentary from the pen of Richard Kurt, with running commentary by Boyle disproving the myth that his speech is permanently slurred!

If you didn't get this for Christmas, consider yourself deprived. Buy this one before New Labour cut your benefits to 'realistic' levels, and take all the slack out.



Guvners
by Mickey Francis
with Peter Walsh. Priced £6.99

This book charts the rise of some of City's hoolie firms, from the Cool Cats in the mid seventies, through the Mayne Line days to the eventual demise of the Guvners in one of the few police hooligan entrapment trials that met with some success. Although written by Mickey Francis, it also covers the career of brother Donald and their formative years in the Cool Cats.

Very much a book in the vein of 1980's organised football hooliganism, told in the style of the bar room raconteur. A bit loose on detail and vague in places, it's a story told as best remembered. Authentic and honest but lacking any explanation and analysis. As Mickey points out, 'this is not a sociological analysis...' This book is an attempt to tell people what happened.'

The emergence of the mainly black Cool Cats was not welcomed by City's main boys, whose leaders

REVIEWS

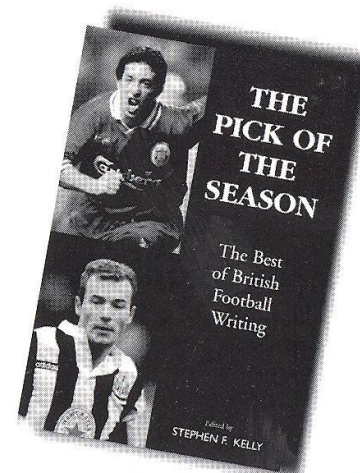
The Pick of the Season
The best of British
Football Writing
Edited by Stephen Kelly
Priced £9.99

As the title says this is a collection of football writing culled from fanzines, newspapers and magazines over the 1996-97 season.

With contributions from Red Attitude (plug plug), Red Issue, and such luminaries as Jim White, it makes for an interestingly diverse review of the season, with chapters on the fans, the managers, players, great games of the season and also the business side of football.

Stephen Kelly must have trawled through a veritable barrel of shit to come up with many of the gems that made it into print, but I can't think of an easier way of filling a 300 page book. It's one of those books you can pick up and put down at leisure, open at any page in the book, read a few lines to get the gist of the piece, hook into the theme, and then you're thumbing back to the start of the piece.

Definitely one for the reading shelf in the little room with the cold seat, or if you are bored shitless at the thought of one of those bus, plane and train journeys to foreign lands. At ten pounds, though, this book pays its way.



at the time were heavily involved in National Front politics in Manchester. However after initial confrontation, each kept to their own territory. Donald refers to there being a certain amount of mutual respect between them. Mickey says, "Over the years, they jumped a few of our boys and we jumped a few of theirs but really we were all there for City"

You don't know whether to laugh or cry when you read shite like that. It was during this period in the late seventies and early eighties, that the National Front was at its most active. Their agenda went well beyond supporting City and football hooliganism. Fortunately there were others, including some of the Cool Cats who weren't compromised by such loyalty to City. It's worth remembering that Manchester NF, including 'top City lad Scotty' and his City firm, were ran out of the centre of Manchester by an anti-fascist outfit known as the Squad. I wonder when their book is due out.

The story continues following City's journey in and out of the first division, with all the action seemingly off the pitch. There's a chapter on United as well as the scousers, Leeds and the Cockneys, covering all the essential ports of call for the seriously committed student of hooligan travelogue.

There is no attempt to play up or play down the events he describes, and no evidence of embellishment, in fact if anything a lot has been left out. A working class bloke, growing up in the shadow of Maine Rd, a lifetime of hooliganism, goes inside comes out a wiser changed man, sets up in business, writes a book on his experiences. Yes you could say that, but you may also say this. From coming through the Cool Cats, to being a main man in his own right, he was happy to co-exist alongside City's NF mob, fully aware of their 'paki bashing exploits' at away games. In fact some of Mickey's war stories show how keen he was to do battle with black fans of other clubs. As if to prove to some cynical observers that their loyalty is to City and not to any perceived black agenda, leaving the cynical observers unchallenged to promote a fascist and loyalist agenda. Add to this Mickey's account of prison life, where he acts as an enforcer for the screws, slapping fellow prisoners in the cause of good order. More a case of working for the gunvor than being a gunvor.

As one City fanzine put it, "At 194 pages, Guvners is an overlong book inside which there's a fascinating magazine article trying to get out." That's about the size of it.



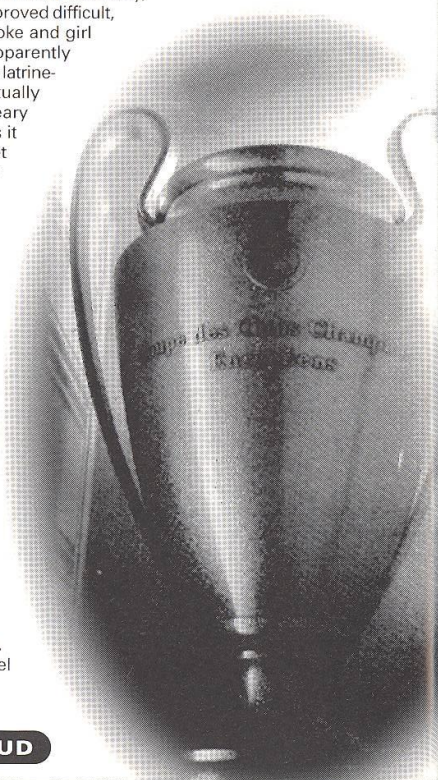
Our trip to Turin began at four in the morning at a Fallowfield bus stop on a wet and windy Wednesday, polishing off the left over drink from the previous Saturdays' Liverpool drubbing. No wonder the bus driver didn't look keen. This was followed by an unsuccessful jib from Piccadilly to Chèz Swampy; being the only ones on the train leaves limited room for manoeuvre, it's not as if the hector can get anyone else's ticket while you look for yours or move down the train a bit and get off the next stop. At some stage later in the day it seemed funny that we'd done Planes, Trains and Automobiles in reverse order; to appreciate this you'll probably need an extended drinking session and guaranteed qualification for the next stage of the Champions League. The only thing worth remarking on the flight was the in-flight meal, which was to all intents and purposes a cheese butty. Cheers.

Oh, and also, as we were going with Miss Ellies, there were a few stewards/SPS on the trip, two of whom were at our hotel and seemed like decent lads; perhaps it's the yellow jacket that turns them into tossers. The hotel was very thoughtful; their breakfast included a respectable and welcome amount of cake; they offered to keep the bar open for as long as necessary for when we arrived back from the match and they had no end of free stuff in the rooms as well, or at least that's how it seemed...

Rather than follow the Miss Ellies itinerary, 'arrive at ground three hours early. Go straight in. Sober up. Be bored shitless,' we opted to find our own way, first stage being finding the Central (What a) station. This proved difficult, but not as difficult as finding a loo! Word of advice; bloke and girl next to each other in classic 'toilets this way' sign style apparently means 'walk this way to find a snotty museum down some latrine-esque stairs' - how were we to know! When we eventually found a toilet and emptied our (by this stage) weary bladders, it was not your usual British toilet; for starters it had an attendant who you were supposed to pay a set amount to when you'd finished; also, it appears that it's OK for street-theatre performers to change into their papier-mâché costumes behind you, causing some surprise when you turn round; just as well we were in a toilet really.

Conscientiously deciding to get a tram ticket for the journey, we then needed somewhere to buy one from; turns out you get them from the newsagents. Dead logical that, it's often as I've wondered past Aleef's and thought, hey, wish I could get ticket to Prestwich in there. The trams were a right state, rickety old wooden things with graffiti all over the place; more that made up for by the helpfulness and friendliness of other passengers who knew a 'bloody hell, where do we go now' look when they saw it.

The train to Turin was the second failed jib of the journey; however, if all the effort you're going to put in, is finding an empty compartment and remain there to continue on the duty free, then the chances of not paying are remote. It was pretty cheap anyway, and despite the hector speaking less English than I do Italian, he was dead friendly. The length of the journey was somewhat unexpected; two hours or so, more Manchester to London, than Manchester to Liverpool. Which leads me to the point, 'do not arrange your travel by 'what it looks like on Gazzetta'!



We eventually arrived in Turin, which has a nice main square near the station, but is not a patch on Milan. Near enough everywhere was closed between four o'clock and seven. (ie when you really want something to eat) apparently it was siesta time. Two of the very few places that were open differed greatly; the first was a bar in which Dave bought a toastie and a round (four beers) for about £20 or 7 million Lira; the second was a pizza place run by an Egyptian Inter fan where I managed to have two big slices of pizza, a big potato cake and two bottles of peroni - dead good beer - for roughly a fiver.

This place was really sound; the Egyptian bloke was really friendly, enthused over Ronaldo, let us pay when we felt like it, and even ordered us a taxi to the ground. I felt it was stretching the limits of hospitality to ask to borrow his staff toilet as well, so off a couple of us went to find somewhere before the taxi came. Nowhere obvious; it's not very classy to find a back alley, but sod it, needs must. Only this back alley turned into a main thoroughfare mid-stream; not wanting to put across the message 'we come to your country and piss on it', I exercised my PCC's (as the men's magazines would have it) and hurriedly made my exit - unfortunately not having 'adjusted my dress' completely.

The taxi driver was not in the slightest intimidated by our songs on the way to the Delle Alpi, instead joining in as and where he could. A Fiorentina fan - which gave us another chance to practice standard conversation, "Fiorentina? Ohh, Batistuta yes? Great!" Replace Fiorentina with Inter, Milan or Juve, replace Batistuta with Ronaldo, Weah or Del Piero, works every time. He decided to impress us by opening his window, declaring his devotion to Fiorentina, v-signing the hordes of Juve fans. Funny but daft.

We got dropped off at the Juve end, not that

that made much difference - the stadium looks shit hot from any angle, it looks as if it's hung from loads of concrete supports, like an upturned spider. And it was surrounded by coaches - Juve coaches - where do their fans come from?

On the way round to our end, having purchased a variety of memorabilia, including a Juventus scarf (worn round the neck as it was proper cold by now), we had to pass through a police cordon, presumably designed to stop fans mingling, although at first sight they seemed to be letting anyone through. Three of our group of four strolled through; the fourth (me) attempted to follow only to be stopped by a couple of batons crossed in my face and a few words from the two large carabinieri holding the batons. My knowledge of Italian, beyond *mama mia, bella* and names of food, is learnt from Gazette on Channel 4 - *riga, attaccante, centro-campista, difensore, capocannonieri, scudetto: penalty, attaccante, central midfielder, defender, top scorer, league title.*

The obvious thing to say was 'Manchester', only the Italians say 'Manchestre', and I thought when in Rome etc, 'Manchestre'. Carabinieri not convinced, so I resorted to my own form of Esperanto, "for fuck's sake", response "ah, Inglese", laugh, let me through, time for some chronic piss to be ripped.

The ground is, I think, brilliant. From the outside it's incredible; the inside is not that luxurious. As Choccy says, "these foreign stadia often appear magnificent from the outside but on closer inspection they have some pretty basic features." I like that, though, it leaves you in no doubt that it's not a corporate entertainment

Three of our group of four strolled through; the fourth (me) attempted to follow only to be stopped by a couple of batons crossed in my face and a few words from the two large carabinieri holding the batons... I resorted to my own form of Esperanto, "for fuck's sake", response "ah, Inglese", laugh, let me through, time for some chronic piss to be ripped.

Doumo shopping arches make the Arndale look like a public toilet

facility but a football ground, pure and simple; big fences for segregation, concrete blocks, and it's bloody huge. Also featuring two giant screens, a step up from OT's 'what's on the board Miss Ford' scoreboard effort.

I was a bit gutted that it wasn't 100% full, but the Juve fans were noisy bastards anyway, especially when doing their 'oye oye' bit and bouncing up and down a lot. Some of their banner writers had obviously learnt English to the extent of 'God kill the Queen', and the simpler 'Fuck off'. To be honest they seemed a lot more up for it than we were, but I suppose that's only to be expected given the team's situations before the game. My own mood was not helped by the sight of Poborsky on, Cole off, great tactics or what!

The game? Same result as last year, different performance? I thought we got shat on, but looked determined and confident we could hold on then hit on the break. I suppose the game was always going to be like that; if Giggs and that nutbar Monterro are going for a fifty fifty tackle, chances the one thinking 'got to win this game' and not 'hope I don't get injured and miss the quarter final' is going to win it. Schmeichel was again superb and held out for 87 minutes. By that time we could have won it. Solskjaer had a half chance early on, Cole later. All he had to do, with virtually his first touch, was to latch onto a hopeful punt upfield, get clear of the last defender who was trying to get a piggy-back off him, skin the keeper who tried to take his legs and put it in from an acute angle. Yeah, useless c**t, as some people thought it wise to remark afterwards. A real world class player would have scored that, just like Inzaghi or Fonseca or Zidane scored every chance they got instead of hitting it wide/hitting the post/letting Schmeichel block it again.

Got held in for 45 minutes or so after; United in good spirit despite the result, plenty of songs, a few obvious and not that funny comments about the war. No trouble either with Juve or the police, apart from a few missiles and a bit of posturing - one Juve boy dressed (over dressed) mainly in Stone Island kept wandering up to the fence, making the 'outside' signals and muttering about the ICJ.

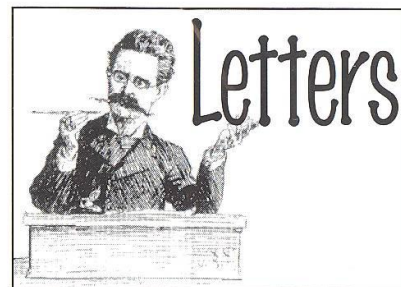
The police were relatively calm and friendly, the SPS who had come along 'for your safety and protection' accomplished that by watching the police cordon from the other side and doing jack-shit. Free holidays all round.

The journey back to Milan, would take, Bert the travel guide told us, "45 Italian minutes". Unfortunately it took about 2 or 3 English hours, so we arrived at our not exactly central Milan hotel at gone 2, having missed the famed Milan nightlife. We made up for it the next day by wandering round the city centre; the Doumo shopping arches make the Arndale look like a public toilet, and Il Doumo, the cathedral, is the most amazing thing I've seen, inside and outside; "Jesus Christ!" exclamations are somewhat ill-advised. The people of Milan are class; friendly and well dressed. Of course this led to the realisation that the Armani shop was around somewhere, and the sight of two of us pegging it round the placid city centre trying to find it, with only three minutes left before the bus left for Malpensa airport, is not one I'll forget. In short, you can see why a lot of players sign for the Milan clubs; we are driven past the mental San Siro; if someone says 50 grand a week and drops you off in Milan centre to think about it, what are you going to do?

...if someone says fifty grand a week and drops you off in Milan centre to think about it, what are you going to do?

The airport provided its own entertainment, mostly in the form of Paraffin Pete's unforgettable Pernod exploits. I'm sure I had my own private security guard following me around. I think I lost him when we realised we hadn't got the right boarding passes and had to go all the way back to check-in again. The flight home was not uneventful, SPS/fan congratulations, stories of sexual harassment of the stewardesses, a hold up at Manchester while a particularly unpopular arrest was made. I can't go into detail as I hadn't really got a clue what was going on.

A final thought; wandering round Milan, glum faces, a million 'if only' comments, cheered up slightly by Burberry's style scarves for a fiver. What do we see? A leper, a real Ben Hur job; whole body swathed in black, bent double, clawlike arms hardly able to hold her walking sticks, and worst of all towel wrapped stubs for feet. And there's us fannying about in a foreign city (again), pissed off cos even though we're through to the Champions League quarters, we've lost 1-0. Away. To one of the best teams in the world. And all she's got is all the change me and Tony could find. Makes you think, eh?



Dear Red Attitude

Now that the Andy Cole debate has disappeared into the back of the Feyenoord/Chelsea/Newcastle net, it is worth considering what might have been.

Fergie was trying to prise Collymore away from Forest when Keegan took the bait and sold Andy Cole. The list of bad strikers bought from Forest would have gained one more unwanted addition. Thankfully, Roy Evans was of the mind that if he's good enough for United, then he's good enough for me! Collymore flopped at Liverpool big style, who surprised me when they got their money back in full from Villa.

His partnership with Savo Milosevic would make Barnsley's defence look watertight. Yet he's managed to get in the England squad ahead of Cole. Maybe Hoddle's not so bright.

The only saving grace for Collymore, and more importantly for us, is that he didn't sign for United. Imagine the shit he would have had. He's flopped at £8 million twice, and hasn't had a tenth of the shit that Coley got. And as for Salas, anyone seen him play? Happy of Altrincham

LETS ALL LAUGH AT RANGERS

Dear Red Attitude

1. They and their fans are the most bigoted in British football, signing players purely on religious grounds for over a hundred years.
2. Their supporters renditions of various Munich chants.
3. Their seedy alliance with Chelsea, no, not big club City.

4. The way they rioted in the 70's at OT, causing havoc in town too, does this happen when Celtic visit?
 5. Such class players as Souness, Hurlock, Roberts et al, purely for the purists.
 6. Paul Gasgoigne. Sheryl's black and blue - she's black and blue, she's black and blue.
 7. Always good for a laugh, their constant failures in the European Cup, UEFA Cup, then into the Bridgeton and District Cup.
 8. They actually believe they rival United! Get a life, you are ability-wise on a par with Bolton Wanderers.
 9. Archie Knox. Hope you are happy because leaving United was the best thing that happened in years. KIDDO!
- Perhaps a postcard from Monaco would be nice, Knox could be in Raith or St. Johnstone.
10. Have you ever seen any non-grotesque Huns, more deformed than the Miceys.

Yours
Moderate of Manchester

Hello Red Attitude,

First I have to wish you all the best for the new year. I really hope Manchester United will win the Champions League, even if it is only for the reason that no German team will win it.



I only moved to Fulham to be near you...

Yes you are right, I am banned from every ground in Holland just because I pushed a steward who wanted to take a flag off the fence. He told the cops I beat him up.

These bastards are the same in every country, although from what I've read in Red Attitude, you've got some real 'nazi-stewards' at Old Trafford!

When Manchester United reach the final, we can meet up for a drink. Thanks again for the latest Red Attitude, and keep doing the good work.

Sammy
Roda Casuals
Holland

Dear Red Attitude,

Thanks for the latest Red Attitude fanzine. Here in Madrid, Man United have more and more supporters each day. Good luck to your team in the European Cup. We are still celebrating the 100th anniversary of Athletic Bilbao, organising travel to games, supporters meetings etc.

You are welcome in Madrid anytime.
Happy New Year
Almudena
Madrid.

R.A. We have some business in Monaco to take care of first, but if we do, and Madrid win their quarter final as well, we might get the chance to take up your offer!

Hello,

I would like to say that Red Attitude becomes better with every issue. Keep up the good work and all the best for your team.

Thorsten
St. Pauli.
Hamburg



the ugly face of English soccer

MATTY'S MUTTERINGS

A message to all the Czech Romanies being badly treated at Dover by the immigration boys, tell them you're there to bolster Liverpool's reserves, you'll get in no problem.

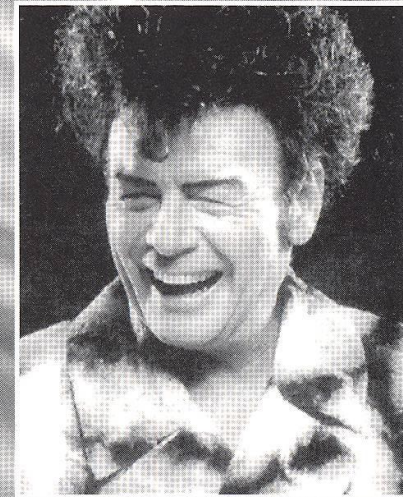
Following Berkamp's recent suspension/dip in form/slagging his team mates for being alkies, anyone fancy a tenner on Mr Cole for player of the year? That should sort out his World Cup place - could be a bad thing if he gets injured, then we're back to square one. On the other hand, it'll be nice to see how the fans who delighted in taking the piss out of him handle his renaissance, about turn the press or big red faces and 'gets the ball' songs all round?

Piss poor journalism (in England? No) - Emley's "2,000 devoted fans". Nothing against them, I hope they enjoyed their day out, just like I hope they enjoyed the next Unibond game, except I reckon on or two of those 2,000 might not have made it.

Shame to see the end of the Fast Show, til 1999 apparently, after another nice series. Just one query; how come Roger Nouveau, football fan, doesn't support Chelsea? Picture the scene; stood waiting at some non-descript tube station, less moody atmosphere than expected, a scarfed, hatted, badged, tasteful autoglass replica shirted middle-aged bloke wanders up to a couple of crafty cockneys, asking (plum fully in mouth) "excuse me, how do you get to the ground?" suits you, ohh, suits you sir!

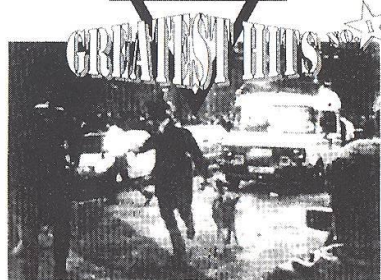
Word of the week: Cole-o-phile

FOLLOWING THE SACKING OF COLIN BELL, CITY ANNOUNCE THE APPOINTMENT OF THEIR NEW YOUTH TEAM COACH



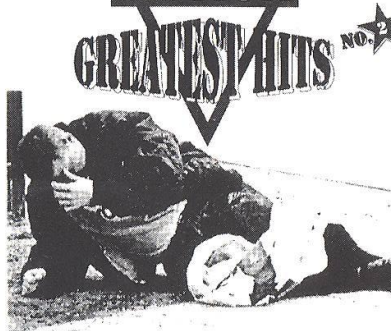
Already in the running for best piece of journalism for '98, from the Daily Mail's Ken Lawrence - headline FERGIE HAS THE JITTERS; leads with, "Alex Ferguson put his Manchester United players through unexpected closed door preparations yesterday revealing just how nervous he is about Chelsea's FA Cup challenge", picture of a pensive Fergie with caption, "worried man: Alex Ferguson sees Chelsea as a real threat". Maybe I'm being wise after the event, but how funny is that?

Anti FASCIST ACTION



WATERLOO, COULDN'T ESCAPE
IF I WANTED TO...
BATTLE OF WATERLOO LONDON 1992

Anti FASCIST ACTION



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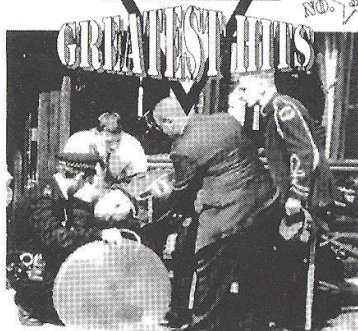
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BILLY, DON'T BE A HERO...
WHITE BANG PUP - C.B.F. / 118 MARCH - LONDON 1998

AFA NEWS

In the 1970's the fascists in Britain tried to 'kick their way into the headlines', although the National Front had some success the combination of physical opposition and the election of a right wing Tory government in 1979 saw them rapidly decline. Nowadays the British National Party no longer seek confrontation and declare 'community politics is sensible politics'. The danger is this new approach could be successful.

Last May in the general election, the BNP stood over 50 candidates, qualifying for a 5 minute TV broadcast and the free delivery of two and a half million leaflets. They had no illusions about winning seats, instead using the election to reach a wider audience. They claim to have got 3,000 enquiries as a result of their election campaign which gives some credibility to their verdict of 'mission accomplished'. It is worth pointing out that if Britain had proportional representation, although the far right only got 0.13% of the overall vote, they would have 8 MP's!

With Labour in government and election promises flying out the window, the already high level of disillusionment among traditional Labour voters is rising. The fascists are looking to become the voice of opposition in working class areas, in the same way the Front National is now the largest working class party in France.

The failure of the left to provide credible solutions to working class problems allows the fascists to gain influence in these areas, but they are also keen to increase their influence with the middle classes. They are starting to increase their work in rural areas and small towns, and leafleted the massive pro-hunting Countryside demo in London last summer, as well as the march against banning hand guns in September. The BNP leader, John Tyndall, recently revealed his elitist tendencies when he declared his satisfaction that the party was

getting more enquiries from people "of a generally superior intelligence, better appearance and bearing."

At the BNP rally in 1997 another one of their leaders was keen to quote a liberal academic who had expressed concerns that conditions in Britain were ripe for a fascist party to grow, as in France and Austria, all that was needed was a modern, professional approach and 'men in suits' to deliver the message. As we can see the different pieces of the jig-saw are starting to fit together.

The local elections in May will see a major effort from the BNP. Every branch is expected to stand candidates and as the election nears, activists are required to be out and about four nights a week. To try and avoid splitting the fascist vote, the BNP is putting some effort into appealing directly to the membership of the NF and the National democrats to join them.

In the past the fascists would hold marches and meetings at election time giving militant anti-fascists the opportunity to cause considerable damage.

Nowadays they have side-stepped the confrontations, preferring to canvass door to door. The absence of other political parties on the council estate landings is why the BNP are picking up working class support.

As fascists move away from street violence, so must anti-fascists enter the political arena. The threat of violence from C18 or the KKK must be confronted when necessary, but this is a distraction from where the real problem lies. The 'solutions' offered by the far right aren't radical, they are ultra-conservative; more repression, more division, more exploitation - all in the name of the 'national interest'. Anti-fascists can stop the growth of the Far-Right, and AFA is developing new tactics to deal with the new problems.

Join us.

The Correspondent

...in Britain were ripe for a fascist party to grow, as in France and Austria, all that was needed was a modern, professional approach and 'men in suits' to deliver the message

MANCHESTER AFA

Anti-fascists were surprised to hear towards the end of last year that the BNP were bragging on their website about a new group they had established in Stockport. Concerns were compounded when the British Nationalist in November listed a Stockport group with a PO Box, suggesting a) members and money, b) a high degree of organisation (for them), c) an intent to distribute sufficient material locally to warrant their own address rather than use their London address. Bits and pieces of information also began to filter back of at first half hearted attempts to distribute racist leaflets and stickers and then over the Christmas/New Year period of fairly widespread flyposting. Taken together this appears to mark the start of a six month campaign, a blueprint for which was also outlined in the November issue of British Nationalist, intended to culminate in the standing of candidates locally.

So why the surprise? Even these nuckleheads ought to be able to turn all their publicity during the General Election (TV, Radio broadcasts etc) into a few recruits locally, especially with the history of loyalism in Stockport and the fascists record of exploiting this. However, the renewed BNP activity came as a surprise, and was even initially dismissed by some of us, due to their record of humiliating defeats at the hands of anti-fascists in Stockport and in nearby

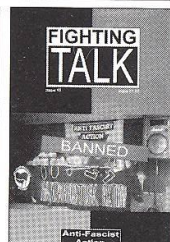
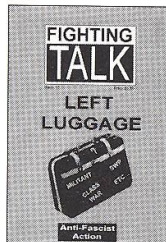
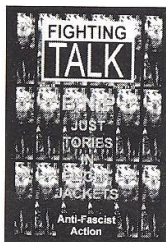
South Manchester. Their last attempt to organise in Stockport is still talked about by both fascists and anti-fascists after two minibuses of likely lads routed their march through Stockport in 1985 and one local BNP'er still complains of a chesty cough to this day after smoke bombs were used to attempt to coax the master race out from Stockport station waiting room. Needless to say nothing further was heard from them, until now that is. They must be as stupid as the guy who two years ago set up a South Manchester BNP branch based in Chorlton, who after only a few weeks contacted anti-fascists to negotiate a surrender. The regional BNP organiser Mike Henderson asked him what he had expected when Manchester is "full of nutters" and no he wouldn't come down to help him out, he had made his bed now he could lie in it. So why go through all the anguish and agony Mr Bowden, life can't be that dull up there in The Long Sons on Lancashire Hill that you need to play Russian roulette. Wise up Terry give us a ring and we can help you get out of this mess.

0976 406 870

Anyone else who thinks they may be able to shed some more light on what these characters have been up to should also contact the number above or write to PO Box 83, South West PDO, Manchester M15 5NJ.

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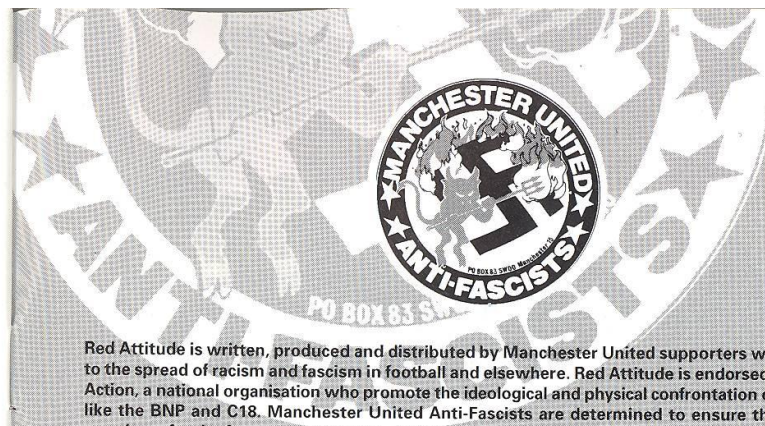
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Red Attitude is written, produced and distributed by Manchester United supporters who are opposed to the spread of racism and fascism in football and elsewhere. Red Attitude is endorsed by Anti Fascist Action, a national organisation who promote the 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 fans 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 and are in the process of setting up an active support group in London, 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