

INDEPENDENT
MANCHESTER
UNITED
FANZINE

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RED ATTITUDE

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RED ATTITUDE

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The Correspondent, Stroud Football
Poet, Mikey, The printers.

WITH THANKS TO

Conviction, Carlo Podatini,
Carlo Batesini, Feyenoord Fans Against
Racism.

RA DESIGN

Debs.

DISCLAIMER

The views expressed in this fanzine are
those of individual contributors and are
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CONTRIBUTIONS

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

REDS IN PRISON

We send free copies of Red Attitude to
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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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INDEPENDENT
MANCHESTER
UNITED FANZINE

EDITORIAL

The great unbeaten Champions league run was ended by the slimmest of margins in Turin. At the outset most of us would have conceded Juve away as dead points and settled for five out of five.

If this was the Italians pulling their tripe out to qualify, against a United team minus Keane, Irwin, Scholes and Butt, playing a lone striker and makeshift midfield, then we have to admit that things have changed somewhat for both teams since last year's trip to Juve.

Have we got better or have Juve declined. Certainly Juve don't travel as well as they used to! As for United, our record in both leagues speaks for itself. Up until we played Juve at home, our form was indifferent, yet still we topped the Premier. Since then, having calibrated ourselves against the measure of the 'top team in Europe', we have displayed a free scoring vein of form, that has had the pundits claiming the season is over already. Arsenal, the only team to spoil the run, closed to within a point, and having done so, found themselves seven points adrift a few games later.

Suspicions about Blackburn's pedigree were well founded, and four goals later they were well found out aswell. Ambiguous press reports claiming Blackburn scored twice, have left many of their own fans firmly convinced that they got a point at Old Trafford!

Liverpool were given some Cole-fired shock therapy barely a week later, to leave all the early contenders, bar Chelsea, shell shocked and disorientated. So yes, I think we can safely say that we are getting better.

Player of the month has to be Andy Cole who has rounded on his critics in spectacular style, banging in 13 goals in 10 games. The Andy Cole debate, having raged for nigh on three years, has thrown up many arguments, statistics etc. both for and against the lad. Regardless of the differing views, I've yet to meet a red who isn't genuinely pleased at his (and our) good fortune. As for those still traumatised by Andy Cole's misses, just do what he does and shut your eyes before he hits the ball!

Loser of the month has to be Jamie Stuart, sacked by Charlton after being tested positive for cocaine and cannabis. He was the fourth Charlton player to get captured, and this was reflected in his sacking. Do the FA only test Charlton players? How does sacking him and effectively ending his career, steer this young man away from drugs? What message does making an example of him give to others? None at all. All it tells me is that he wasn't a £5 million rated player like Paul Merson (drink, drugs and gambling) otherwise he too would have got sympathy, therapy and counselling from the FA.

Ambiguous press reports claiming Blackburn scored twice, have left many of their own fans firmly convinced that they got a point at Old Trafford!

With three German teams through to the last eight, and if my understanding is correct, that they are being kept apart from

Perhaps if referee Sandor Puhl was put in charge of drug testing, the FA would be able to turn a blind eye to it!

each other in the draw, then the odds are almost 50/50 on a trip to Germany. So put your money on Real Madrid! Fergie is said to be looking at the possibility of adding a couple of players to the squad, ready for the next round of the European Cup. This sounds remarkably familiar to last season's unfulfilled shopping expedition. Don't hold back Fergie, they've got £40 million of our money sitting doing nothing, and I'd rather see it wasted on expensive speculative Poborsky style transfers than see it gathering dust (and an attractive rate of interest) at PLC HQ. So go ahead, make a hole in it the size of the North stand.

On behalf of everyone at Red Attitude, I'd like to thank all our readers for your continued support, and wish you all a happy festive season. (Starting to sound like Edwards.)
All the best
Danny

Andy D
In loving memory of Andy Dignam, Red Attitude, Anti Fascist Action who died on 12th December 1996. Deeply missed by his family, friends and comrades but not forgotten.
Rest in Peace.



3-1 Again: Funny Dat; Eh, Eh, Eh!

ARTHUR ROBERTS SAFE IN HIS HANDS?

In the last issue of Red Attitude, we brought to the attention of our readers the possibility that Arthur Roberts, stadium safety manager, may well be the disgraced former Chief Superintendent of the same name. It turns out our suspicions were well founded, and Arthur Roberts is in fact a convicted criminal. Since the article appeared, the News of the World picked up on the story and ran it. We also received some interesting correspondence from "Conviction" based in Sheffield, which we have printed in full. (See next page.)

Roberts was head of an investigation into police corruption which resulted in ex-PC Ged Corley getting a 17 year sentence. Roberts' second in command, Inspector Jackson was concerned that a miscarriage of justice had occurred but his attempts to do something about it were thwarted by Roberts.

Roberts was charged with perjury and perverting the course of justice for allegedly suppressing evidence which would have effectively cleared Corley.

Roberts was acquitted on these but found guilty of misconduct, after admitting examining Corley's defence papers prior to the trial. And that's classed as misconduct. Corley's defence papers managed to work their way out of his solicitors office and find their way onto Roberts' desk. That Roberts didn't question how they got there and then proceeded to have a good read of them beggars belief!

So how did they get there. Perhaps some light can be shed on it by tape recordings made by a very concerned Inspector Jackson when he raised the matter with Roberts and which subsequently found their way into the hands of Private Eye magazine, who wrote:

To Jackson's innocent plea: "Why can't we tell the truth (about a possible conspiracy against Manchester Police)? Roberts quips: "The way it comes out it makes us look fucking ridiculous."

On the tape Roberts defends a Manchester sergeant who "put his neck on the block for us..." and who had "shown us papers which could ruin him and his wife..." To which papers does Roberts refer? Surely not to confidential documents handed to prosecuting officers by a sergeant whose wife had "removed" them from the office of Corley's solicitors, where, coincidentally, she worked?

Jackson, determined that the inconsistencies he had come across should be investigated by a neutral force, then told Roberts that "the only way I'm going to be satisfied is if this file is at Chester House (Police HQ) in an hour." Roberts responded: "All that will do is knock our credibility". (Private Eye, 18.1.91)

Remarkably for his troubles, Jackson also ended up being charged following an internal investigation by the West Yorkshire police. Jackson's health suffered and as a result he was unable to stand trial. This proved quite a stroke of luck for Roberts as none of Jackson's taped evidence was heard, and allowed Roberts to claim "I was only getting a quarter, sometimes none of the information I should have been

getting... a lot of my decisions were not based on 100% information." In other words it was Jackson's fault. (Ned Kelly, you have been warned!)

When Eric got the 'Let's kick racism out of football' campaign off to a flying start down at the Palace, there were some at the club who believed that Eric should have been sacked outright for his behaviour, tarnishing the image of the club etc. Principles, morals, the standards set by Sir Matt, all wheeled out by those 'defending' the good name of the club. It seems somewhat incongruous then, that Arthur Roberts, should be travelling in the opposite direction, not too long before that. What isn't clear is whether Roberts employed with United commenced before or after his trial at Leeds in March 1994. Whilst our correspondent from Sheffield maintains that he was already in the employ of United, when his trial commenced at Leeds Crown Court, (why there?) no mention was made of it in Steve Panter's reports for the Manchester Evening News. Steve Panter states: "Mr Roberts, 49, now retired from GMP was given a nine month suspended jail term..." (Manchester Evening News 12.3.94).

So either United have taken on Roberts, as chief safety officer fully aware of the nature of his conviction, and his seriously flawed public service credentials, or even more ludicrously, they have taken him on after he had been suspended from the force, whilst he was awaiting trial on serious charges, with a custodial sentence a real possibility. One shudders to think what the other job applicants were like if Roberts was chosen on merit!

United's Ken Ramdsen told the News of the World, "I cannot see how what happened has any connection with his job" How about public safety Ken. Roberts kind of fell down quite badly in this department with the result that an innocent man ended up being sentenced to seventeen years in jail.

Danny

CONVICTION...

Dear Red Attitude

Is this the same Arthur Roberts ...? you ask. Yes it is. Ex-Chief Superintendent Arthur Roberts, formerly in charge of the Stretdford division of the Greater Manchester Police, admitted on oath at Leeds Crown Court in March 1994 that he was in charge of security at Old Trafford. I heard him do so. That's why Roberts' nine month prison sentence for his misconduct when in charge of the Corley investigation, was suspended - because he'd landed a 'responsible job'.

Steve Panter, the well-informed crime investigator for the fearless Manchester Evening News, was also present at his trial. Curiously, Panter has consistently omitted to mention that the Arthur Roberts who left the police force while still under suspension is the same Arthur Roberts that now employs a gang of security guards with a mission to control United fans.

Is the Manchester Evening News being over-protective of Roberts? And if so, why?

We might be forgiven for imagining that Mr Roberts had scarcely changed his occupation, although he is no doubt much better paid in his present job. But does Roberts' past matter to United fans?

Time and time again blame is placed on the fans for trouble at matches, including disasters like Hillsborough here in Sheffield. Somehow it's always forgotten that the Hillsborough disaster was caused not by fans but by the police. The cause was not the terraces and the fans behaviour on them, but the barriers and the police crowd control. The solution, imposed without regard to logic, was to get rid of the terraces. It is based on the same, unchanging attitude to fans: that they are subhuman, a mass to be relieved of their ticket money and then forced to be docile and submissive. But that attitude is also the cause of the problem, and it is essentially a police attitude - which is why it is dangerous to have an ex-cop in charge of security, and especially one who left the police under a cloud - not because he was prepared to blow the whistle on what was happening, but because he wanted to cover it up.

The whistle was blown by his second-in-command in the Corley case. Peter Jackson. Worried that Roberts was not prepared to give Corley's lawyers the evidence that would clear their client of the charges for which he was serving a 17 year sentence, Jackson went to a meeting with his boss wired up, and recorded the conversation. Jackson asked Roberts, "Why can't we tell the truth?" Roberts refused, saying: "The way it comes out it makes us look fucking ridiculous." Details of the meeting were revealed in Private Eye no. 759, and they have never been denied. The Guardian (owned by the Manchester Evening News!) took up the story. A counter attack was mounted against Jackson, who found himself in a mental institution and not fit to stand trial on the same charges as Roberts. His damning evidence against his old boss, including the taped conversation, was therefore not heard by the Leeds jury, who acquitted Roberts on two other charges.

The policing of football crowds (whether by public or private forces) is a serious matter, involving not just fans' enjoyment of matches but their safety. Terraces can be safe for those who choose to go on them, but that safety depends on the organisation and management of security. From what Red Attitude reports, it seems that reinstatement of safe terraces would require more changes than just talking out the seats.

In solidarity,
Andrew - Conviction
Sheffield



**a word in
your ear...**
the noonan column

"Thank you for calling the SPS helpline, unfortunately all our operatives are reminded in custody. Your call is being placed in a queue, please sit down and hold, if you stand up your call will be disconnected for the remainder of the season."

It seems someone at Old Trafford is listening to my advice about the strikers. As I correctly pointed out, we have got four class strikers who can work with each other in the squad system. Any thoughts of selling Cole nowadays are about as likely as the Labour party cutting benefits to single mothers! Oops, spoke too soon. Well they've got to get the money to fund the Football Task force from somewhere, all of fifty bags of sand.

I watched Panorama, hoping to see a hard hitting documentary, but it didn't hunt down the heads responsible. If that was Roger Cook, he would have gone round their houses and knocked them up, without any prior notice.

Can you imagine it, fat Roger chasing Edwards through the leafy suburbs of Alderley Edge. "What have you done with the £30 million Martin? You make a living out of ripping off fans don't you Martin? Are you proud of charging kids two grand for a replica shirt?", whilst Edwards frantically tries to raise the SPS on his mobile phone. "Roberts, Kelly, Thugs, anyone there, get down here now. I'm being accosted by a biggish fellow. I think it's that Briscoe chap. Why won't you answer...?"

"Thank you for calling the SPS helpline, unfortunately all our operatives are reminded in custody. Your call is being placed in a queue, please sit down and hold, if you stand up your call will be disconnected for the remainder of the season."

Edwards in despair throws away the phone and pulls out his wallet. "What do you want? I've got northstand, nice view, how about exec seats, bring the wife and kids, Red Cafe, meet the players? Okay final offer, I'll throw in some away tickets and hold inclusive talks with IMUSA."

"Now I know you're not the real Martin Edwards" said a disgruntled Cookie, as headed off for brunch.

Well that's today's complete fabrication over and done with, and not a solicitor in sight.

My tip for the quarter finals? Monaco. Where is it? Just past Texaco.

Later
Dessy

RED ATTITUDE

Nislog's
SNORT

THE
PREMIER LEAGUE HABIT
FOR SERIAL LOSERS

Nislog's
ROBBIE FOWLER

PACKED WITH
POWDER
AND ADDED
SUBSTANCE

PRODUCE OF
COLUMBIA
AS USED BY
CHARLTON
ATHLETIC
YOUTH
SQUAD

450g

8 **RED, ANTI-FASCIST & PROUD**



McMANNAMAN DEMONSTRATES THE BENEFITS OF GIRL POWER

RED ATTITUDE

ULTRAS

Racism and Football Culture in Italy

Final Part

The following report was presented to Fanatics! Conference by Carlo Poddutri and Carlo Balestri (Archivio sul tifo calcistico in Europa - Progetto Ultra - Comitato Regionale Uisp Emilia Romagna, Bologna, Italy).

The Italian "ultra" members felt they were part of a movement based on strong cultural ties that kept together very different groups and subjects. Therefore, the new groups and the historic groups did not question each others belonging to the "ultra" world.

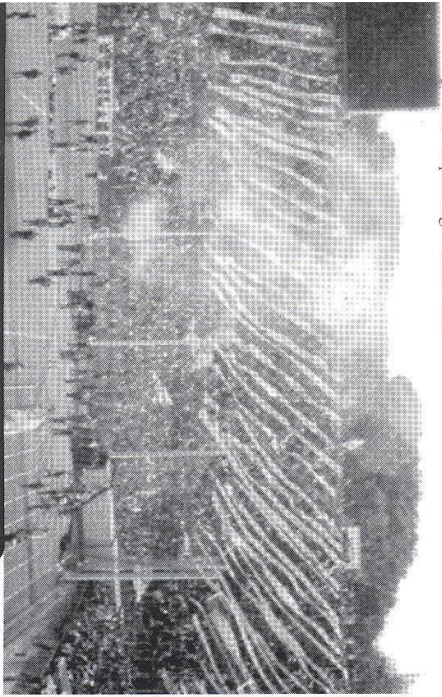
Consequently, the conflict dynamics were governed by the internal rules of the "ultra" world and often all the groups, old and new, competed against each other to win control of the curve (terrace). This fight is still going on within the confines of the tradition of the Italian "ultra" culture. The new groups have not just competed against the historic groups solely from the military point of view. In many cases the confrontation has also taken place on an organisational level and also in terms of their visibility in the curve. Now choreographies become more and more complex and, therefore, more expensive. The result of this conflict has often ended up in a deadlock. In various stadiums where curves had previously been controlled by leftist leaderships and groups, and because of the mainly rightist tendency of the new groups, now supporters ambiguously claim their political neutrality. In the name of supporting the team or in preserving curve unity, the various groups accept a solution that actually favours the strategies applied by the extreme right-wing groups, who focus on penetrating the "ultra" groups. These strategies are further favoured by the increasing intolerance in Italian society towards the new immigrants coming from poor countries. Starting

from the end of the 1980's, simultaneous to the rise of political movements with a strong xenophobic component, such as the Northern League, and together with the growth of skinhead and extreme right-wing movements, stadiums saw the exponential growth of racist choruses, the exhibition of nazi or fascist symbols and of openly anti-Semitic banners. Outside the stadiums the increasingly systematic involvement of "ultra" groups in acts of racial or political intolerance could be detected (beating ups of black people and leftist militants, fire attacks against hostels for foreigners or social centres). Therefore, in this period the racist and xenophobic tendencies that had long been latent in society started to explode and to become clearly visible. The part of the "ultra" movement that had foreseen and anticipated these trends, began to politicise and radicalise more and more the alignment to a xenophobic vision of life. This happened in the curves of certain stadiums of Northern Italy, where the growth of an anti-South feeling in stadiums preceded and accompanied the birth and development of an openly xenophobic and separatist movement such as the Northern League and acted as booster in the strengthening of an identity claim based on ethnic differences: "Bergamo as a Nation, all the rest is South" chant the Atalanta "ultra" members, "Bossi save us, Brescia to the people from Brescia" is the banner exhibited in 1991, before the local elections to be held in Brescia (Northern Italy). In Italian curves, this local racism coexists with classical racism against those who are considered strangers who do not belong to the national community (immigrants, gypsies). Insults against people from the South are not

chaned exclusively by groups supporting the Northern League; on the contrary, they are systematically adopted also by the Northern supporters of nationalist tendencies, such as Verona, Inter, Piacenza and so on. The crisis, however, does not confine itself to the presence of neo-fascist groups in curves, but is characterised by the depth of the adherence to a reactionary and xenophobic vision of politics, giving support to the institutionalised right-wing parties, National Alliance, the Lombard League and the neo-fascist Tricolour Flame, shown by many of the youngest "ultra" members. While in Northern Europe hooligan groups have often supplied unwell and uncontrollable underlings, or hoodlums to the neo-fascist parties, in Italy an increasingly systematic recruitment campaign of young militants and effective political activists has been noticed. Evidence of this cross-over between right-wing politics and football comes from the numerous career opportunities offered to some "ultra" leaders because of their ability to pull in votes and gain consensus among young people. There are, for example, Parliamentary Members belonging to National Alliance who come from the Verona curve supporters. But it is in local government elections that the presence of football's right wing recruits is most noticeable. In Rome, for example, on the occasion of the last local elections, thirteen elected representatives belonging to right-wing groups were from Roma and Lazio curve supporters. Lately, the extreme right-wing curve groups are also ready to bypass the traditional football rivalries and are starting to collaborate in order to pursue a political objective. Thus, on 29th November 1994, on the occasion of the Brescia-Roma match, a preplanned attack against the police and the Brescia "ultra

was organised. This attack was carried out employing a powerful military potential (axes, knives and so on) from neo-fascist superhooligan groups supporting Roma, Lazio and from neo-fascist "ultra" members supporting Bologna and also from other Italian cities. The latest developments of the "ultra" movement has undoubtedly been conditioned by what happened in Genoa on 29th January 1995. Before the Genoa-Milan match, a small group of superhooligans supporting Milan, led by a young professional accountant strongly in favour of the extreme right, planned an aggression outside the Marassi stadium. The group was equipped with knives and reached Genoa by train on regular service, concealing any element that could tie them to football supporters and reached the stadium following a preplanned itinerary. In front of the stadium the group attacked some Genoa "ultra" members. During the fight one of them, Vincenzo "Claudio" Spagnolo, 24 years of age, was stabbed to death. The "ultra" world, fiercely attacked by the mass-media, was upset and for the first time a meeting among the representatives of the main groups was organised. The result was a declaration condemning the use of knives during clashes and hoping for the restoration of old rules and behavioural codes typical of the historic groups ("Stop the knives, stop the rascals"). Until the end of the





This Archive not only represents an observatory on the football support but is also a meeting place for all those subjects belonging to the "ultra" world who want to oppose the rising tide of intolerance and racism.

Any intervention has to be introduced by someone already present in the curve acting as a mediator, otherwise it will not work, otherwise it could be considered as interference by "ultra" members who will therefore oppose it

fierce opposition by the "ultra" group supporting Verona at the news of a possible signing up of a black footballer for the next season. Recently, in Bologna, an extreme right-wing superhooligan group attacked some black immigrants during the celebrations for the Bologna team's promotion to the First Division. Despite these events we believe that in the "ultra" world unity at all costs is in danger. The cement represented by a common culture seems to be no longer enough to keep together, on the one hand, groups that offer a strong identity to their members on the basis of a series of initiatives and activities (including even the social field, carrying out collections of second-hand clothes for war victims and fund raising in favour of Associations helping children) and, on the other, groups who, are mainly oriented towards a military confrontation. We notice that some historic groups are presently studying to find a way for reducing violence in their curves. Furthermore, some small groups and individuals are trying to find the right strategies aimed at depriving racist and

1994/95 Championship a sort of undeclared truce was compiled with, leading to a considerable decrease in violence and clashes. However, the truce did not lead to the actual disarmament of the most aggressive groups. These superhooligans did not lose their military power and this is demonstrated by the fact that from the beginning of the 1995/96 Championship, a considerable renewal of violent behaviour was observed (guerrilla fight during the Fiorentina-Atalanta "Italy Cup" final, extremely violent clashes in Campania between two "ultra" groups supporting Third Division teams, violence against players in Foggia) and racism was back again, which was proved by the shameful behaviour of some "ultra" groups supporting the Cremona team against Paul Ince or the xenophobic groups of the control they now exert on the stadiums. The circumstances for the birth of our project. The aim of the project is to stem intolerance and racism in the stadium curves, creating an intervention structure on the basis of the German Fanprojekte, adapted to fit the specifics of the Italian situation. In Italy, contrary to what happened in Germany, it is not possible to act by means of structures built outside the curve. Any intervention has to be introduced by someone already present in the curve acting as a mediator otherwise it will not work, it could be considered as interference by "ultra" members who will therefore oppose it. That's the reason why since the very beginning it is necessary to start as equal partners with the curve groups. Hence, by means of mediation through these groups, it will be possible to develop the right conditions from the point of view of prevention, to make the best use of young peoples collective potential supplied by the popular support culture, typical of young "ultra" groups. At present the Project is going through its first stage and has activated an Archive on football support in Europe collecting all the essays, books, articles on the issue. We have also collected fanzines, videos and choreographic material.

RED MOLE uncovers...

Race Card

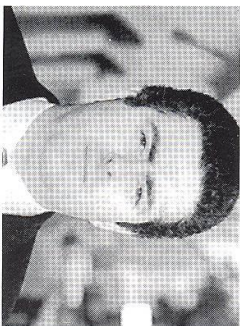
David James has been the target of a race hate campaign by some Liverpool supporters who it seems are keen to keep the old prejudices alive. Blaming the blacks, or playing the race card as it's known, has surfaced now that the team are not playing like the Liverpool of old. No doubt the bigots believe Bruce Grobbelaar was a 'better bet' between the sticks.

Hartson

The sale of John Hartson to West Ham by Arsenal Wenger for £5 million was seen as an astute bit of business last season. It still is, especially by Harry Redknapp.

SPS Candidate

Metropolitan police officer Paul Evans, looking remarkably like Nick Hancock on steroids, was found guilty of assault at the Old Bailey. Seventeen stone Evans kicked his victim at least twenty times and then beat him with his truncheon, first in the street and then at the station. Evans is now starting a prison term for his endeavours. We shall forward his details to Mr. Roberts and the SPS for future employment consideration.



Meanwhile Paul Condon, chief of the Metropolitan police, has asked for the power to root out bent cops and dismiss them from the force. There was a time when I would have agreed with his line of thinking, but now I beg to differ. Keep them all in the force and at least then we'd know we've got all the rotten apples in the same barrel. Let them loose and who knows where they may turn up next. Just a thought, eh Arthur!

Judas

Paul Ince is begging West Ham fans to call off their vendetta against him. Now me and Nicky Butt didn't have a problem with Paul leaving United for Inter, nor even joining the scousers (if they're the only ones who'd pay his rate and call him Guv'nor). However to try and call a truce with those who have abused him for eight years by admitting he made a mistake wearing a United shirt is a complete cop-out. Every player gets abused, ask Shearer, but what Ince is admitting to is that it has got to him, but the only difference between the shirt Shearer gets off us to the shirt Incey gets off West Ham is the racial element. Ince's admission will only vindicate the racists who won't see their actions as a 'mistake', more like a victory. And besides you're only making a rod for Rio Ferdinand's back when he does the obvious!

PLC

November saw the PLC announce profits in excess of £27 million which when added to the £13 million lying round from last years profits, has given rise to fears in the City that United don't know what to do with it all. Fergie's timing in the pursuit of £12 million rated Salas could almost have been designed to embarrass the club into stumping up the necessary. Cold feet by the money men in the past have tied Fergie's hands when competing for the top stars and most bids don't get beyond a disbelieving laugh at the other end of the phone. There are no imminent plans to develop the stadium, in spite of the incredible demand for tickets, and the only significant outlay will be for the new training centre. Oh and a big truck-off warehouse to keep all the money in.

Plans to revamp United's sponsors in the summer when the Sharp contract run out should also help fill the warehouse. It seems United are keen to bring in a basket of sponsors along similar lines to the European Champions League. The word sponsor is now somewhat misused as the club is in all probability in a better financial state than any of its sponsors. So who is sponsoring what? At least with Sharp there is a familiarity beyond which most of us can honestly say that we've never been influenced to buy any of their products. (Apart from a knocked-off ViewCam)

Foxy

The House of Commons voted overwhelmingly in favour of banning fox hunting during the first reading of the Bill. The cruel sport has been condemned as barbaric in many quarters. We spoke to Ruel Fox who said he was delighted at the result and said he would now feel much safer doing cross country running.

Feyenoord

Finally if you were the Mancunian in Wetherspoons for the Feyenoord game, talking up the virtues of C18 to the travelling Dutch, trying to find some common ground, well you may or may not be pleased to know the following. The United fan who engaged you in conversation, inviting you to explain your interest in C18, was in fact a member of Anti Fascist Action. What wasn't clear was your motive. Your storyline and methods were very tabloidise, your panic when mildly challenged was pure fascist paranoia, had you not left so suddenly this story would have had a photo to go with it. However your face is fixed firmly in the front of my mind. So until the next time, mind how you go...

It's Keith Fane!

Preview day at the recent NEC Motorcycle Show, and someone or something is attracting a bit of a crowd. Everyone's gathered round a stand, and an MC is warning everyone up. Hang on, that voice is very familiar - it's cuddly Keith Fane, family-entertainer and all round good guy.

So what's he up to? There's certainly an air of excited anticipation. Looks like he's about to welcome someone on stage. Maybe it's the Neville brothers? Beckham, even. There's a lot of kids about, so maybe it's Fred the Red. Yeah, bound to be...

'Gentlemen, gentlemen, contain yourselves no longer, welcome please' (is it Fred? Is it Phil?), cue drum roll...

'Estelle and Nina from Manchester's Bar Fantasy!' You can guess the rest. Two beautifully bored young ladies, pulling naughty girl faces and touching each other, wriggling their shit to bad r'n'b, illuminated by the flashes of a hundred disposable cameras.

Dear oh dear, Keith, is this really what it's come to? Warm-up man for strippers? A man who makes a living out of women who sell their sexuality. There's a word for that isn't there, and it rhymes with 'pimp'.



Suits you SIR!



JON DAHL TOMASSON DOES BLOW-UP DOLL IMPRESSION



NO SURRENDER TO THE PLOY!

Or... How I learned to stop worrying and love the control society

The rise of the control freak in the United psyche has been inexorable over the last few years. An Orwellian nightmare has unfolded around us. Barcodes and identity numbers, invisible ticket selection and 'invitations to renew' have all taken the place of the free and open institutions of the past. Now we are watched on CCTV as we listen to the tannoy messages dictating today's behaviour. We have our seat numbers taken, if we refuse to sit in them, and are scolded like naughty school children for daring to support our team. Our rights of freedom of association and freedom of speech would appear to count for little in this post Taylor Report paradise. Instead we are treated as mindless morons who cannot think for ourselves.

It's not as if we couldn't see it all coming. The plans for change existed in plain sight for many years before Lord Justice Taylor was ever involved. The need to control the individual to control the crowd had long been recognised, and this was never going to happen on a free flowing terrace. The solutions proposed included mandatory all seater stadia, and tightly controlled ticket access. These were not proposed for safety reasons, but along with CCTV, membership schemes and officially organised travel to away games, are listed as crowd control proposals in a piece from the early eighties. Originally the clubs couldn't be bothered with it all. That is, until they realised the money making potential of restricting supply to increase demand, and travel monopolies. After all, United must take over £1 million a year in membership fees, just so people have the right to join yet another ticket lottery. I won't say that nothing needed doing. My dad stopped going in the early sixties because people were throwing darts down the terraces into their own fans. Now we've gone too far the other way. From the day of paddocks where the police feared to tread we now have thought police stalking amongst the ordered rows like schoolmasters on examination day. And it sucks. The passion, the feeling is draining away, week by week. I'm not proposing a return to the Stone Age, but a happy medium could have been found.

So now, in '97, we find ourselves not enjoying these glory years, but struggling for a meaningful football existence. This season has seen us enter new depths, just as atmosphere was staging a minor comeback. The Southampton game was where the club stepped across a line, and the time for talking about it all was past. Those on the left side of the paddock who have been working hard to try and get some noise going had had enough. No one was going to come and fight on our behalf, so we had to do it ourselves. The result, 135 Action, founded on the premise that it was better to try to do something and fail, than sitting around and taking this shit. IMUSA have to look after the interests of all Reds, and, like all democratic institutions they can take a while to get into motion. Their negotiations to recover the books for the 41 should not be understated.

135

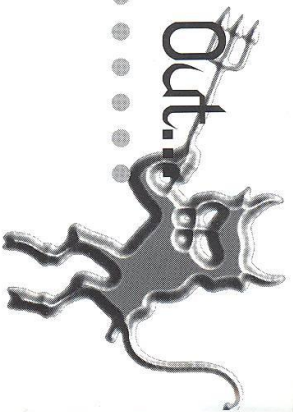
Action

Founded on the premise that it was better to try to do something and fail, than sitting around and taking this shit

However, we are the ones on the front line game after game, so we need to be organised.

The last few months have seen the preliminary skirmishes in what could well become all out conflict, not just at Old Trafford, but all across the country. The original supporter has had enough all over the country. Discontent is rife at many clubs and being told the game is changing isn't good enough for people any more. It is a dangerous time too, with issue hijackers like Libero, and re-invented know nothing former politicians all too ready to muddy the waters. 135 Action is not about personal glory for anyone. We are committed United fans who just want to support our team, and are prepared to risk our books for that right. We love it enough, that we are prepared to risk it all. We are dedicated to non-violent actions, if only because they would not achieve our ends and enable us to be falsely labelled hooligans etc. With this in mind, we leapt for a fan strike against Chelsea. We felt it was a good tactic, but regrettably some people were incapable or unwilling to understand the logic in it. All very well when you're safely tucked away in J stand or wherever, but down in the paddock the blocks involved were solid for over half an hour. An admirable show of self-control by all. Since that time, the PLC has backed off from direct confrontation, and has instead been taking names. 135 Action will continue to move for direct action when it becomes necessary, but we will continue to burrow away behind the scenes as well. Other avenues have since been explored, but we are aware that OT is only one front in the war. For us to ever have a singing end, or the introduction of safe terracing, issues at the FA must be addressed as well. Their willingness to sacrifice the soul of English football for a shot at hosting the World Cup is the ultimate Faustian pact. It is something we have to consider if we want. Is the FA's three weeks in the sun really worth eight years of watching our national game become a soulless, exclusively middle class affair?

The Devils Ride Out.



Peter Schmeichel

The greatest keeper in the world, still. Has produced faultless performances recently most notably Wimbledon and Juventus away. Some games lately could have been played without a goalie, just to make a contest out of it. Commanding at Anfield, giving our defence the swagger at the back the Micekys wished they had.

Gary Neville

Very competent defending and distribution all season. I'm sure he's looking forward to settling a score with the Geordies later this month. The shape of the defence and cohesion between them all is improving with each game. Great game at Liverpool where McManaman got sweet FA.

Phil Neville

For me he's still not shown his full potential but is still some player. Has stepped in admirably since Denis Irwin was mugged in Rotterdam. Seems to do less marauding down the wing of late. Giggys must have come on all territorial with him!

Gary Pallister

Unfortunately he didn't score the first at Anfield for me this year, but a powerhouse season at the heart of the defence. Outstanding especially in Rotterdam. His comeback from injuries would put Lazarus to shame! Henning Berg must have healing hands!

Ronnie Johnsen

Previous concerns about Ronnie's effectiveness playing in midfield, (in the Premiership rather than Europe) have been eased on the strength of recent performances. He's brought his defensive speed into the centre, proving what a versatile player he is! What was he doing stuck out in Turkey, and how did we spot him?



Henning Berg

Settled in very well and looks good with Pally, (maybe better with Johnsen.) One criticism is he lets the ball bounce sometimes instead of meeting the ball to head clear. Very nearly cost us dear at Selhurst Park and had Schmeichel to thank. That said, a shrewd signing by the wizard.

Teddy Sheringham

The crash course has been passed. His partnership with Cole is flourishing. To expect him to fill Cantona's boots was unlikely, but it is fair to say that he has put his own mark on this team. And this team will put a few medals his way by return.

Andy Cole

Now then, isn't it uncanny how things can change. How long have we said Andy Cole been suffering more bad than good luck. Suddenly everything he hits is on target and most are bulging the onion bag. The runs he has always been making now seem to be paying dividends. The ones which just didn't connect right before, are now going in, like

his first in Feyenoord. Funny how his all-round contribution has also managed to get noticed amongst the goal gits. The guy is on fire and how he deserves it, for sheer perseverance when everyone was on his case. (Except me!) Long may his good fortune last.

Ole Gunnar Solskjaer

In any side in Britain he would be guaranteed a first team place; but none of the strikers at Old Trafford take their place for granted. It is a testament to the Gunnar that when he has been drafted into the line-up he has produced the goods. He is probably the most naturally gifted out and out striker on our books as Tim Flowers will testify.

Nicky Butt

Brilliant. His passing still leaves a bit to be desired at times, but he has battled his way through the best midfields in England and Europe, taking no prisoners as he goes. Has carried the burden of Keane's loss and got on with the job. Good goal at Wimbledon and unlucky not to score at Anfield.

Paul Scholes

It isn't often you can sit back and talk about one player, amongst the current squad, with such anticipation as to what the future holds. The boy Scholes is justifying the tag of the next Cantona. At Wimbledon he was head and shoulders above anyone on the pitch – typified by the goal he scored. The goal against Feyenoord (home) and against Cameroon for his country were to say the least exhibition stuff. Half point deduction for the need to try the refs' patience every game.

David Beckham

Starting to look interesting of late. Came on at Wimbledon made his point, looked good, moved on again v Kosice and then was class against the scousers. This is the standard he has set for himself last season, so now we're close again. Did you get the Beckham vibe just before the free-kick at Anfield aswell?

Ryan Giggs

Still looking to take people on at every opportunity. His confidence of late is up and down like a whore's nickers. In Feyenoord he did little for nearly an hour as Moncou pulled and kicked at him. Then suddenly he thought enough is enough and took the piss for the rest of the match. Having his most influential season for some time as Teddy knows where to find him.

Sick Bay.

Roy Keane doing well following cruciate ligament surgery, and his ETA has now been brought forward to April or May.

Denis Irwin.

In spite of Bosvelt's best efforts, Denis reckons he'll be back for boxing day. There's no stopping these Cork lads.

David May.

Anyone seen or heard anything of him lately? Does he still play for United. David if you're reading this please get in touch and let us know you're okay. Otherwise your face may be appearing on the side of milk cartons shortly.

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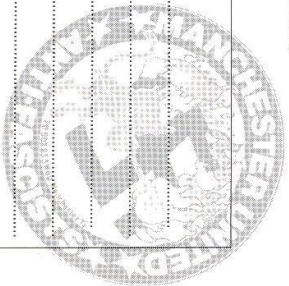
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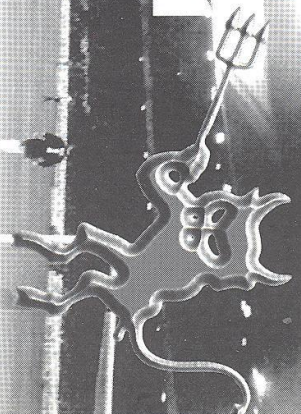
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FEYENOORD 1 UNITED 3



We'd all heard the stories about fans without tickets being banged up and deported, so had managed to divest ourselves of anything to do with United. It proved too much for our mate Neil who met us at Piccadilly, he'd brought that 'wood effect' black and blue kit which always reminds me of Darren Ferguson. He was persuaded to leave it on the train to Hull. For reasons best known to himself, he'd also brought an enema kit with him. I'll leave you to work out why, as the rest of us couldn't!

The woman at the ferry check-in clocked us as football fans straight away, "you do know we're not allowed to take football fans don't you?" She obviously believed the story about going to Amsterdam for a piss-up as much as we did, she must've heard it about sixty times that evening. She insisted that unless we had evidence that we were going to Amsterdam, the police would send us back. Top salesman-ship, we bought their P.O coach to 'dam tickets, and the police presence at Europort was as noticeable as City's presence in the Premiership.

It's just as well we did buy them, we'd assumed Europort was on the outskirts of Rotterdam, which would be near enough to Amsterdam - not true, Europort is effing miles from anywhere, understandably so as it is one of the most mingling, soulless places I've ever seen, mind you I've never been to Liverpool.

Just to backtrack a bit, there were press reports about trouble with Leeds and Newcastle fans on our ferry, it's funny but I'd assumed most Newcastle fans wouldn't be travelling to Holland seeing as their match against PSV was at St. James'. I heard that some French people tried to stir things up between English and Dutch, but ended up getting a shoeing for their efforts.

There was a couple of Leeds fans sat near us and they seemed like half decent lads considering, I suppose people have the right to support whoever they want, in the same way they have a right to befriend whatever farm animals they want, but there's a time and a place (for both) and this wasn't really it. There was a feeling that this was our party,

which wasn't helped out when one of them let rip with 'Munnich 58'. He got a bit of a slap, not as bad as he deserved, from a couple of Sale lads followed by a couple from Salford (who then accused us of being Leeds but that's another story).

That apart the crossing was fairly unremarkable; we decided to find a seat in the bar and stay there for a while. Staying there for a while in a similar sense that Jordi Cruyff 'could be better than his dad', that is moving only to the bar, the duty free (who seemed to think it was a good idea to sell me a litre of Dutch gin for 4 quid) and to find out where the f*** Neil was. If you were on that boat you will have seen Neil. He looked like a mole would look if it drank too much, though it could dance, and kept on asking the DJ for the Stone Roses, no matter how many times he told you all he had was Fool's gold.

FOR REASONS BEST KNOWN TO HIMSELF, HE'D ALSO BROUGHT AN ENEMA KIT WITH HIM...

AN ENEMA KIT WITH HIM...

We spent the day/before the game in Amsterdam; what a place. Nothing whatever to do, although they do have some rather nice coffee shops that sell all different kinds of coffee that's much cheaper than say Nescafe in England. They also do a good hot chocolate. When the sun goes down there's even less to do. One lad was so bored he decided to give this girl 75 guilders. I think she needed the money to buy some clothes and a proper coloured light bulb. Mind you he did have a chat to her for fifteen minutes or so, for that length of time he might have been able to explain to her why City are so shit. Also some shops were open quite late, maybe it was for Christmas shopping. They must have been the Dutch equivalent

HAVING SORTED US OUT FOR TICKETS, SHE ASKED IF WE WERE COMING FOR A DRINK, WHICH IS LIKE ASKING SHEARER IF HE'S A SHITBAG.

of John Menzies, all they sold was books, mags and videos. We'd arranged to meet Brenda, from Feyenoord fans against racism, in Rotterdam on the day of the game. It looked like this was going to be difficult. I had no idea what she looked like, and had spoken to her once on the phone to get directions to 'Grentzen's', an English sports pub. Finding someone I didn't know in a pub I didn't know in a city I didn't know was about as likely as finding an honest scouser anywhere, ever. First we had to go to Rotterdam; not a problem. Next up was avoiding police attention - not so easy. There was loads of them hanging around the station exit, not menacingly, just keeping the peace by looking hard as nails. The idea was stroll past them, look as if you know what you're doing; fine in principle but difficult when five of you do it and end up trying to find or follow each other in a way that might be interpreted as "hello we're ticketless United fans, fancy deporting us?" Having got past that hurdle, the next was to find this pub, but not before we'd had chance to notice the sodding awful noise. A loud echoey metallic clang, regular as clockwork, straight out of a futuristic apocalypse Terminator 2 film, but you're probably not interested in that.

Found the pub; not 'Grentzen's' but 'Grandstand'. That's what happens when someone has to speak English to you with a foreign accent; that's what happens to you when you haven't bothered to learn a single word of Dutch on the clickhead (but true) assumption that they all understand English anyway; something one of you might forget when announcing "I like the Dutch, they're all off their face". A little Dutch might have been useful when asking every woman that even hesitated when walking past us if she was Brenda - cue some very funny looks and snappy responses.

We eventually met Brenda, and she was great. Not only did she get us three tickets for about £15, she also sorted us some tickets off a Dutch tour for about £40. He seemed well chuffed with the price, but considering these tickets were valid for all the Champions League home matches, that's a bargain; it's also an idea United might think about introducing to save me going down to O.T. at 7 in the morning on three separate Mondays.

Having sorted us out for tickets, she asked if we were coming for a drink, which is like asking Shearer if he's a shitbag. Round the back of De Kuip Stadion, there's a little complex which combines the training area, youth team ground and a social club.

This social club is a shit hot idea; trophies and pictures of their old teams adorn the walls, and beer heavily subsidised (by the club!). It was 10 guilders (€3) for six halves and a cardboard tray to carry them. It was rammed, there must have been about 500 in there. If you saw them round Manchester, or at the game you'll know that most of them were really big buggers: the bloke along the bar from me was six foot eightish, had shoulders wider than Choccy's arse and to top it off, was a skinhead with a West Ham top on.

The phrase 'Irons den' sprang to mind, as did one involving the words 'here', 'out of' and 'get the fuck'. But it would've been rude not to stay for a beer, especially at less than a pound a pint. I'm glad we did stay, we got talking to some of Brenda's mates, which included more or less half of those in there, none was less than 100% friendly. Here's a tip if anyone else ever finds themselves in a similar situation; the idea is to buy a couple of these 6 trays for your group, then again as and when necessary; you're not really expected to buy six each and finish them about ten minutes later. A good way to break the ice



"I LIKE THE DUTCH, THEY'RE ALL OFF THEIR FACE!"

A GOOD WAY TO BREAK THE ICE HAVING DONE SO IS TO GET BACK TO THE BAR WITH SOME LOOSE CHANGE POOLED BETWEEN YOU AND SOME DUTCH LADS AND ORDER FORTY TWO BEERS...

having done so is to get back to the bar with some loose change pooled between you and some Dutch lads and order forty two beers; cue yer what expressions all round; genuine respect, everyone getting out of your way as you try to carry them back.

Not only was everyone dead friendly, they also knew a lot about United, especially the forty one from Southampton. It seems we're followed in Europe with as much interest as at home; "you are playing really well at this time, yes even you Andy Cole is scoring" - sentiment appreciated you cheeky bastard. One bloke who's writing a book called 'A life like Feyenoord' wanted to know what I thought of their fans at the home game; another was talking to me of their problems with fascists. The main thing is that, as I was told by everyone, "We fucking hate Ajax" in the same healthily obsessed way that we hate Liverpool.

At least knowing that was a good way to guarantee their hospitality; I'm sure Tony and Paul started a "If you all hate Ajax clap your hands", it's weird half their songs being in Dutch and the rest in English, "stand up if you love Feyenoord/hate Ajax", "we all know Ryan Giggs is gay, ole, ole, etc"

The way the tickets worked out was that Tony, Paul and Neil would be in the opposite top corner to the United end and two of us would be in the Feyenoord Kop. One of our new mates assured me it would be "alright, like", "there are some really bad people but you will be okay, just don't jump up when you score, and I think you will be scoring some, yes?"

We got no trouble at all. I don't know if it's because we were with them or what, we must have stood out like sore thumbs; after each goal they all jumped up and went proper radio rentals mental; I jumped up and groaned through the effort of trying to suppress myself. And the weird thing was, in the middle of kicking the shit out of his seat, and the corrugated front

barrier running in front of the moat, and any other inanimate object, like everyone round us was doing, one of them turned round, shook my hand and said "good goal" each time, even the shinned in special, then carried on going mad.

Three things stuck in my mind; the Kieva Barca 0 result got the biggest cheer of the night, apparently Barca are an Ajax team. Secondly, halfway through the second half a club class special behind us was, we were told, giving the team a bit of abuse; I'd next to us turns round and gives him a mouthful back, on the grounds that he was a part-time twat who hadn't been at the shirty league game on Sunday and wouldn't be here the following Sunday either.

Thirdly, and this is the one, after oh Andy Cole got his hat-trick, Tony, Paul and Neil couldn't contain themselves (it's not as if they did for the first two) and there was some reaction around them. A steward moves in, "we're not getting arrested are we?" asks Tony, "no" laughs the steward, "we're not getting kicked out are we?" asks Paul, the steward looks bemused and says "why should I kick you out for supporting your team?" "That should be played in the sleep and tattooed on the forehead of Merrett, Roberts and every SPS twat at our place. Three lads, 'fear'd English hoodligans', in the away section, eviction not an option, just shifted to the United end.

On the Thursday some Reds with more taste than respect for the law did over the Timberland shop in Amsterdam, we helped the police with their enquiries. That is, they came up to us, said something in Dutch we didn't understand. "You are English", nod. "You do not have to answer our questions, you do not have to allow us to search you" a bit different to "you have the right to remain silent/ have a confession beaten out of you". We didn't mind, all the incriminating evidence we had was a newly-bought Feyenoord top (not a good thing to buy in Amsterdam, it seems) and a bit of cake.

The ferry home was the same again except this time it was really packed with Reds; the new branch of ACAS (Andy Cole Appreciation Society) wasn't very helpful to the cabaret but then none was interested anyway.

On a final note, if you were the Red in McDonalds' loo, Amsterdam, on the Thursday afternoon, you took far too long skinning up, I was dying for a shit. I was having confections trying to keep the bastard in. Not helped by the fact I'd got chilli relish and tomato sauce mixed up when sorting us out for some burgers in the Feyenoord social, something I was about to pay for - especially in a Dutch bog which leaves your Fowler steaming up at you from the porcelain, if you're the kind of person who inspects before they flush.

Matty

Match Reports

United 7 Barnsley 0

October 25th...

The pre-match media hype before the game in respect of Andy Cole forced Fergie's hand and a starting place in the line up was his, if only to confirm who wears the pants round here. Nonetheless the compliment was returned with interest as Coley played like a man possessed, scoring twice in minutes to set up the avalanche that was to follow. Barnsley had no answer and were on the ropes from here on in. Only their supporters, rising to the occasion that a visit to the home of the Champions merits, had any hope left after the half time whistle. "We're gonna win 5-4" they sang in jest rather than hope, followed by "6-5" as circumstances dictated. "We don't come from Barnsley" was met with bemusement by the reds who refused to be drawn into admitting they don't come from Manchester, or Barnsley for that matter. Perhaps what they meant was they didn't want to go back to Barnsley, and at 7-0 down who could blame them. Andy Cole completed his hat-trick. Ryan Giggs continued in the style which could influence the judges for European Footballer of the Year, along with faultless efficiency throughout the ranks. Even Rob got on the scoresheet. There will be those who will dismiss this result on account of Barnsley's lowly position, but try telling that to Roy Evans.

United 6 Sheffield Weds 1

November 1st...

Spent half an hour from 2.20 onwards wondering whether to pay the asking price from some of the more realistic touts, that is, not 70 quid, or to wait until after kick off and see if there were any knocking around at face value. Decided on the second option, on the basis that we'd hit a south Yorkshire side for seven the week before, so were unlikely to do it again. I could just see the sports report intro: under the David Platt leads his plucky side to shock Old Trafford win; nothing whatsoever happens in the first five minutes; fans save money to spend in Amsterdam.

...Under a keeper who not only went down like a sack of shit but has a figure resembling one.

Then up popped my other conscience, funnily enough it was a red devil that always used to be the bad one in the Heathcliff cartoons, with the alternative: on fire Andy Cole hits hat-trick in opening minutes; nothing whatsoever happens for the rest of the game; fans spend sod all in Amsterdam after being turned back at Europort. Bollocks. £30, I'll give you £20 - £25, okay. Only it's North Stand Tier 3, which means by the time I got to my seat the boy wonder could already have done his three minute hat-trick, but they decided to wait for me. In fact they decided to be outplayed for the first twenty minutes by a side who were not quite as shite as the league table suggested, just watch Big Ron make it look like mid-table respectability was all his doing.

This lasted until a nice little Cole - Solskjaer combo set up Sheeringham who side-footed home. From twenty five yards that is, under a keeper who not only went down like a sack of shit but has a figure resembling one. The next goal defied description, so I won't bother. Cole got a neat header from a deflected cross. Solskjaer has clearly signed some sort of contract which means he can't score shifty tap-ins and must instead hit the far corner of the net leaving the keeper helpless, although they're not arsed whether it's a curler or a volley these days. Sheeringham got a header. Schmeichel made at least two unbelievable saves, kept his concentration for the whole game, apart from being distracted by Guy Whittingham's studs.

Ah, the North Stand. View good, atmosphere not so good. Not only do you feel divorced from the action, so does everyone around you. Also you feel like a right twat singing the 'McAteer song' when you're in the type of company Arsene Wenger prefers: the 'Andy Cole scores a goal' song did get an airing though, and most joined in. Let's be honest, it hasn't made the atmosphere worse, it means more people can see the boys - so what if they're kids, they'll be coming for the rest of their lives once they're hooked, and of course it means more money for the plc...

Match Reports

Arsenal 3 United 2

November 9th...

Attitude and freezing my tits off. (Yes, I'm a woman, we have these things, well some of us do...!). I procured my ticket off some nice bloke, who implored me not to sell it on... his mate thought I could be a tout, (please!) at face value. Nice one!

After one stropy old bill attempted to close our selling down, I decided that it was time to make my way in and find the Ladies. Highbury generally might be shit, but the Ladies really are okay. One bloke obviously thought so as he came out and confused the hell out of me.

On with the game. United carried on from where they left off in Rotterdam, good movement, passing and generally getting a grip on proceedings. But just as the pattern establishes itself, along comes Anelka and just as I began to wonder how many more time he was going to run across the back four, he scored. Bollocks! I hate Arsenal.

...you'd have thought they had won the fucking League, and were all on a promise from the missus... the missus...

Viera made it 2-0. Compensation was had only by the Arsene Wenger songs, "Wenger's shagged the youth team," and various other paedophile ditties. The arses replied with "Ryan Giggs beats up women". Coops! I thought, dodgy ground here, after all the shit Gascoigne's had, and deserved, Lee Chapman, blah, blah, blah. Domestic violence is not going to be condoned here, me thinks. "At least she was a scouser...!" came the red reply, I allowed myself a smile...

We can do it, I remember thinking, willing, and there like a prayer came The Tottenham Reject, fucking excellent. Those gooners choked, and double choked, as he kissed that badge. Nice one teddy, that's definitely what you were bought for.

Highbury turned into a graveyard. 2-2

Scholey played his socks off, and Wright didn't score, unfortunately the geriatric Platt did. The bastard was booked for spirit-pulling, scored with his head and never used his feet all afternoon. I feel a Frank Clarke transfer bid coming on!

Seven minutes to go, a draw would have done me, as my nerves were shot to pieces. But it was not to be. The midweek game caught us up and we ran out of steam, but if Arsenal are the best challenge the Premiership has to offer, then it really could be all over!

Parting shot: What a sad bunch of bastards those gooners are, you'd have thought they had won the fucking League, European Cup and were all on a promise from the missus, (or had the blow-up doll fixed after giving it a love bite the last time Ian Wright scored!).

I made my departure, stopping by to say hello to the Beckham family. (Mum, Dad and sis) who gave me a ticket outside the ground the last time we played the Arses. Thank you very much again, you made my night, pity we didn't win this time, that's all.

Maid Marion

Match Reports

Wimbledon 2 United 5

November 22nd...

A game of two halves this was in some respects. However, the first half was not a disappointment. We pressed and created situations rather than goal scoring opportunity. Some of our approach play was great. However, due to hesitance at the back we could of gone in at half time a couple down. Schmeichel made one of his customary one-on-one saves, you're more surprised when someone beats the Great Dane. The second half was us having plenty of good situations but this time creating some good opportunities. Butt, Giggs and Sherringham all went close, whilst Giggs wasted some good possession on the left but had the end product as well. Butt finished clinically shortly after half time, and when Beckham put us 2-0 up it was surely all over. Typically the Don's had other ideas, and after a couple of touch and go offside decisions went against us it 2-2. At this stage we stepped up another gear and with a bit of luck, which had not been with us on two penalty shouts first half, we re-took the lead. This time I knew we wouldn't let it go again. A cheeky backheel by the outstanding Scholes and a brilliant finish by Cole wrapped it up. Another clear to signal to the rest of who's boss.

Michael Palm

United 3 Kosice 0

November 27nd...

Ah fuck 'em. Three-nil and we pissed it. They had two very good shots on goal (one of them at 0-0), but look, and lets face it, we stroldled it. Coley Ole, Taddy, I'm supposed to write about the match not to be arrogant. So lets consider the occasions on which I was worried. I was very worried when I saw the queue in Barca (also when I saw the prices in Barca), worried when the taxi was late, worried when my chip got cold etc, etc. News? Bar 38 is cool. Paradise excellent on Thursday. For the New Year, go Golden at the Academy. Champions open again and full of old fanny. Barca top notch, as is Alastica. Joop cool for an imprisonable offence. The missus reckons that South is full of top trouser. Not cool, cutting benefit to single parents. Kosice? Couldn't give a shit. Soz.

Spiderman

United 4 Blackburn 0

November 30th...

It takes 700 air miles to get a single ticket to Milan from Manchester Airport. Now I happen to know from work that Roy Hodgson has a NatWest credit card, that he receives 1 air mile for every £20 spent, and the day after United humiliated the in-breeds, he spent £14 grand on his new home. Fat boy's going home, he's going home....

So the master genius Hodgson pitches up with the fantastic idea of playing only one up front with no creative midfielders. It's a real ego boost, and a sign of exactly how we are perceived to be by other teams, that when our nearest rivals play us, instead of coming and sticking it up us, like they have every other team. Before the match I was, I confess, concerned.

...the fantastic idea of playing only one up front with no creative midfielders

Match Reports

So a pretty dull 20 minutes, highlighted by a nasty challenge by Sutton, for which he got a nice juicy yellow card. The match got to the stage where I borrowed a copy of UMS, redesigned and to it's detriment.

Right then. Ole and Teddy, two class acts. Up steps Teddy, feeds Ole, absolutely cracking strikers goal. What's so good about their partnership (or share of a threesome, if you know what I mean) is that they are good footballers who think alike, rather than the direct chances on goal Teddy has to spoonfeed Andy Andy with. Who do I prefer? Andy the striker, rifling in shots like a true Red. Second half, Teddy feeds the mighty Norwegian gnome, who lets it cross him left to right before xxxxx it in back across Flowers from 18 yards out. Class.

Then Blackburn just fell apart. Sutton got sent off for being mates with Terry Venables. Then came OG of the season, when Nev crossed a brilliant ball and some tosser, under pressure from Cole, smashed from a decent distance and angle past a decent keeper. By the time a different tosser put oh number 2 in, United were taking the piss. For the first time ever watching United, I really thought these are the second or third best in our league (allegedly) we're playing okayish and we've reduced them to a mess. We're the best team in Europe.

Spiderman

Liverpool 1 United 3

November 30th...

No way can you call it a title decider in early December, but the scousers needed the points to stay in the race. A similar performance to Wimbledon in terms of us having plenty of good situations, but this time creating plenty of opportunities. Butt, Giggs and Sherringham all went close, whilst Giggs wasted some good possession on the left against a bemused McAteer. Fowler went close with a header and Owens was on to open the scoring but for a great challenge from P. Neville. The scouse crowd and players were struggling with their own inertia accelerated by an impending feeling of deja-vu.

The pressure finally told early in the second half as Cole latched onto some dodgy defending by Kvaerne to coolly slot the ball home past James, the most expensive ball boy in the Premiership.

At that stage the result was not in doubt. Giggs nearly made it two minutes later but his effort was well blocked. Then as we settled down again, McManaman's only contribution of the match produced a surprising penalty at the kop end. Fowler slotted home. This didn't please United however as we pressed forward again. Cole linked with Sherringham outside the area only to be checked going through. Beckham finally this season produced a free-kick of some note. James looked on like a dodgy keeper, as it went in off the underside of the bar.

Cole finished things off from Giggs corner and Sherringham's header near post. The scousers were gutted as their season disappeared down the plughole. '3-1 in your cup final' chanted the Reds with typical scouse humour!

Chelsea are now left as the most serious threat to us... whoever wins the FA cup the might be taking on one trophy too many as both of us have greater goals in Europe.

Just a point on the new away end at Anfield. We were two rows from the back with the roof only a couple of feet above us when stood. The view left a lot to be desired, when as normal, and this is not a complaint against our magnificent away support, we were stood all game and had to watch the action at the Kop end bent down, looking round the heads in front of us. Anyway what do you expect of a small club - hey incey?

Michael Palm

crowd and players were struggling with their own inertia accelerated by an impending feeling of deja-vu.

PORTO REVISITED

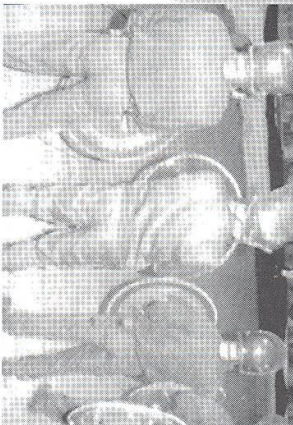
Recent events in Rome brought back memories for many Reds of United's quarter-final away leg last year in Porto; to be honest the Porto police tactics then were more brutal and probably less justified. Skinhead twats singing about Heyssel or "no surrender to the IRA" who probably spent the rest of their football watching life singing "who the fuck are Man United" deserve everything they get, if you ask me. It seems that what they got was a few baton charges, there was the odd photo of a bruised "never going again", but I didn't see any shots of anyone with six or so bullet wounds.

The contrast between those images and the scene of the Ribeira – a large bar lined square about half an hour from Porto's ground, packed solid with drunken, singing Reds, was huge.

That's not to say this was the only time a 'party' has turned sour. United in Turin and England in Rome being obvious examples, it's interesting to note which of these the FA and Tony Blair did something about. Writing in Steve Redhead's 'The Passion and The Fashion', Adam Brown (seen on telly just after Rome making a similar point) showed how "the Montpellier trip... [is] a useful illustration of what can go wrong with football fandom from a seemingly near perfect situation" (1993, p.34).

The scenes he describes could easily have been from Porto: "hundreds of United fans singing, dancing, drinking, playing football and swapping scarves with the 'opposition' in French sunshine. It was 'carnival-lesque' celebration of just being there" (Redhead, 1993, p.35) – echoed by Peter Walsh's description in the Manchester Evening News of "a carnival among 10,000 Manchester United fans" (21/3/97, p2). It was not only the English papers that recorded this; one Portuguese newspaper noted that "the invasion by the fans was also a test to the hostile capacity of the city".

What went wrong in Montpellier was this: Brown's band, Rattink, were playing a gig for United fans in a local club. The club's security were unwilling to admit some United fans and the situation escalated with the club's security using plastic bullets and the police (CRS) using truncheons and dogs. Whilst it was not as serious as what happened in Porto, and was also on a smaller scale,



it's a useful example because as Brown goes on to explain, "This incident raises important questions about the policing of football supporters. Most notably because the French police and the club's security seemed to base their actions on the, at the time, hysterical media image of English supporters, most of whom, they presumed, were afflicted with the 'English disease' (Redhead 1993, p.37).

This has an uncanny parallel, with many people's interpretations of events in Porto; in the Daily Mail, Jeff Powell wrote that "the problem is that the reputation of English football hooliganism preceded them" (21/3/97, p.78).

Whether or not this reputation is justified or even accurate nowadays is debatable, in the post-Heyssel/post-Taylor era. According to the media it's entirely unjustified, this is the brave new world of English football. Fantasy football and 'soccer sausages' replacing trouble on the terraces, especially now the terraces have gone. This is the image projected by the media and the game's authorities, and suffice to say that certain incidents have been ignored in Despatches from Old Trafford. Richard Kurt argued that "the media have, recently, engaged in a conspiracy of silence over the old voodoo's slight return... writers have jinxed themselves firmly on to the family values/all seiver/ good news' bandwagon... nothing must be written to spoil the image that the media, FA and Charman have struggled to create since the 80's" (1996, p.47.8). There are several incidents from the last season that spring to mind – the West Ham game, City v Boro, etc... which went unreported, may be suggesting

that there is some kind of good news conspiracy.

I spoke to someone in local radio who was at the Porto game, who said that no such conspiracy exists, certainly not explicitly. He used the example of the Porto game to show how what could appear to be a cover-up might happen... The reporters are sports reporters (unlike many at the England-versus-Italy game, hence its publicity), so should be concentrating on the game. So they're unlikely to be in the right place at the right time to catch the story: when this bloke got into the Press Box, ITV were oblivious to anything that had happened, and he was dictating the story to many members of the press. Because they weren't there, most of the reporters had to wait until fans got back to Manchester Airport for their stories, hence any bias. Whatever the truth is, the fact of discussing a cover-up means there has to be something to cover up, as most people who have been to certain games know. It might well be a reaction to the whitewashing; a letter to one United fanzine wrote that "maybe bringing back the violence and kicking the new fans out of football is the answer" (United We Stand, Issue 62). In any case, the point to be made is that there is still football violence, but not at anything like the 70's/80's levels on which foreign opinion (the opinion any cover ups would have been aimed at with future World Cups in mind) seems to be based.

If the 'super clean' image of the game in England isn't wholly justified, neither, probably, is that opinion apparently held by other nations of our fans, or at least in the case of United fans, when they travel to away games. Bill Buford's Among The Things now looks as out of date as most of Filbert Street; kicking off seems to have been replaced by having the crack, as you can see in the fanzines or at the games: "friends don't believe you, but the drunkenness at these fixtures is simply incompatible to any other event anywhere" (Red News, vol 8, No 7) - "by mid-afternoon the copious amounts of Super Bock consumed had clearly got the better of some Reds. Having a crack... that is laugh, that's what European travel is all about" (United We Stand, Issue 61). Luke Steve Miller reported in The Mirror: "Old Trafford assistant secretary Ken Ramstein revealed that the British consulate had praised the behaviour of the United fans before the match" (21/3/97, p.13). Our story was no different, arriving back at our hotel in the early hours of the morning, after finishing the city centre bars and 'discotheques' (Portugally, still discotheque appears to mean strip joint in Portuguese), still hoarse from the singing, from the old, "If I die on Kippax Street..." to the new, "Truck McManaman, fuck McAleer..." (well it was new, then). I suppose it's possible or even probable that behaving like that could

In other words, if the Portuguese via their media see English football fans as drunken hooligans, then a drunken English fan becomes a hooligan in their eyes, even though they might never have been involved in any football violence

be misconstrued as hooliganism in itself, or as a prelude to it. Richard Haynes, in Steve Redhead's book, talked about the "relation between fan behaviour and media images... as Dean Baudritland has argued "there is an increasingly definitive lack of differentiation between image and reality which no longer leaves room for representation as such" (Redhead 1993, p.14). In other words, if the Portuguese via their media see English football fans as drunken hooligans, then a drunken English fan becomes a hooligan in their eyes, even though they might never have been involved in any football violence. This does, however, ignore the fact that most United fans got on really well with the locals; the distrust may have been more on the behalf of the police as we shall see later.

This distrust might well have been fostered by the fact that "some United fans in Porto acted like first class assholes" (United We Stand, Issue 61) – although another fanzine questioned whether or not they were "true" United fans: "a group of lads who not only acted like idiots but had quite clearly never seen Old Trafford" (Red News, Vol 8, No 8). That's perhaps a little too reminiscent of the attempt to pin some of the blame for Heyssel on Chelsea fans, whether or not those people were real United fans is in some ways insignificant, as that shows they were seen by the Portuguese, and particularly the police. As the Portuguese newspapers reported: "the night and day prior to the match, there were incidents in the city... on Carlos Alberto Square, four English fans attacked a cleaner who had to go to hospital for treatment. In Restauracao Street, three fans began to jump on top of cars... In Miraflores, at two o'clock, a group kicked in the wing mirrors of two parked cars". That's not to mention the 'foamain' incident for which a well-known bloke was apparently set upon by the police when they got him on his own later that night.

I was checked four times - fair enough, the first could well have missed something as all he did was to pat my chest, then, allow me through. However, the second was so thorough that he stopped just short of a cavity search.

That might set some sort of context for what went on. It can be split into events before the game, and after the final whistle. The trouble started well before kick off as more and more Reds made their way from the bars to the Das Antas - the numbers that turned out were huge, but unfortunately the access to the ground was not on the same scale. Peter Walsh of The MEN pointed out that "as crowd pressure built up, the Portuguese police persisted in holding the fans at "checkpoints" to examine tickets and carry out body searches. Inevitably, the delays caused a bottleneck" (21/3/97, p2). I was checked four times - far enough, the first could well have missed something as all he did was to pat my chest, then, allow me through. However, the second was so thorough that he stopped just short of a cavity search. As a result, the third and fourth checks were not needed and just contributed to the 'bottleneck' effect.

When the crush began to swell, the police opened the doors to let some fans in, then abruptly closed them again, attacking fans who were now at the front, irrespective of whether or not they were trying to force their way through. In The Mirror (21/3/97, p42), Steve Millar wrote that "supporters at the back pushed forward with men, women and children falling in the chaos. Riot police, believing it was the start of trouble, lashed out indiscriminately, with batons splitting the heads of innocent people", which is a fairly close assessment of what happened.

We eventually got into the game about 10 minutes after kick-off, having noticed that one of the gates had been left open and pegged it through, as more fans began to do the same as us, the police shut the gate and began using their batons again. This seemed utterly pointless, half an hour into the game they left the main gate open and did not close it. Until ten minutes from the end, so now anyone could walk in, and did (some Portuguese, for example).

After the game, as David Walker said in the Mail, "United fans attempting to leave the ground at the end discov-

ered the exits blocked by shutters. Some supporters tried to force their way out only to be charged back by baton-wielding policemen who then discharged tear gas into the crowd before opening fire with rubber bullets" (21/3/97, p78). Each of these attacks by the police had the effect of a huge surge away from the exit gates, so people were falling all over the place, down the terraces.

The sound of the bullets was audible on the ITV coverage of the game. Bob Wilson referred to "the firecrackers going off behind us". It seemed he was confusing some firecrackers United had set off before the final whistle with a charge by some guntoting nutters. I suppose it was an easy mistake to make. At least he'd still spoken less shit on the night than Big Ron. We were eventually allowed to leave the ground three quarters of an hour after the game had finished.

The Mirror's Steve Millar declared that "the Portuguese police must shoulder the bulk of the blame" (12/3/97, p42), and this is a view that has since been widely accepted - not without reason, either. Famously enough, the fanzines before the game carried warnings about the Oporto police; one advised "as always be wary at the game as they are not generally very highly respected" (Red News, Vol 8, No7). This is something of an understatement. On the day before the game a group of us were talking to a couple of Portuguese lads; when the subject of potential trouble came up they advised us to keep an eye not on the Porto fans but on the police - "they are, we say, filho-de-puta - I think you say bastards". This cautionary note was picked up on in another fanzine: "Porto is one place where you do not want to get arrested. When they were recently asked if they were worried about Reds causing trouble, the police's answer of 'not at all' was reportedly spoken in a tone of grisly menace. They might even be looking forward to it" (Red Issue, Vol 9, Issue 8). Around town on the days before the match, they certainly didn't look too friendly; more a case of grim stares and muscle flexing than event 'all'. The English newspapers backed up the view that the Porto police were the artil-

lery according to John Richardson of the Daily Mail. Alex Ferguson declared "they look menacing and on

Bob Wilson referred to "the firecrackers going off behind us". It seemed he was confusing some firecrackers United had set off before the final whistle with a charge by some guntoting nutters

Wednesday night were ready for war" (22/3/97, p80). Whether they were really after a parody of just reacting to the image of English football fans is difficult to say, Chief Superintendent DeJin Passos was in charge of the operation. His explanation was that "the situation was frightening and becoming more violent by the minute as visiting fans tried to leave the stadium... at no time did my officers use excessive force... had we not taken that action to restore some sort of order we could have had a major disaster with many more people injured" (Daily Mail 21/3/97 p78) or perhaps everyone would have left quietly, and gone back to the Ribeira.

Whilst I would argue with his point that 'excessive force' was not used, he does at least offer some explanation for their actions AFTER the game. It does not however explain their disorganised and brutal action before the game. As they opened one gate to relieve the crush which was probably caused by their checkpoints, I saw the tunnel lined on one side with police officers whose batons whipped down in synchronised, military fashion on United fans passing through the area, on fans who did that contribute to crowd safety, or not constitute excessive force, Mr Passos?

It was also suggested that "UEFA must also bear some of the blame for clearing the antiquated Estadio Das Antas as fit to stage a European Cup quarter-final" (The Mirror, 21/3/97, p42).

There's been a lot said about 'standards of safety at the ground that would not be acceptable in post-Taylor Britain' (Red Issue, Vol 9, Issue 10). There were no crash barriers; the 'terracing' was rows of steep, crumbling concrete blocks over a foot-pole high. But these didn't cause the problems - they weren't helped maybe by the poor condition of the stadium, though. For example, the second of the surges away from the exit gates after the game pushed me back a couple of paces; as I had been standing on the edge of the concrete blocks anyway, I fell down two or three levels, with others falling on top of me or tripping on me - the same sort of thing was going on all around us. It would not have been as dangerous if the condition of the stadium had been better, but it wasn't caused by the stadium, it was a result of what was happening at the exit gate.

Access to the stadium was a factor; the Das Antas has a road (split level rubble track that is) running around it, walled off by the stadium on one side and a tony foot wall on the other. The fans who had official club

tickets had to pass through the area where the pre-game trouble was; the road was segregated with people who fancied getting rimshowered for not buying their tickets from the pit on one side and the others on the other side (think of the Moon Under Water's getting served/punctured about rope. It wasn't like that). This and the constant checks created that bottleneck effect, which caused the crush and which maybe was what the Porto police panicked at originally.

...police officers whose batons whipped down in synchronised, military fashion on United fans passing through the area...

There were 'suggestions' of forged tickets. Particularly in the Portuguese papers, many forged tickets were discovered yesterday at the Antas Stadium in the hands of English supporters...the tickets were almost a perfect imitation, according to Angelino Ferreira, the Vice President of FC Porto...the paper and the hologram was identical to the original but the bar code was not, and for this reason, tickets would not go through the turnstiles. The FC Porto identified a travel agency where the tickets had come from. (This travel agency was rumoured to be UF Tours)

However, when we approached the gates, the police asked to see our tickets, then turned us back. Unless there has been some kind of invention which allows Portuguese policemen to read bar codes with the naked eye, this suggests there were some other problems with the tickets. In an interview with the Manchester Evening News, British consul Eric Manley suggested that "their tickets may have been valid, but for another part of the ground than that which they were eventually led to, and so did not pass the scanning equipment" (21.3.97 p.3) The price given on our tickets was 6,000 escudos. In general, people who got in without hassle were those with tickets priced 10,000 escudos or, roughly equivalent to £40, the price FC Porto had decided to charge United fans. This suggests that the tickets we ended up with were intended for Porto fans, who were being charged about 18 quid less than us, and backs up the

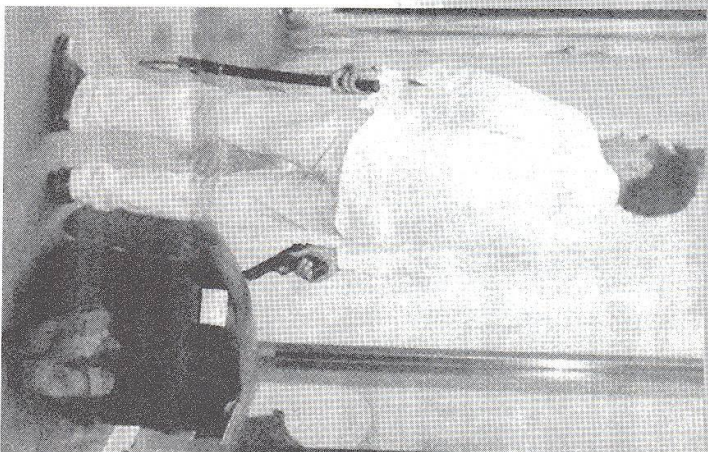
theory that there weren't any forgeries at all. It is difficult to assess the influence that 'lack of tickets or 'forgeries' had on the events before the game, but it certainly doesn't explain the incidents after the final whistle.

It may be easier to assess the influence of the behaviour of United fans at the game. There are two basic views here; the first absolves United fans of any blame. This view was particularly popular in the British newspapers – surprise surprise – according to Andrew Edwards of the Manchester Evening News, "it became clear today that United supporters were not at fault for the trouble" (23.3.97 p1). FA Chief Executive, Graham Kelly was quoted reinforcing this view: "we haven't heard any reports of misbehaviour from the fans. Everything I've heard so far points to the fact that the fans behaved impeccably" (Daily Mail, 21/3/97 p78), which was obviously his reason for the decision to do bugger all else to help.

The other view, presented in a couple of the fanzines, is perhaps more realistic – "it definitely wasn't a case of smoke without fire as was portrayed in some forms of the media. It seems that whereas travelling English football fans could do no right in the '80's, they can do no wrong in the '90's" (United We Stand, Issue 61). I don't think the cover-up idea needs to be talked about anymore.

This is not to say that those writing the fanzines do not have their own reasons for producing a different view – such as protecting the reputation of United's 'casual revivalists'. This is reflected in some articles in the fanzines; according to one, "embarrassing was the only word fit for the press reports after the game in Porto. Was this the great Red Army...?" (Red Issue, Vol 9, Issue 10). Another article said "as some lads have grumbled, once again we Reds are portrayed by the world media as victims who have lost the lustre for retaliation. Not entirely true... all we can say is that talking to the hospital admissions people in Porto produced some interesting stats as to whom the ambulances brought in" (Red Issue, Vol 9, Issue 10). This seems to be a more accurate view than that of the British media. Fans were involved in fighting, both before and after the game, with the police. There was some damage to the ground, going through the exit tunnel there were two smells, one of tear gas, the other coming from the toilets which had been redesigned by some kind-hearted Reds – as in smashed up and used as weapons against the police. However, I would argue that most of the violence from United fans was retaliatory; what happened after the game could have been revenge for scenes before the kick off, or an idea to get them before they get us from fans expecting more of the same.

A letter to United We Stand (Issue 61) provides perhaps the best summary of the behaviour of United fans: "About 20% of what was going on in Porto was down to United boys (I've not seen a moodier crew in a long time watching



England fan in Rome enjoying the Porto experience

However, when we approached the gates, the police asked to see our tickets, then turned us back. Unless there has been some kind of invention which allows Portuguese policemen to read bar codes with the naked eye, this suggests there were some other problems with the tickets

the Reds). This is not to excuse the cowardly wimps masquerading as the law in Portugal, but some of it was the United fans fault."

A crucial issue was communication, or lack of it. It would have helped before the game to have had someone in authority who could have explained to United fans exactly what was happening, whether the club should have taken responsibility for this or left it to the police (is debatable, but either way it would have helped if the club stewards had had a clue about what was going on, "nothing to do with me mate" wasn't very helpful, was it? That might have reduced the element of chaos; a more organised, ordered approach might have produced pre-match calm and peace. "had such communication been possible on the night... it is unlikely the police would've found the excuse to kick off" (Red Issue, Vol 9, Issue 10). However, as the PSA officer at the game pointed out, "there was no communication between the police and fans except with batons" (Mirror: 21/3/97 p43). The lack of communication was worse still after the match. As Maurice Walkins, United's solicitor, said "it would appear there was a problem with the tannoy announcements and supporters were unable to hear the request for them to remain where they were. As a result, they moved from the terraces to the exit, where the incidents occurred" (Manchester Evening News, 21/3/97, p1). Having watched a video of ITV's coverage of the match, I did hear a tannoy announcement (in clear English) requesting that the United fans remain where they were until they were cleared by the police to leave the stadium.

Two points; firstly, the idea behind keeping us in was to prevent any shenanigans with Porto's Ultra's, yet in the 3 days we were there no-one apart from the police, treated us with anything but friendliness. Secondly, the announcement needed to be audible to those fans at the game, not to Scouse shits watching on their stolen telly's, gutted that our 4-0 lead hadn't been overturned. It was timed poorly, very close to the final whistle when the party (and the noise) was in full swing. As was noted by one fanzine writer, "had the public address system been audible, then the announcement telling fans to remain where they were whilst the area outside the ground was cleared would have been adhered to. As it was, fans tried to leave the ground and the police panicked badly" (United We Stand, Issue 61). It was not only the police who panicked; what was going through the minds of the Reds nearest to the exits, with anything up to 10,000 more behind them, memories of the pre-game crush, and a psychotic police force outside the doors?

It was not only the police who panicked; what was going through the minds of the Reds nearest to the exits, with anything up to 10,000 more behind them, memories of the pre-game crush, and a psychotic police force outside the doors?

Fans were involved in fighting, both before and after the game, with the police. There was some damage to the ground...

The problems such as 'forged' tickets, poor access to the stadium, and particularly the notable lack of communication were all contributory factors. If, as was suggested earlier, United fans should take 20% of the blame, I reckon that the other problems should take around 20% of the blame too, which leaves more than half of the responsibility with the Porto police – they after all failed to communicate, fired the bullets and wielded the batons, provoking a predictable and justifiably violent response. It was perhaps understandably given that "the old ball at the match seemed to think we were all still stuck in '70's hoolie land" (United We Stand, Issue 61), whether or not they were justified in this belief remains very debatable. It will be interesting to see if there are similar incidents in this season's Champions League, and if there are, whether they are "the inevitable knockback of twenty years of hooliganism" (White, 1994, p78).

REVIEWS

United In The Sixties

Remember the sixties when sex, drugs, rock & roll were the order of the day? Well neither do I, but United in the sixties is all about football in a golden age when sane people wore flares.

The book goes some way to providing an insight into not only the fortunes of Man Utd but football in general during the days when the footballing populous could discuss Man City without creating up and a ticket for Man Utd cost less than a blow job.

It briefly intro's in the late 50's and charts Busby's uphill struggle of rebuilding the team after the Munich air disaster before swiftly moving onto the sixties breaking the decade down into individual seasons, giving reports on the crucial games, key figures, attendances, etc.

It follows United's efforts to capture the spirit and success of the 'Babes' in the league and in the then embryonic European cup, a feat which their successors eventually eclipsed.

Highlighting some of the differences with football today it lingers on a time when anyone seated at a game generally had a double barrel surname. The FA were still fannying around in places both club and fan alike didn't want them to, amazingly they tried to bar Man Utd from entering the European cup, and although successful with Chelsea, Busby rightly told them to fuck off.

United in the Sixties is quite illustrating in the picture it paints of football before television and merchandising became involved, not to mention corporate wankers in executive boxes when the game was almost exclusively a working man's sport.

The book goes on to profile some of the more charismatic and influential figures of the era, Charlton, Best, Law, as well as some of the lesser known background players.

Although is not particularly hard going, for people like myself with an IQ lower than a Scotsman's morals, it also has plenty of photos to look at if you get bored. It also has a pocket at the back full of memorabilia from the time, e.g. a letter from George Best's dad, a Euro cup final programme from '68 and a players rule book, which amongst other things advises the players to cut down on smoking in training and on match days!

Verdict

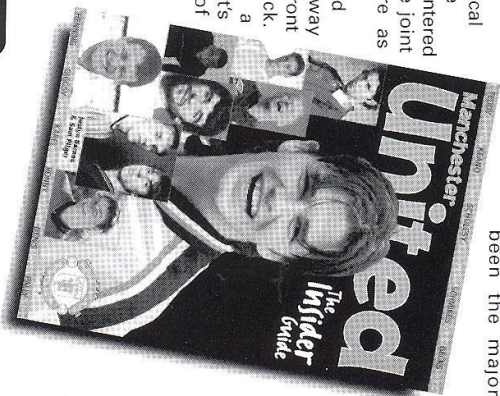
At thirteen quid a throw, it doesn't represent the best value for money, so unless you're reading this from the executive boxes, I'd wait for it's debut at the library.

Manchester United The Insider Guide Price £7.99

Another product from the amalgam of the Man Utd Magazine, Man United books, VCI plc, Zone Ltd. In my line of business, cross company joint ventures usually signal the construction stage of some great civil engineering project, (Millennium Dome, Channel Tunnel being two that spring to mind) which require a greater financial and technical input than one company alone could resource. So with such an august array of plc derivatives tasked with the project, I was expecting an insider guide to blow my socks off and steal a march on next month's tabloid exclusives.

With socks firmly in place on completion of the review stage, I'm still left with the view that this book is quite good from cover to cover, arguably for the wrong reasons. Firstly there's a distinct lack of advertising, which must have been the major

technical hurdle encountered by the joint venture as they worked their way from front to back. As a result it's full of



REVIEWS

readable stuff that ordinarily should have appeared in United's monthly mag. I wonder why not? No room after all the adverts perhaps, or held back to kick the arse out of the Christmas market more likely! The book if you like is the unplugged version of the magazine, not to be confused with the uncensored version, which has yet to be made. Hence no stories of clubbing with Ryan and Davina, spicing up the posh one, Teddy and Totter, and having a drunken brawl with Kearno are to be found in this book.

Still this book makes the ideal Christmas present for any Red of reading age who's got everything but a match ticket.

Panorama – The Money Game. BBC 1 8.12.97.

Based on the book 'The Football Business' by David Corn, this expose of how football is now run didn't quite live up to the pre-match hype. Following the refusal to appear by Edwards, Hall, Sugar, the FA, the Football League, the Task Force, Mellor and Sports Minister Banks, this documentary had as many 'key players' missing as United's 2nd round Coca Cola Cup tie at Ipswich!

The case for the prosecution, how football has changed since the advent of Sky, the Premier League and City flotations. How forming PLC's allowed Edwards and co. to by-pass FA rules preventing profiteering and asset stripping by directors. Now the clubs are merely the football subsidiaries of the PLC holding companies. So nothing we didn't know there, and of course no spokesmen from the greedy bastards to articulate the great contributions to the national game they've made to justify such generosity of spirit to themselves. I suppose we should take great comfort from the fact that United 'won' again, with Edwards skrimping his Premiership rivals handsomely in the cash stakes. Edwards combined share value and sell-offs are touching £100 million. A clear £30 million ahead of that geordie bastard Hall!

So where does that leave the fans, who are underwriting this bonanza with increased ticket prices, over priced merchandise and Sky TV direct debits that have trebled in as many years.

Apart from the contributions of the erudite Andy Walsh and the upstanding Steve Briscoe, of INUSA, Panorama failed to give voice for those who are

prepared to campaign for fans rights and oppose what is happening to our game. Instead they presented those on the receiving end as victims. (Geordie having to pay £66 for his replica bar code having struggled to get his head around paying £50. Paid it anyway. Schools FA going bust because United won't play Father Christmas.)

Panorama (and World in Action,) once at the cutting edge of investigative TV reporting, have had their teeth well and truly pulled by twenty years of Tory media manipulation. In 1984, Neil Hamilton, (the honourable bent bastard for Knutsford) sued Panorama following allegations that he was a fascist sympathiser in the documentary Maggies Militant Tendency. Alastair Milne, the BBC Director General was sacked along with the journalists involved in the programme.

Hardly surprising then that no real emphasis was put on any radical fan based solutions to the problems. In simple truth, no-one is going to do it for us, so we must do it for ourselves. Independent supporters groups, protest groups, fanzines promoting fans issues and concerns, can set the agenda, as INUSA have demonstrated, and effect change.

Fighting Talk Issue 18 Price £1.50.

The latest issue of Fighting Talk, Anti Fascist Action's quarterly magazine, focuses on the recent international conference organised by AFA for militant anti-fascists from across Europe and North America.

Controversially the conference was banned from using their venue after 'interference' from Labour run Camden Council. As FT go on to say "...by the actions of the Labour Council...the first significant step has been publicly taken in this country toward establishing parity of esteem between fascism and anti-fascism."

There's an update on the work of anti fascist groups in Europe and America, along with the usual look behind enemy lines, and an interesting letter from Eddie Brimson which we've kindly reprinted on page 43 for the benefit of all those who have not been inspired by this review to go out and buy a copy!



IMUSA QUIZ NIGHT

PO Box 69, Salford, Manchester M32 0UZ

16TH DEC - 8PM - O'BRIEN'S - STRETFORD

HOSTED BY PAT CERRAND

Do you know who got his tackle out at the 1996 Cup Final?

If you know or not, these are the sort of questions being asked at the next Quiz Night.

At the last quiz night, Reds racked their brains as they tried to remember who were United's first European opponents at Old Trafford (Real Madrid) and who they played in the World Club Championship (Estudiantes).

Competition is fierce but (mainly) friendly, and no doubt Pat Cerrand will keep contending the championship or trying to avoid City-esque humiliation.

We are also hoping to attract a non-footballing guest from Old Trafford. So get a team together, brush up on your United trivia - can you remember what Ryan had removed in May 1994 - and good luck! (small charge for competition entry.)

IT A MEMBER THEN WHY NOT JOIN ON THE NIGHT. MEMBERS BRING THEIR CARDS.

8PM - O'BRIEN'S (UPSTAIRS) STRETFORD (NEXT TO McDONALDS)

32 RED, ANTI

buy a rule by the players and on match



WORLD CUP. PARIS, 1998.

In a Cold War world,
George Orwell once likened football
To the continuation of politics and war
By other means;
And earlier in the century,
When Britannia ruled the waves,
And the sun never set on the British Empire,
England gave football to the world.
In a symbolic display of white mans' control.
And now this game is played by women and men
Of all creeds, colours and beliefs.
In five continents,
And across seven seas and five oceans.
In over 200 countries;
And in an age when Sky never sets on its
global Empire.
People will be watching their teams
In bars and home,
In shanty and in village.
In tower-block and on farm.
At every moment of the day and night,
Across all the meridians and time-zones,
Etched across this spinning globe;
And kids will be kicking balls
On green-grass common, desert sand,
Shingle beach, city street and playground,
Hill side, mountain side, snowy waste
And jungle, forest and river bank
Dreaming of their heroes and famous victory.
And in the city which toppled the Ancian Regime,
And gave the world a glimpse of new possibilities,
Articulated in the new watchwords,
"Liberte, Egalite and Fraternite",
We celebrate the new Age of Reason,
In the year 1998.
And we celebrate the worldwide game of
football Liberty, Equality and Brotherhood and
Sisterhood. Through The World Cup, 1998.
By Stroud Football Post



Win a copy of
"Manchester United
in the Sixties"

Red Attitude have two
copies to give away in our
easy to enter competition.
Just answer the following
question

Question: Name three 60's
United players who
played for England

Answers on a
postcard to:
Red Attitude,
PO Box 83,
SWDO,
Old Trafford,
Manchester
M15 5NU

COMPETITION

WRONGS MUTTERINGS

"Oh my aunt fanny, if he's a class striker then Eddie MacGoldrick is my uncle's cousin. Oh bollocks, he is my uncle's cousin. I've always thought our Eddie could do a job for us actually, maybe sweeper, we've all seen the mess outside OT on a matchday.) which means Andy Cole must be a class striker. One swallow doesn't make a summer, or a video, neither does 15 so far this season (that'll be 15 more than the greedy twat then). But the point is he is class, whether he's scoring at his current rate or not. In short, don't do a Daily Star—morning before Barnsley—(Cole to be axed for OLE? morning after Feyenoord — GIVE COLE AN ENGLAND ROLE."

Two faced bastards, yes it's nice to see him scoring, getting confident etc., but there are people who can appreciate more than his Goals Scored column — such as Assists and Desire to do well for the club.

Perhaps the best thing about Cole's class is it's forged from adversity, like Eric's post-ban form, like Eric's chip against Sunderland after his 'merde' patch, like the 3-2 derby win. Like the bloke on the 141 who chats up a nice young lady, asks to be excused, throws up in the aisle, rejoins with, "So what was your name? (His?) He knows who he is... Andy Cole keeps on coming back from injury, low confidence, missed chances, this purple patch followed Feyenoord at home, remember as Rudyard Kipling said:

"IF YOU CAN KEEP YOUR HEAD
WHEN ALL AROUND YOU ARE LOSING THEM
IF YOU CAN IMPROVE YOUR GAME BEYOND RECOGNITION
WITHOUT THE APPRECIATION YOU DESERVE
IF YOU CAN MAKE FANTASY FOOTBALL'S HILARIOUS
"OLD FOOTBALL WAS SHIT...
BUT NOT AS SHIT AS ANDY COLE"
LOOK LIKE THE LOAD OF TOSS IT WAS
IF YOU CAN SHOVE PEOPLE'S WORDS DOWN THEIR THROATS
THEN MY SON,
YOU WILL BE CLASS."

Why can't someone say something about David Beckham without using the word 'spice'? She's not even the nicest Spice Girl, and is not fit to wipe the arse of Louise (I wouldn't mind that job). Anyway, it'd be nice to hear "you spice twat" being replaced by "not shown last season's form yet but here's hoping..."

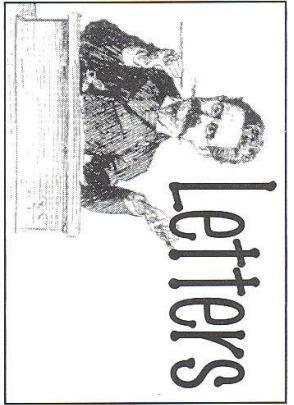
Another French temper loses its cool at Highbury, said the bloke off Sky's Monday review, Petit pushed piss poor referee — put it down to his French temper; Cantona tries to avoid Tony Adams' lunge — put it down to his French temper; Davis breaks Cockerill's jaws — put it down to his French temper. Dead easy this amateur psychology.

I can't work out if we don't buy anyone because we don't need anyone, or if it's because they're all tightarse after their dividends.

So there it was, United @ Sheffield Wednesday 1, predictable sacking to follow. What is it with club chairman? Sike, not doing too well early season, hammered by the best team in the country, let's sack the manager. Which is obviously the key to success. I'm glad Fergie got sacked after the 5-1 derby, after QPR, and after Newcastle and Southampton last year, otherwise we'd have won jack shit by now.



Frank Clark shows no emotion as City take the lead at West Brom



ANDY COLE 'AGAIN'

In the last week I have heard so much shit about Cole it has made me break the habit of a lifetime and write a letter. Now, I agree with the Cole haters that the Barnsley match changed nothing. Andy plays as a central striker and was best placed therefore to get a hatful against the honest but outclassed Barnsley. He also managed to miss at least one chance which should have been put away. But, and I am now coming to my point (at long bloody last, I hear the cry) that same match demonstrated his true worth to us. Andy picked the ball up in their half when there was 10 minutes to go, we were six nil (that's 6 - 0!) up and he had what looked to me like the entire Barnsley eleven between him and the goal. What did he do? Did he lay it back for somebody else to try and do something? Did he wack it into the Stamford end and then look apologetic? No, he ran at the defence, beat at least three men, got the ball to the by line and then laid in a centre which even Pob was able to despatch (seven nil).

I always thought that that was the sort of application we expect to see from somebody in the Red shirt, not some self seeking tosser who only wants to see their own name on the score sheet (Shearer) and screw the club (Collymore). I know expectations at OT are sky high, and are enhanced by the avalanche of chances we create in most matches these days, but I prefer to be realistic. Until Alex actually signs somebody who will do better than score more or less every other match, chucks in the odd hat trick and works his bollocks off for the team (and has a cabinet in his front room stuffed with medals to prove it), then get off Andy's back, and get behind him instead.

By the way, keep up the good work with the mag. It does an old anti-fascist's heart good to see people still bashing away for the best causes. Mick (North Stand Glory Hunting Day Tripper)

SELF?

Dear Red Attitude

Like many others wholeheartedly supported the first-half silent protest at the Chelsea game. Unfortunately for all concerned, Chelsea scored and somewhat sabotaged the protest in the process. At this point (or soon after) the K-stand began singing and I duly followed. Seeing plenty of other reds in the scoreboard were doing likewise I didn't feel at fault, so therefore proceeded to do my normal exercise of trying to generate a better atmosphere.

I have since spoken to the organisers of the protest who told me they were 'very happy' to have me on board. Personal attacks and bullshit in my absence at INUSA meetings, together with snide comments in fanzines do the campaign no good whatsoever.

Although I personally think the tactic of boycotting the K/East stand bars would be more successful, I will support whatever moves necessary in support of a singing/standing end. I do hope this sets the record straight.

Yours 'Self-Publicist'
North Stand Lower (under J)
RA Reply
Dear Self

Thanks for your letter putting the record straight. I'm surprised you take umbrage at what after all is yet more free publicity.

Perhaps your public profile could have been better applied to backing up the spirit of the protest, rather than resuming normal operations at first opportunity, which perhaps has left you open to the 'snide comments' with which you take issue.

As for boycotting the beer and pies, I think it would be quite difficult to dissuade the hungry and thirsty who utilise these establishments from doing so, even the BSE crisis failed to impact on sales.

The alternative is of course to get in the ground early and buy up all the pies. These can then be thrown at regular intervals during the game at those who are not singing / standing / sitting etc in time with the prevailing protest. Any left over pies can be brought back the following week, having sufficiently hardened, for throwing at the SPS.



Dear Red Attitude

How are things with you? I send you the last fanzine of 'Herri Norte' which I hope you received.

I met with supporters of Manchester United on the way to Rotterdam as we were returning from playing Aston Villa in UEFA cup. I send you one photo I took of Herri Norte supporters and Manchester United supporters.

I presented them with one flag of Athletic Bilbao FC to put in Rotterdam Stadium and Old Trafford stadium. I hope you see it okay.

Congratulations to United fans who fought against Feyenoord supporters because they are nazis and have fascist tendencies. Remember this year they killed one supporter of Ajax and Ajax supporters are anti-fascist and the club of Ajax grew with many of them Jewish.

I congratulate the people who fight in the stadium and street against fascism and racism.

All go ahead.

Borja
HNT Algorta

Reds on Tour, France.

Dear Red Attitude

Well, what a bummer, I'm banged up in the French Pyrenees with four other reds from the Manchester area, that's bad enough but to make matters worse in the next cell there's two cockney Arsenal fans (bloody torture).

So as Sundays clash with Arsenal came closer the rivalry became intense and the bats became braver, tobacco, stamps and cakes came up for grabs.

Huddled round our radios on Sunday buzzing, then much banging and cheering from the wankers next door, then after our comeback we trashed the cell and cried "Cockneys, cockneys, give us your cakes." But after their third goal, "devastation", I'd sooner have had another five years stuffed up my trumpet than have to face the taunts of the next cell!

Anyway, I received an old copy of your mag from prisoners abroad which compensated for our defeat, it made my day, for that I'm grateful, its a lifeline to back home, there's nowt like Manchester folk.
So if you can, please send me your mag, keep up the good work, keep smiling, I do...

Yours

Chris Lucas
16968 (cell 15)
Maison Darret Pau
14 Bis Rue Viard
BP 1616
64037 Pau Cedex
France.

RA Reply.

Thanks for your letter Chris, we've sent you a bundle of back issues to help while away the time, along with the latest issue.

Dear Red Attitude

Can you send me one copy of all your available back issues up to and including number 15. I enclose a cheque for £10, which covers it. I have not filled in the payee, but I know I can trust you:-

- a) because of your politics
- b) because I am Spiderman's dad, and
- c) because I have friends with lots of guns.

All the best

RA Reply.

I wouldn't bank on it for the following reasons:-

- a) because we now know where you live
- b) we've taken Spiderman hostage, and
- c) we are currently reviewing our political position following a substantial donation, or unwanted gift as he called it, from Bernie Ecclestone of Formula one fame.

Will Spiderman's dad gets his back issues? Has Spiderman got a web site? All this and more in next month's Red Attitude.

Dear Editor

In the light of recent events, I thought you might be interested in seeing a copy of a Parliamentary Written question I addressed to the European Commission. You will note that the Commission's response seems to suggest that all-inclusive travel packages, certainly on a restricted basis, are against European Community law. I would be very happy to forward all complaints to the European Commission.

Yours Sincerely

Glyn Ford M.E.P. 46 Stamford Road
Mossley, Lancashire OL5 0BE.

RA Reply. Anyone who wants a copy of the correspondence raised by Glyn on this matter, can do so by writing to Red Attitude, or directly with Glyn Ford if you have a complaint to make on this matter.

Dear Red Attitude

On March 1996 has come out REDS SKINHEAD MAGAZINE no.1, a skinhead anti-fascist and anti-racists fanzine developed from our struggles for free and self management spaces in Bari. We want, by means of REDS, to propagate and promote the real skinhead culture in opposition to fascist propaganda and journalistic stunts. Therefore, for us, REDS is an instrument of contra-information about the skinhead movement and about the working class characterised by a strong anti-racists and anti-nazis

identity.
Each issue of REDS will consist of interviews with bands, Oi!-PUNK-SKA-COMBAT recessions, reviews of books and fanzines, concerts, reports of anti-nazis skinhead gatherings, RASH and SHARP news, articles about the history and identity of the skinhead movement, articles about anti-fascist football fans etc.
This is a message for bands, fanzines, skinhead crews and anti-fascist fans to get in touch and exchange fanzines, photos, articles, stickers, badges, etc.
STAY RUDE I STAY REBEL

Andrea Geniola
via Faenza 159, 70019 Triggiano Bari
Italy

REVIEWS

Sing Up For The Champions
The official 1997 Manchester United Single
— Music Collection International Limited

When the bloated, white bearded, paedophile we all know and love as father Christmas drops down the old chimney this yuletide, let's hope and pray that he doesn't leave any of us 'Sing Up For The Champions' by Reds United.

Co written and produced and engineered by the musical genius that is Andy Pickles!! The first question that springs to mind is 'how come it takes two fully grown adults to pen what is essentially the extension of various terrace (if we had them) chants? Perhaps Pickles didn't want to be singularly responsible for this Christmas magnum opus!

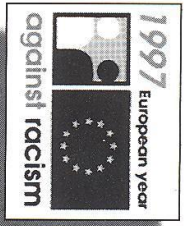
I'm sure that the many thousands of people who crave for anything United will welcome this single into their twisted little homes over the festive period. In fairness if we compare this product to the other seasonal offerings, i.e. the Teletubbies and the Spices, the quality simply shines through.

Gathering together both young and old superfans to wall, out of time and out of tune to the backing track is a marked improvement on Parfitt and Rossi! Although I'm sure Pickles could have saved himself a few quid by hiring the latter.

No apology is needed for marketing the product at the very young and the sadly obsessive follower of MUFJC but the very least Messrs Pickles and Maddison could have ensured was certain level of musical quality. The brass and string sounds all that one would expect from a castor, whilst a decent drum loop would at least have given the track some credibility.

More fun in Accapulco than Jailhouse Rock!!

Marky B



According to the latest British Crime Survey, there are 130,000 to 150,000 racial incidents annually, one of the highest in Western Europe. And the number is rising. Organised racial violence is akin to political terrorism and the BNP, NF and C18 are its political wing. It is not a social problem that can be resolved by better policing, slogans or middle class moral posturing.

Primarily the victims and perpetrators live on the same estates. Any anti-racist initiatives sponsored by the political establish-

From Blackpool to Madrid to Brussels, footballers have united across Europe to show their opposition to racism in football, and in society, and to celebrate and support the European Year Against Racism. Show Racism the Red Card, a Newcastle upon Tyne based campaign against racism in football, launched its new anti-racist video at the European Parliament in Brussels on 3 November. The video, which features top premier league and international stars, will be used as an anti-racist teaching aid in schools and youth clubs throughout Europe.

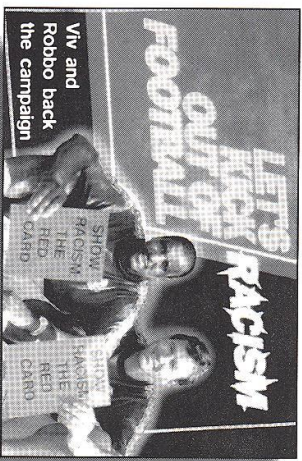
"Young people look to footballers as heroes and we aim to promote them as anti-racist role models," said Ged Grebby, the campaign's coordinator. "The video is a celebration of multiculturalism, showing how footballers from all over the world play together in successful teams."

On the video, players such as Ian Wright, Gianfranco Zola, David Ginola, Tino Asprilla, Paul Ince, Ryan Giggs, Dennis Bergkamp, Uwe Resler, Les Ferdinand, and many others, speak out against racism in football. The campaign has also won support from the Prime Minister, Tony Blair, who said:

"I applaud such efforts to promote greater understanding and respect between our different cultures. I am passionately committed to creating a society where every individual, regardless of colour, creed or race, is afforded the same respect and life chances as their neighbour. Racism has no place in football. Football, like society, should be about fair play and individuals working together as a team - where everyone has the opportunity to make the best use of their skills and talents."

Show Racism the Red Card launched its video in England during October - at the Riverside Stadium in Cleveland, home of Middlesbrough Football Club, and at Highbury, in London, home of Arsenal Football Club. It will also be launched in Germany in December, while events are planned for Italy, France, Holland, Scotland and Wales in 1998.

Meanwhile, 'God' is back. The former French footballer, Eric Cantona, nicknamed 'Dieu' by adoring Manchester United fans when he was playing for the English champions (until May this year), appeared in a one-day football tournament in Madrid on 12 October to celebrate European Year Against Racism. Organised by the Association Internationale des Footballleurs Professionnels (AIFP), the event involved a number of celebrities and football stars, including George Weah of Liberia, and Hugo Sanchez, former World Cup star with Mexico. And in Blackpool, the campaign against racism in football and the European Year have been highlighted by two illuminated neon signs. These were erected in September by local anti-racist campaigners, racial equality councils and the local authority.



Schools and youth organisations can buy Show Racism the Red Card's anti-racist educational video, plus a resource pack, for £35 (Other organisations £50). It is available in German, French, Italian and English. For copies of the video and further information on the campaign, please contact the coordinator Ged Grebby, 4 Drury Lane, Newcastle upon Tyne NE1 1GA, Tel 0191 291 0160 or 0410 775616.



ment, handed down from above, that fails to acknowledge the social basis of race hatred must be regarded with suspicion.

The gap between rich and poor is at it's highest since records began, millions in this country are surviving on crumbs and it is contrary to human nature to expect them to share them.

Continuing to address the symptoms rather than the cause is not a sincere attempt to resolve the issue of racial violence, but to perpetrate it.

AFA

The White Cliffs of Dover...?

The first fascist demonstration for several years was announced by the NF, who planned to march against East European gypsy refugees in Dover on Saturday 15th November. The NF only managed to attract about 60 marchers, but what was interesting was the handful of C18 and BNP activists who turned out with them. Presumably testing the water with regards to future public activity.

The Kent AFA organiser spoke about the background to the march. He said: "Dover has recently been the focus of attempts by the Far Right to whip up public hostility against Romany asylum seekers from the former Czechoslovakia. The Roma people suffer extreme racial abuse in Slovakia and the Czech Republic at the hands of neo-nazi gangs. Once here, because of legislation passed by the last government, they are banned from leaving the town which was their port of entry, while at the same time they are denied the opportunity to work. This is one of the reasons that some locals believe them to be simply 'scroungers'."

On the day itself there were two 'protest' demonstrations called, one by the Kent Socialist Alliance, the other by the ANL: both in the wrong place. A major police operation was launched with suspected anti-fascists being stopped and searched. Despite this, as the NF moved off AFA stewards managed to block the road and confront the march. Police reinforcements were rapidly called up and dogs set on the anti-fascists, but the imaginative use of firecrackers caused considerable confusion to the extent that the dogs ended up attacking the NF. The NF organiser Terry Blackham gave an entertaining impression of a demented puppet as he tried to avoid a firework, subsequently the highlight of TV news bulletins across the nation.

As the Kent AFA organiser explained, "we employed a tactic of continual harassment with individuals getting in behind the line of dog handlers. In this way we were able to slow the march to a snail's pace and the front of the march resembled an almighty scum as more protesters began arriving. The riot police eventually managed to get the march to the main road but as the situation quickly deteriorated the NF's coach was brought up and they were escorted out of town."

So successful was the AFA hit and run tactic that it took the NF one hour to walk less than 500 yards and their original plan of marching to the immigration office had to be abandoned. The successful disruption of the NF march shows militant anti-fascists are willing and able to confront the fascists when they take to the streets, while bearing in mind that the main fascist threat still comes from the BNP who were forced to abandon this tactic 4 years ago.

Talking of the BNP, Tyndall was due to address a BNP meeting in East London in September. It seems all the anti-fascist groups were informed of this and there was a general air of expectancy that 'something would happen'. This indeed was the case, and Tyndall got turned over by ANL supporters outside the pub where the meeting was. AFA members in the area were pleased to see new elements confronting the fascists - but what puzzles us is who was firming the attack and why?

Anti-Fascist Action Round-up

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The quarterly magazine for militant anti-fascists



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 BM 1734, LONDON WC1N 3XX
 AFA NATIONAL PHONE NUMBER 0976 406 870
 INTERNET: [HTTP://WWW.FOOOBAR.CO.UK/USERS/ANTIKH/AFA](http://www.fooobar.co.uk/users/antikh/afa)

STILL DEEPLY DIVVY

WE THOUGHT YOU MIGHT BE INTERESTED IN THIS EXCHANGE OF VIEWS BETWEEN ONE HALF OF THE BRIMSON BROTHERS AND AFA WHICH APPEARED IN THE LATEST ISSUE.

Hello FT, Eddy Brimson here,
 Since Dougie and I wrote our first book many things have been written about us. The majority of what has been written has been total bollocks but soon learn to ignore it and get on with the job in hand. However, comments in your publication can't go unchallenged, labelling us as racists is something we just won't let lie. Let me give you some background information. Since I was born in 1964 I have only ever joined 3 organisations: 1. The Watford FC supporters club 2. The Toyah Wilcox fan club, and 3. The Anti Nazi League.

In our books we have allowed the Fascists to voice their view because, unlike many clubs we won't pretend they have gone away. People need to know they are there in order to do something about it. It is the same method we employ when dealing with the violence that still exists within the game. Yes we have said that the 'Kick Racism Out Of Football' campaign has become counter productive because we believe people have become immune to it, therefore taking away its effect. If you don't agree with our approach then that is your prerogative, but please don't brand us racist for trying something new.

We made the decision early on to be totally honest in our writing, in the views we express and to ourselves. We have found out that honesty is something many find difficult to handle, usually because they have something to hide themselves. We have had to live with plenty of threats from the fascists since the publication of our first book (I am sure you know that this is a particularly strong area for them) but the comments in your publication hurt big time. Someone at Fighting Talk has taken it upon themselves to brand us fascists without having a clue as to what we have been trying to achieve behind the scenes, both now and in the past. That is nasty, Dougie and I can handle most things but being branded racist is not one of them.

Yours

FT Reply: Right. Let's get this straight. We have reviewed two books written by the Brimson brothers and we have slagged them both off for being "boring", "nonsense" and "shit", but not for being racist. In fact, in our review of their first book we point out that "the authors make it clear that they abhor racism."

The Brimsons claim to be "totally honest in our writing". Ha! Despite the offer of two interviews with AFA to get across the militant anti-fascist viewpoint these two jokers preferred to invent an AFA interview in their second book, taking the piss out of our politics in the process. Totally honest, eh? And for someone who is so proud of having once been a member of the ANL is it really acceptable to provide an uncritical platform for fascists in both books?

Racists - no. Arseholes - definitely.



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

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

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

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

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

Join Red Attitude

Membership of MUAFs is now free and is open to all United fans who want to have an input into the work of Red Attitude and MUAFs. 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 5NU.

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 5NU

London AFA

BM1734, London WC1N 3XX

RED ATTITUDE