

TERRACE BINNÉ

FANZINE



ISSUE ONE

The Introduction...

Welcome to the world of Terrace Bint. The only (to our knowledge at least) football fanzine (or fanny-zine as one of my ever so witty male friends has dubbed it...) aimed squarely at a female audience. A word of warning: it doesn't contain photos of "fit footie babes" in Brazil bikinis. Hopeful pervs can put it down now. It also doesn't contain WAG gossip, any articles called "Who is the BIGGEST ENGLAND HUNK?" or similar, or an interview with Delia Smith. It also doesn't contain tedious trainer fetishism, hooliespeak, or self indulgent pseudo Gonzo ramblings.

So what does it contain? Good question. A lot of ranting, a bit of moaning, plenty of crap jokes, and an attempt to address some of the issues that girls and women who go to football, to discuss ideas and share stories and hear our own realities represented. Because that generally doesn't happen in most football fanzines. When women write about football they are generally expected to do serious pieces to demonstrate they deserve to be taken seriously. But they're written from a certain viewpoint of what "serious" is. This fanzine aims, amongst other things, to give women and girls the chance to write about what they personally find important or interesting without worrying about the "NWAf, fuck off to Marie Claire" brigade getting on their case.

It also aims to do the opposite - provide the chance to be totally un-serious, daft, and even downright ridiculous. We're here to take the piss. Out of those who think every article a woman writes needs to be some uberworthy "I get football, honest" type thing, out of the moody sub-casual cliched wank that gets aired all over the place these days, and, of course, not forgetting, out of ourselves for being, like, right on, yeah?

We aren't arsed if the self appointed cool brigades don't like it, we aren't arsed about potential backlash from the NWAf crew, we aren't arsed if it's ridiculed, ignored or dismissed as the hormonal ramblings of a bunch of uppity whiney probably hairy legged man hating etc etc bitches who should stop going to the football and get back in the fucking kitchen rather than moaning about things that don't concern them.

TERRACE BINT FANZINE

To submit contributions, ask questions, or to get our address to send us presents or hate mail...

EMAIL:

terracebint@riseup.net

To keep up to date with news of future editions, please visit:

<http://terracebint.wordpress.com>

If you go in for all that internet stuff, add us at

www.myspace.com/terracebintfanzine

Or search "terrace bint" on facebook.

We aren't arsed because we know that whenever someone tries to assert a cultural identity that differs from the norm, those who hold the cultural power in their hands feel uneasy with it. Terrace culture at present has been created by young white able bodied men and so that culture naturally values young white able bodied men and puts them at the top of the pecking order, the ideal to be adhered to. Anything that tries to create it's own little space within the same arena but outside that mould is bound to be seen as a threat to the power held by those within it and so will be criticised, belittled, or dismissed. So we won't be too surprised or bothered if certain people who fit that mould get a bit disturbed by our presence.

Anyway enough of the recycled cultural theory for now, there's plenty of that coming in the rest of the mag, don't worry... Enjoy this issue, and PLEASE send us feedback, letters, and contributions for the next one. We need your input, in any way, shape or form. This first issue is pretty much a prototype, a test, to see how the idea is received and to hopefully spur contributions for a bigger and better second issue. Get scribbling, get snapping, get angry, **GET INVOLVED.**

TERRACE BINT DECEMBER 2008

So where's all the football then?

Considering this is supposedly a football fanzine, you might be shocked to notice that there isn't actually much football in it. No match reports, player profiles, no discussions of the last round of cup fixtures, in fact nothing much at all to do with issues that actually concern on-pitch action. Why's that then?

Take a look at the name again. There's a big clue in it - the word TERRACE. We're not called Pitch Bitch or Goal Slut or anything equally dodgy because (apart from those names being shit) we're not so much a football fanzine as a football CULTURE fanzine, aimed at a specific section of the people who go to matches, talking about off the pitch matters. (We were going to call it Snatch At The Match but decided to stick that one in the keep net for a future feature...). We're a pan-club fanzine which doesn't want to be tied down to discussing footballing matters of individual clubs that don't really interest or have relevance to a lot of the readership. Not because we don't have a clue about football, cheeky, but because you can get proper coverage of the football in a plethora of other mags, newspapers and normal fanzines. That's not our domain. We're aiming at a niche. ("Women, niche, I wouldn't mind aiming at their niche, fnar fnar..." We know how you think you big throbbing innuendos you.) We also don't talk about women's football because that's a whole different arena; this is for women who watch mainstream men's football in a predominantly male domain, and the issues that arise from that situation. However if anyone wants to drop something into our inbox that's interesting and relevant enough it'll get included. As usual, send all your mitherings in electronic form to terracebint@riseup.net.

Feminising Football?

Women are becoming more numerous and visible at football and are finally starting to get our voices and opinions heard. But unfortunately, it seems that those who receive the most exposure tend to be those who talk the least sense... Terrace Bint rants again.

One of the reasons I started this zine is because I find most attempts to provide a female oriented approach to football either patronisingly vacuous or tear inducingly worthy and boring. Generally accepted female narratives on football usually fall into one of two categories, the "Oh isn't footie ace, I love it, I'm always down the pub watching the game with my scarf on trying to impress the boys with my new knowledge gleaned that day from the back pages of The Sun" or the "Football is a serious matter and we women are just as capable of unnecessarily intellectualising it and infusing it with pathetically weak liberalism as men are." It's enough to turn the hardest purveyor of football feminism into a paid up member of NAAF.... Well, almost.

The first approach is characterised by women who love watching "the match" down "the boozier" with "the lads", swigging alcopops or weak lager while wearing excruciatingly naff T-shirts with slogans like "Footy Bird!" "Fancy scoring with me?" Or something about balls. Cheeky eh?

Their love of "footie" is usually a recent innovation, more often than not coinciding with the breeding and incubation period for most nauseating new-football mongs; a major tournament featuring England. Buoyed by tabloid hype, plastic nationalism and the number of "fit footie loving blokes" they spotted in All Bar One when games were on, they bought some mini car flags, a bit of face paint and an image of football created by the Sky TV marketing department in 1993 and now bang on to everyone in sight about their love of the "beautiful game" (particularly to young men who bear a bit of a resemblance to Ashley Cole and drive flashy two seater cars.) This approach is commonly known by the name of one of its first and most prolific proponents; Zoe Ball Syndrome.

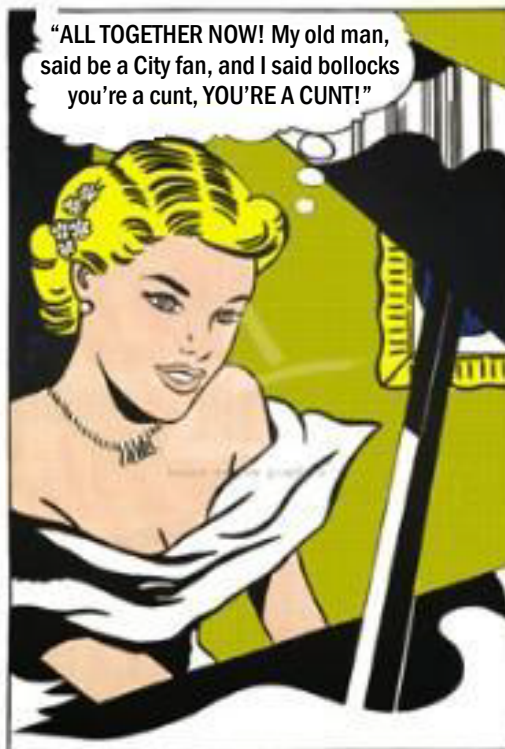
But these creatures, annoying as they are, can usually be easily ignored. Yeah they do your head in, but they're generally harmless.

They give off a bad impression of what a female football fan is but anyone with the slightest bit of sense sees this and doesn't take them any more seriously than they take their interest in the game.



Not so in the case of the second chief example of female footballing fuckwittery, the self righteous pseudo intellectual who has managed to convince both themselves and those around them that they have a true knowledge of football and are in it for "all the right reasons". Their trademark is the bizarre paradox of banging on about how football is a traditional working class sport tainted by modern day moneymaking, while on the other hand despising everything that is working class and traditional about it. Particularly those awful fans with their sexist and racist chants (ok they've got a point there...) and penchant for alcohol and mindless violence.

These stupid interfering self important bitches make my blood boil like no other character in the football stereotype pantheon. Clueless stuck up wannabe journos (a vast percentage of them already are, spouting their inane shite in all sorts of predictable places), and often politicians, with a fabricated view of how football once was gleaned from pictures and BBC footage of smiling crowds of children and men with flat caps and large moustaches and a desire to make football, OUR football, adhere to their sanitised faux-egalitarian New Labour vision. The most nauseating thing is that they genuinely believe that they are genuine football fans. They've been supporting a team for, ooh around 10 years now, their newfound enthusiasm for the game only being outshone by their desire to completely ruin it for everyone else. Now that overt racism has been more or less eradicated from stadiums, thanks largely to fan activism within the grounds



themselves and partially by the cringeworthy mawkish official campaigns led by the FA and other governing bodies, these self proclaimed saviours of football have turned their attention to sexism within the game. But of course they haven't taken up the cause of average matchgoing female football fans and what would make our experiences better - because for all their posturing these women wouldn't be seen dead

mixing it with the rough-necks in the stands - but instead focus their attention on shit that most of us really don't care about and that we actually find not all that bothersome, like swearing and mentioning of "fits" in songs, and players spitting and being bad role models for poor impressionable young children. But supposedly we should all be grateful to these visionaries who are trying to feminise the game on our behalf and make it a happier, brighter, more inclusive sport we can all enjoy,

hand in hand, without pointless macho violence, rivalry, on-pitch dissent, drama, excitement...

How fucking patronising do you want to be? Their lack of engagement with actual football fans, and exposure only to the opinions of the ones they meet in the office or in the press box or hear on pisspoor radio phone ins, has led to this false idea that what we need to eradicate sexism in football is to eradicate all the ghastly macho behaviour and terribly rude chants we are subjected to in stadiums, to make the stadiums themselves cleaner and prettier and more attractive to the ladies, with nice toilets

and a good selection of half time refreshments, with comfortable seats we can sit in to watch the match and stewards to make sure those awful drunken men don't stand up and obstruct our view. Apparently the subsequent new atmosphere will make football a more attractive place for women.

Lord give me fucking strength. Where to begin?! Offensive chanting, moody atmospheres, screaming abuse at players, officials and rival fans alike, standing throughout the game, over the top goal celebrations resulting in injury, widespread drunkenness and general ballooning; these are some of the main things that I have loved about following football throughout my life. And I'm a woman. Why the FUCK would I want to change any of that? Because some women who have recently got into football might potentially find it unpleasant and offensive?

Do you know what I find unpleasant and offensive? Clue; it's not football songs which mention shagging a bucket with a big hole in it. It's this idea that women are humourless, overly sensitive, and unable to handle themselves in the rough and tumble world of following football. The idea that women can't handle football as it currently stands and need some sort of cleaned up, sanitised version of it. How fucking patronising is that?

There is no doubting that some things in football stadiums need to change. All too often at matches women experience some seriously out of order discrimination and harassment that should



The Dutch penchant for liberalism and tolerance brings out the best in their football supporting youth...

never, ever have to be tolerated. Certain sections of our support get excluded from some aspects of following teams; older people and those with some physical difficulties who can't fight their way through large and sometimes violent crowds to get into grounds, particularly at aways, and who can't stand up for long periods of time shouldn't be made to feel they can't come to matches, especially as in most cases these people have been coming for decades and deserve to watch the team they've given so much time and energy to in relative comfort in their older years. Similar arguments apply for those with kids who want to bring them to the match in the same way their parents brought them years before. They need to be guaranteed a certain amount of comfort, safety and access to facilities. (Comfort and safety DOES NOT mean, however, sheltering kids from rude words in football songs. No child has EVER been permanently damaged by hearing the words "Sad Geordie bastard and a shite football team" at a young age so spare me the recycled child psychology.)

Pathetic attempts to change the game by people who actually know fuck all about its everyday reality helps no one. Positive change can only be achieved by fans themselves identifying the changes they want to see and striving to

put them into place with support from their own fan communities. Self organisation and empowering fans to take control for themselves is the way to eradicate the social problems that affect us. That's something that can't be achieved from atop a moral high-ground or a column in The Guardian.

Inspirations.....

FOOTBALL FANZINES

Bit of an obvious one... From searching out old copies of The End and FOUL! on the internet to geeking out over the well-thumbed United We Stand collection in the attic to marveling at the amazing stuff the likes of Wigan's Mudhutter Football Express and Cosenza's Tam Tam are putting out; the scribblings of other obsessive and often slightly odd football fanatics are a constant source of pleasure, inspiration and plagiarism.

DIY PUNK

Forget the Pistols and all that nonsense, we're talking the smallscale, uncompromising, self produced shit. Music, art, poetry and of course fanzines, From Sniffin Glue to Leftover Crack (well I fucking like them, alright!) and beyond.....

RIOT GRRRL

The bands of this early 90s musical, cultural and political movement such as Bikini Kill and Bratmobile provided a suitably angry female soundtrack to the creation of this fanzine while the idea of using the self published page as a way to discuss our lives and realities as women, while giving a middle finger to well crafted prose and professional design in favour of the shoddy, heartfelt and unashamedly female was directly walking in it's legacy. Riot Grrl told us "fuck living your lives how other people want you to, take control of your own life and don't let anyone use your gender as an excuse for not letting you do what you think is right." Spot on.

CASUAL CULTURE

The real Northern deal, not the post-Football factory snide Burberry rip off.

DADA/SURREALISM

SITUATIONISM

Providing key ideas that can help build the tools to smash the modern football spectacle... And a get out clause for anyone who's ever put together a slightly erratic and nonsensical fanzine....

FEMINISM

Constantly belittled by those who fear it. Constantly a source of strength for those who attempt to live it.

NORTHERN SOUL

Be it the hard-edged stompers of Dean Parrish and co or the strong but soulful love laments of Dee Dee Sharp and Martha Reeves, this is the genre that soundtracks both our day to day reality and some storming nights out. Pass the talc....

EUROPEAN SKINGIRLS

Particularly the Germans and Italians; strong, beautiful, intelligent women who refuse to adhere to the feminine myth. Except the fascist ones who can blatantly fuck right off and die.

ANARCHISM

Again constantly discredited by those who fear it's power and don't understand it's true nature. Autonomy, self determination and social justice, not just black hoodies and Rage Against The Machine CDS.

A brief and by no means complete list, featuring just a few of the many many influences at work on the production of this fanzine....

ULTRAS

Continuing the fight for their ideals and upholding the mentality despite constant repression. Absolute inspiration.

FACTORY RECORDS

Not just home to some of the greatest music ever recorded but also pioneers of an ideal of love not money but style AND substance. We like to think we're in some way following in their shambolic footsteps...

ITALIAN HARD MOD

The favoured style of our friends on the Curvas of Napoli; matching the desire for individuality and sharpness of dress of classic mod with the defiantly street level attitude of skinhead without the elitism of the former or the thuggishness of the latter. Throwing a nod towards casual but not as cliché, intelligent working class kids looking smart and getting into mischief while raising a middle finger to a state and society that wants them to shut up and do as they're told.

MANCHESTER

No comment required.

FOOTBALL

Erm, probably goes without saying really, that one....

BOREDOM

Well I certainly wouldn't be writing this without it...

“Won’t somebody PLEASE think of the children?”

TB gets down with the yoof and does it for the kids, etc....

The photo to the right is one I found during an internet trawl for decent images of female football fans for this fanzine; one of the few I found that doesn’t involve gratuitous cleavage. What I love about it is the look of wonder and astonishment on the little girl’s face. Now she is holding a Liverpool scarf, and it was taken last season, so the look might have been caused by recognising Peter Crouch from the previous Saturday’s trip to Chester Zoo, but I think it sums up the amazement we felt at that age when we first started going to the stadium. Amazement at how many people could fit into one space and make so much noise, at seeing those heroes you’ve seen so many times on telly and have pictures of all over your bedroom wall there in front of you in the flesh for the first time. Amazement at suddenly having everything click in your head and realising exactly why people go so mad over football, and taking the first step to becoming one of those daft obsessives yourself.



Supposedly little girls shouldn’t get so excited over football. They should get excited over dolls and kittens and plastic jewellery and going to Brownies, not to the match. But every year there are thousands of girls who start swapping boyband posters for football squad lineups on their bedroom walls; who stop drawing hearts and peace signs on their schoolbooks and start practicing drawing their club’s badge, and who start spending more time trying to make up songs for new signings than dances for new Girls Aloud songs. And they put the Babysitters Club books (or whatever Americanised shite they read these days) aside for a little while to start delving into old football annuals and player biographies (and probably these days hoolie memoir books as well..) and reading about the history of the club that has captured their hearts.

I’m such a daft sentimental idiot when it comes to kids getting into football. The day after the European Cup Final this year, I met a pair of kids, about 5 and 7, waiting with their mum for their dad to come back from Moscow in a pub next to Old Trafford. They were proudly waving mini inflatable cups around and wearing I Heart MUFC T-shirts. They were fucking ace. The little boy, named Ryan after Ryan Giggs, replied when his mum asked him “Who do you love, Ryan?” with an enthusiastic “UNITED!” “And who do you hate?” “SCOUSERS!”. Teach them while they’re young. I’ve come across a couple of kids under the age of 10 in the last year or two whose knowledge of United’s vast songbook has been absolutely immense, who sing with the passion that only a little kid giddy in the first throes of footballing obsession can.

It makes me proper buzzing to know that there are kids getting into football in just the same way as I did all those years ago and who will soon be experiencing all the emotions, good and bad, that I have over the years.

In my diary on the February 6th this year, the anniversary of the Munich air disaster, I wrote the following... “Across the world today there are kids reading books and learning for the first time what happened and feeling the same things as I did when I was a ten year old. Some of them will be about to embark upon an incredible journey that will see them cross seas and borders and continents, make and break relationships, drink and sing and cheer and dance, and have, or rather let, this club shape their personality and life and soul and destiny. Watching them will be parents who have themselves undergone a similar transformation, who have themselves been through all the highs and lows and swings from solitary depression in the bad times to collective euphoria in the good times. And they will realise one day that while you have these very personal moments of joy and anger and sadness and grief, you are in some strange way bound to thousands of others who feel exactly the same way as you do, and though you’ve never met the vast majority of them, when you do meet them you realise your shared experience means you do actually know a strange amount about them”. Like I said, a proper overly sentimental misty eyed dickhead I am at times.

But this over-romantic optimism for the future soon turns sour when I realise, actually, a lot of the kids who once upon a time would go through all this stuff nowadays WON’T be going through it. Not because they

don't feel it in the same way, not because they aren't interested, not because they don't want to - but because they CAN'T do it anymore. How many kids get to go to matches these days on a regular basis when it costs at least £15, usually over £20 a pop? How many parents of young kids these days can afford to pay for themselves to go to matches regularly, let alone for 1 or 2 kids to go with them? Football is increasingly the preserve of the young single person with a disposable income they can spunk away on football without worrying about putting food in kids mouths, the early middle aged lot whose dedication to the cause has resulted them staying or re-becoming depressingly single and with not much else bar Wetherspoon's Curry Club and the Sky Plus subscription to jizz their money away on, and the older lot whose kids are old enough to pay their own way (or would rather jib it with their mates than be paid to go with the embarrassingly past it parents).

I'm not going to carry on with this as yet another long overdrawn rant about ticket prices, which you get in every other football fanzine under the sun more or less; it's just a little something that the older I get and more I start to think about having my own kids I start to worry about. As someone who works with kids I constantly see kids with replica shirts on, talking excitedly about whatever match was on telly last night, recreating Ronaldo's stepover, fighting over who gets to be which team on Pro Evo, winding their mates up who support lesser teams. They know I go to matches and ask me keen as hell about what its like, how close was I to the pitch, am I going this weekend, how loud is the crowd, do I swear (they never seem to believe my attempts to maintain my professional head and say how terrible swearing is...) But almost never do I hear any of them talk about going and watching live football. The closest most get is seeing their Dad play Sunday league. And I know for a fact some of these have parents who go to, or at least used to go to, football; so why aren't they going now and taking their kids to do something they'd blatantly love? Bad parenting? General disinterest? Can't be arsed? I've asked a few, and it won't surprise you to find the answers are economic rather than social.

It's the same with mates at the match. Some of the most hardcore match attenders I know, those who used to go every game with their parents, and still go today, have kids who've only ever been to a handful of games. Not just because they'd rather go on the piss without a kid in tow, but they just can't do it. Going to the match is pricey enough and a lot can barely afford it; even though ticket prices are lower for them, when you factor in all the extra crap you have to buy when you're with a kid to keep them happy and quiet, it's pushing the cost to double an amount you struggle to pay in the first place. They don't want to start taking their kids regularly to games, getting them hooked and then making them feel disappointed and let down when they can't afford to take them more often. That generation I get misty eyed about almost doesn't exist anymore.

Every time this issue gets brought up, blame is laid at the usual doorsteps. Greedy chairmen and directors pushing prices up. Agents and players demanding fees that force clubs to raise prices. Sky TV for creating a climate where the armchair rather than match attending fan is the most valued. The Government whose intervention is causing the rebuilding of stadia and subsequent increase in prices to pay for them. All the usual villains get accused. We're not going to condense complex arguments and the intricate workings of football political economy into a handy line to sum up this article because things just don't work like that. Complicated problems don't lend themselves to simple answers.

What we want to do is throw the debate open. We want to hear YOUR opinions, to hear from matchgoing women and men about YOUR experiences of taking kids at the match, particularly if you're a parent. What do YOU think needs to happen to increase the numbers of kids getting into football, and how can this be achieved? Join the debate by emailing us at terracebint@riseup.net and we'll print your thoughts in the next issue.



DISCLAIMER - somewhere between the writing and printing processes of this fanzine we found a proper smart and simple free desktop publishing thing on t'Internet that let us do fancy things, like text laid OVER rather than just next to images, and so we made it all smart and classy like . Get us eh?! So the first paragraph about making it with scissors and glue now doesn't make so much sense. But then neither does the other 99.9% of this fanzine so it doesn't really matter. Enjoy it anyway.]

I'm going to let you in on a little secret. You might not have noticed, but this fanzine is **shit**. Now I know you're shocked at this revelation, but it's true; it's amateurishly written and shoddily produced by someone who thinks Word 98 is a cutting edge graphic design application. Desktop publishing for us involves hiding my scissors, prittstick and stuff I've printed off the works computer under yesterday's Metro when my boss comes past. But you know what, we really don't care. We're fed up of the mass produced, the overly neat, the sleek, slick and perfectly formed, in football as much as in society in general. Glossy magazines full of polished carefully planned quotes from pre-briefed footballers, every word carefully chosen to be as bland as possible, boringly professional photos showing 25 million megapixels of fuck all of interest. Smarmy men in shiny suits coming out with slick market speak to get shiny plastic fans to buy shiny plastic crap to create a shiny plastic atmosphere in a shiny plastic stadium.

This attitude of everything having to be professionally made, officially sanctioned, perfectly designed to within an inch of its life has become far too evident from those who should know better. Fanzines with a corporate image, flags and banners expensively printed on top quality, erm, plastic; come on, where's the individuality, the creativity, the home made, the hand made, the misspelt and the misshaped? Well, here, blatantly, for starters.

Gripped by a bout of borrowed nostalgia for the unremembered 70s and 80s, Terrace Bint brings you yet another half arsed bunch of scribblings based on ideas nicked from other fanzines slung in together with some things we've seen on the internet and called an article. Part DIY punk, part Brownies badge exercise, roll up your sleeves, get the scissors out and cut out and keep the first in an irregular series of....

(FOOTBALL RELATED) THINGS TO MAKE AND DO!

NUMBER 1 - THE HAND KNITTED SCARF

According to one of my knitting books and a few ranty third wave feminist indie geek zines I've come across, "being anti-knitting is being anti-feminist". Strong point, well put. Supposedly those women who reject traditional women's crafts in favour of more masculine crafts like carpentry, metalwork and face-rearranging are accepting that only the activities that are traditionally done by men are worthwhile, and are therefore actively devaluing that which is traditionally seen as female. How does a woman using a traditionally female craft to create an item to declare her support for a traditionally male pursuit fit into this cultural critique I have often wondered? But then I decide I don't really care and just swing my scarf round my head singing Che Sera Sera.

If you've never knitted your own football scarf, get down your nans with some wool RIGHT NOW and learn. Once you've made one I guarantee you'll be



addicted. Start off with a normal sized one in your home colours, either plain or with simple stripes, nothing difficult. Take it to a game and impress everyone with your "mad skills". Maybe do another one with a thin stripe of a third colour. Then another one and reverse the colours. And another one in away colours. Then an extra long one for when its really cold. Then start embroidering letters onto each stripe, your club's initials in alternating or contrasting colours works well. Then an extra wide one with the club's full name and possibly nickname embroidered on. Then an extra long one with a different players name on each stripe. Then an extra long, extra wide one that could wrap around the entire first team squad and a few reserves 3 times in 5 colours with the name of every player and the result of every FA Cup game you've played since 1976 embroidered on. Buy a decrepid house full of cats, piss yourself on a regular basis and get thrown out of public places for groping teenage boys and randomly screaming "MONEY GRABBING YANKEE BASTARDS!" at confused passers by. Last few steps are optional.

Sex & The Inter City

Terrace Bint gets as close as it's getting to that telly thing with the four tarts in New York and delves into the weird and (sometimes) wonderful world of copping off at the football.

The whole existence of this fanzine is based on one crucial fact. Well its based on a number of facts; most crucially the fact that I am currently unemployed and have a lot of time on my hands that allows me sit around writing crap like this; but most importantly it's based on the empirically observed phenomenon that more men attend football matches than women. Many many more men than women. Which usually benefits men. Football has long been geared towards them, as we well know, hence the whinging in most parts of this fanzine. But there is one area where sometimes the gender ratios work in our favour...

For the uninitiated, football doesn't seem to be an ideal place for romance to flourish. The typical image they believe represents an average match crowd is a stereotype rooted in truth; loads of beered up blokes packed into a small space, sweating, swearing and dodgy-burger farting their way through ninety minutes, with an undercurrent of hatred and violence bubbling away underneath; not the most romantic of atmospheres, they think, unless your taste in men lies at a halfway point between James Nesbitt and Rab C Nesbitt.



And, to be fair, they're sort of right. True, there are a disproportionate amount of extreme mingers amongst football crowds. (MALE mingers, no

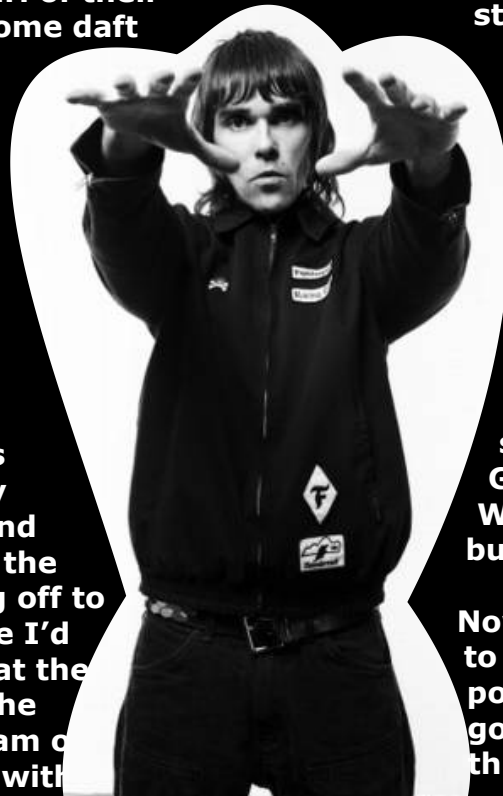
snidey comments about the state of our own mashes for now please.) The vast majority of the men at most football matches I wouldn't in normal circumstances want to sit next to on a bus for 90 seconds, let alone somewhere I've paid £30 quid to be for a full 90 minutes. But, luckily, there are a few diamonds in the rough. And, as there is a LOT of rough, some of

the diamonds you do get are of the high carat, finely cut, extra smooth and sparkling variety. You also stumble across a fair few of the Diamond White variety but we'll metaphorically leave them soaked in their own piss by the can-strewn wayside.

A lot of women, myself included, at a certain point in the football supporting life, make the troublesome transition from cute, scarf waving little girl, hand in hand with Dad, giggling at the rude words in the songs, to horny, player-fancying teenager, hand in hand with a set of

Newly raging hormones, sniggering at all the rude things they'd like to do to that new young winger that's just come up from the youth team. And a short time after that their attention starts to turn away from those devastatingly gorgeous but even more devastatingly unobtainable boys on the pitch towards the infinitely not as gorgeous but infinitely more obtainable boys in the stands next to them.

I remember being about 13/14 and at the point of turning from shirt wearing kid to wannabe casual-ette, after having discovered United We Stand, the Stone Roses and arrogance. Suddenly those older lads with the nice coats who liked to sing a lot were recognised as uber cool, uber fit, and far more worthy of my desire than the players with their crap haircuts and Luther Vandross filled CD collections. With my best (and only) Adidas tracksuit top and matching Gazelles on I'd attempt to cut a swathe down Matt Busby Way, stopping off to buy fanzines from the my favourite (fittest) sellers (fit fanzine sellers?! Oh how times change...) who I hoped would recognise me as the girl of their dreams and not just some daft teenager trying to say "One please mate" in their Manc-est accent despite being from South Wales. I'd then walk past the steps that led up to the old entrances to K-stand and gaze longingly at the queues of lads in the highest quality moody-chic dark coats swaggering their way across the forecourt and singing their way into the ground, before sulking off to the family stand where I'd continue to look over at the buzzing area behind the opposite goal and dream of the day I'd be in there with them.



Like most naive young girls into football I thought that one day I'd find the perfect match; someone who loved my team like I did, who would understand all the strange little quirks and in-jokes that football fans have, who I would travel across the UK and Europe with, on buses and trains and in far flung stadiums, drinking and laughing and having a riot in the name of United. And who of course would have indie pin-up good looks, impeccable musical taste including a vast record collection I could steal from, be fantastically dressed and have a proper rock n roll Manc attitude. A Mani/Ian Brown/Tim Burgess/Richard Ashcroft/less twattish and not city-supporting Liam Gallagher clone who could guarantee me away tickets.

Not much to ask for eh? Perhaps unsurprisingly despite a number of (always doomed) terrace romances the closest thing I've had has been spending an unhealthy amount of time staring at the real Ian Brown who I've been sat very close to at the match on a number of occasions. A couple of times I've been stood right behind him going out of the stadium and been tempted to pretend there's a push behind me and stand right up close with my tits touching his back and my crotch near his arse, or "accidentally" fall into him and touch his hair with my face or something. Then I get a grip and realise I don't really want him to think of me as "that weird bird who frottages me in the ground" and attempt suppress my raging sexual desires by thinking of Malcolm Glazer doing the fan dance. Which ALWAYS works. Harsh but effective.

Now I feel obliged at this point to make it clear that the whole point of going to the match is going to the match, lest you think I'm painting a picture of

some sort of bizarre plot to find love in unusual places, the next step being to join a penfriend to a prisoner scheme and end up marrying Charles Bronson. This myth that women go to football solely to find a potential husband is just that, a myth; the notable exception being when a certain fame hungry bitch called Victoria Adams once accompanied her annoying Scouse bandmate to United-Liverpool with the explicit aim of digging her filthy fangs into our unsuspecting young midfield star, poisoning him with her stupid fucking ideas about moving to the continent and leeching onto his talent because she didn't have any of her own the manipulative little pencil legged tramp. (Not that I'm bitter or anything, obviously...)

But regardless of what outsiders might think, a footballing environment does actually lend itself to the potential for amorous situations; being passionate about the same thing on the pitch can often lead to sharing a bit of passion off it. Football fans, for all the serious posturing, tend to be a bit of a daft romantic bunch; we sing all sorts of over the top sentimental songs and about love and pride and long overly emotional tributes to past teams and players, and are prone to bouts of misty eyed nostalgia and getting all tearful at certain poignant times. And this emotionally charged atmosphere we often find ourselves in, in stadiums and pubs and on long distance journeys, when celebrating glorious victories and trying to cast away the blues after particularly bad losses, and in all the other sorts of places we end up in, usually combined with the warm hazy feeling of drunken naughtiness, sometimes leads to emotional entanglements of a different nature.



When times are good and you feel on top of the world you want to share that feeling with someone, particularly someone who gets it and is more pleasing to the eye than your much loved, but obviously not in that way, mates.

The boozy madness and live for the moment giddy holiday atmosphere of European away games, for those of us who are lucky enough to have them regularly, are one of the prime places where those sneaky smiles and winks across a crowded bar tend to develop into something a bit more; hotel rooms are already secured and, to be fair, most blokes on a euro away are after any bit of action they don't have to pay for so for. The heady combination of strange foreign booze and being in some beautiful European city is a powerful aphrodisiac. Unfortunately though the idea is usually better than the execution; a drunken awkward fumble in the bathroom while trying not to wake the roommates up and keeping an eye on the door in case anyone else comes in when you're hitting the heights is usually about as good as it gets. The only time the earth moves is when some useless fat cunt can't find their room and collapses in the corridor outside. (By the way I'm talking from the generalised sense I get from other people's conversations about what THEY get up to here obviously; I've never been involved in anything of the sort...) Long boozy post-match sessions, long coach and train trips on the way back from away games, and end-of-season dos and other football related functions are also places where steps in that direction are taken. Somewhat unsurprisingly alcohol seems to play a large part in all of these scenarios. Not quite sure what that says... But of course in these circumstances there's no such thing as a one night stand.

There's not much chance of a "wake up next day full of hung over regret, quick walk of shame and then never see them again" scenario. You'll see them again and again, in the most awkward of circumstances, usually with everyone knowing what happened and plenty of sly nudges and winks. Word gets around the football grapevine faster than Rooney gets his mouth around a Big Mac.

On the whole, these encounters are pretty rare; much more frequent are the unwanted advances and occasional gropings by the older, even more desperate mob, who seem to think the sheer novelty of your presence means that they have to attempt a stab, in more ways than one. While most of these pisspoor attempts are done as drunken bravado, so woefully direct and embarrassingly obvious that the only thing you can do is laugh, sometimes you come across a few sleazier, snidier attempts that merit a loud "get to fuck" or sometimes even a slap. Over affectionate goal celebrations, the offer of hard to come by tickets as a sugar-daddy esque sweetener in return for "favours", allowing you to double up at the turnstiles when ticketless, then squeezing just that bit too close for comfort to the point where the back of your legs feels more than just a hint of semi on... really lads, it's just not on. Getting titted up in the half time bogs queue is hardly the makings of a steamy encounter. On the whole, while it's always useful for a bit of fun, relationships founded at the match that involve real men and not just one-way adoration of the ones on the pitch are just too fraught with issues to work out. Yeah some people have managed to find the love of their lives at the match, and every close season there seems to be yet another

wedding of a perfect couple who rewrite the Pogues tune, having found their love by the stadium wall, dreamed a dream by the old South Stand etc etc. But for the vast majority of us, being with someone at the football is just too much of a hassle, too big a distraction from what you're actually there for. Football fans can be pretty selfish and prone to putting themselves first, which is hard to do when you're stuck with a partner; it's a pretty personal thing at times and you need that space to be able to do what you need to without worrying about someone else. Not to mention what happens when an argument starts; a pub discussion about whether Giggs is past it all too easily develops into a full blown row of the what the fuck do you know about anything anyway, you always think you know it all you arrogant twat, yeah well you didn't know when my birthday was did you sort that carries on way past the initial drunken nonsense stage. Who you're going to that away game with, how its not fair if they go and you don't, why didn't you try to get me a ticket as well, I turned down going to such and such 'cos you didn't get one; it all gets completely ridiculous. Jealousy and paranoia from knowing too much about your respective social lives, tension about on pitch matters spilling over into off the pitch matters, and usually in a very public way; it's all too much fucking hard work. Business and pleasure, it just doesn't mix. Besides, to steal a line from the aforementioned Ian Brown that has graced many a United flag in the past - "One love, you don't

need another love." When you're in love with a football club you don't really want anything or anyone else getting in the way of that special relationship. Unless, of course, Mr. Brown is stuck for somewhere to sleep on the next Euro away...



Miss O'Gyny Proudly Presents: A Guide to Terrace Etiquette

As most of you ladies are no doubt aware, being, as you are, at the very forefront of social trend setting, association football has recently emerged as one of the most popular spectator sports of the day, with football matches overtaking horse races, pheasant shoots and public hangings as THE sporting event at which to be seen. Here we present for you a useful guide to football that will help every modern lady to act in the correct way when encountering the game for the first time.

Selecting a team

For a lady, the choice of which football team to support is usually made for them, as they simply acquire the allegiances of father, husband, potential suitor or the other most significant man in their life. However should a lady not have a suitable male role model with an interest in football to make this crucial decision for them, they can freely choose a team for themselves according to social class, family wealth and background, religion, and political affiliation. It is preferable to choose one of the teams which came into existence via Christian sporting associations, such as Everton (formerly St Domingo's) Southampton or Bolton. However, avoid those teams which combine their Christian ethics with some form of socialism, thus attracting large numbers of the working class and other undesirables. Be sure also to avoid teams whose origins have Catholic, or even worse, Jewish, associations; teams who originated in factories or other lower class working environs such as Arsenal (don't let the former "Royal" tag confuse; they have no real ties to royalty, originating in the decidedly unfashionable environs of the munitions factory at Woolwich) and teams whose supporters are prone to fits of violence and unsporting behaviour (for example Aston Villa, whose howling roughs attacked Preston North End players with stones, sticks and their own spittle recently in 1885). It is best to avoid any team from further north than Oxford; the brutish inhabitants of the northern lands cannot be trusted to behave themselves in sporting fixtures, as in the rest of life.

Dressing For The Match

Whilst there are no strict rules on how a lady should present herself at a footballing match, it can generally be advised not to wear too much finery for fear of having it dirtied or spoiled by other spectators. Full skirts and petticoats are best rejected in favour of narrower skirts in order to avoid being stepping on. Bear in mind that when approaching a turnstile be careful to gather together ones skirts and petticoats to avoid entangling oneself, causing tags and snares to one's outer-garments and perhaps even unwelcomely displaying



Parasols and flowing skirts: What NOT to wear.

ones undergarments. Sun umbrellas are generally frowned upon in the stands as they may impede the viewing of the spectators behind. To protect delicate skin from sun a wide brimmed hat with lace veil is regarded as more suitable. Please ascertain that hats do not feature protruding feathers, overlarge floral corteges or other decorations which may obstruct the view of others.

Etiquette During Play

It is considered wholly improper to experience lustful thoughts of players, who are sporting professionals, not postcard pin up boys. If one does feel that ones bodily reaction to the sight of so many dashing young men with partially exposed knees may cause offence or embarrassment, discreet use of a handheld fan can be useful to play down symptoms of heated flushes, decrease body temperature and disguise facial redness. Rehearse controlled breathing exercises before players appear upon the field of play to prevent hyperventilation or excessive panting during the match. Remember, fainting at the sight of the players entering the pitch is NOT a dignified way to conduct oneself in public.

Though finding oneself in an arena of such raw emotion and excitement, ladies should maintain an air of dignity and decorum throughout proceedings and resist the temptation to follow the behavioural examples of the surrounding menfolk. Just as in the outside world, no one appreciates a hysterical woman at a sporting venue,

Should your chosen team be involved in the scoring of a goal, then applause, hurrahs and other congratulations should be genuine but composed. Vocal encouragement for the team during moments of excitement should be avoided. Whilst you may feel that a helpful "That's the spirit!" or similar may be acceptable and even expected in these circumstances, remember that the shrillness of your voice may cause more harm than good by both offending the ears of the men around you and even potentially distracting the players, both of whom do not want to be reminded of the high pitched nag of women in a footballing arena.

Should the opposing team score, allow yourself to emit no more than a quietly disappointed sigh before heartily applauding the effort and valour of the opposition.

Finally, should the referee make a decision the male spectators regard as potentially unfair, do not join in with their vocalised demonstrations or indeed make ANY comment whatsoever; not only are you incapable of understanding the rules of the sport but as a woman you have absolutely no right to question the decisions or disrespect the authority of a man.

Should you hear any form of excessive profanity from a nearby male spectator a firmly disapproving look in their direction should be enough to emit an apology and doffed cap. However remember that you are encroaching upon male territory and they should not have to change their behaviour in their own environment to satisfy your overly delicate little ears. Just as should a foreigner come here and demand the use of their own language by British natives they would be immediately shipped off back to the colonies for offending our national honour, so any woman who attends a football match and demands the end to vulgar or profane language in their presence will be rightly requested to return to their drawing room.



**The "Dashing Moustaches" of Blackburn,
firm ladies' favourites.**

As one of the extremely few ladies in a predominantly male environment, an amount of amorous advances are to be to some degree expected. However should any man act in an excessively or inappropriately direct way or resort to groping, alert the manfriend who has accompanied you who will most certainly intervene to defend your honour. However should you have attended the match independently and without a manfriend to protect you, you are blatantly a brazen hussy who deserves everything she gets, and more.

Confronting the “lesser ism”

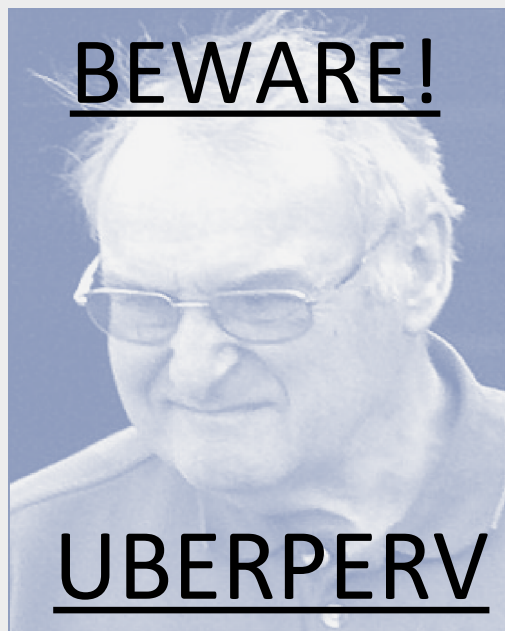
Racism? Well out of order. Sexism? Just a laugh innit?

Now I've had some perts try some tricks at the match before but this bloke really takes it a bit far. Caught by a surveillance operation after rubbing his crotch against a woman at Colchester United's Layer Road ground, 70 year old Brian Lamb was banned from every sports ground in the country in April after it was discovered he had previously been banned from Cambridge United's Abbey Stadium for a similar assault on another woman.

Worryingly, Lamb actually lived in Ipswich but admitted he didn't go to Portman Road as it's an all seater and he could only get away with this type of thing at stadiums with terracing where he could press up against women then move away without raising too much suspicion. Rumours he's going to start a fanzine called Terrace Perv are as yet unconfirmed.

Taken as a bit of a joke in some quarters, particularly given the photo of Lamb that appeared in The Sun, reproduced above, which shows him in stereotypical dirty old man style, with big glasses, scruffy grey hair and a scrunched up weirdo face that you just know means he's making "mmmm, ggrrrrr, oooh" noises while rubbing himself in the trouser area, the matter wasn't taken all that seriously in a lot of places. But what happened was unbelievably sick- one steward who caught him after seeing what he was doing said it was "so horrible, he couldn't even bear to watch". If a steward found it that disturbing to watch, what must the woman it happened to be feeling?

Massive respect to the stewards and the authorities for taking this seriously and giving the bloke everything he deserves. (Actually I'd say he deserves to have his knob shredded off with a cheese grater but then I'm unfortunately not in charge in these matters.) However this was a particularly sick and fucked up example of a full scale register-deserving weirdo. **Supposedly "lesser" examples of sexual harassment at football matches are all too often shrugged off as part and parcel of being in a male environment. A lot of people just don't seem to accept the divide between light-hearted banter and explicitly aggressive sexual behaviour when it's in the context of a football match.**





Terrace Bint's matchday wear: Valerie Solanis Goes Casual.

Behaviour that would be acknowledged as completely unacceptable in any other setting, and that even in a nightclub would nine times out of ten get the perpetrator a rap, gets passed off as just a bit of daft machismo, blokes showing off in front of their mates and having a laugh. What fucking right have they got to "have a laugh" at our expense? This stuff is never done when the woman in question is with other men as that's obviously disrespectful and so off limits, but a single woman (or sometimes a pair or small group of single women) is considered fair game. When I'm with my mates or in a group I never get any hassle, unsurprisingly; but if I'm on my way to the bogs, or at the bar, or in a seat in a different part of the ground to the others, or going between pubs or on the way to meet someone after a game, that's when the trouble generally happens. **Because the blokes who do it are cowardly fuckers who can only be hard when they're in front of their mates and Stella'd up. Hard as fuck eh.**

I've had the full range of nonsense at matches, from the odd cheeky comment and chat up attempt that's intended in good humour and taken in the same way, (and come on, being honest, is pretty welcome at times, though it does seem to be decreasing as I get older...) to the slightly OTT touchy-feely goal celebrations and attempts at getting chatted up in the bar at half time which are generally just a bit annoying and get put right with a few sharp words. But more often than I'd like I've been subjected to some really dodgy stuff from groups of blokes mouthing off or trying it on really strongly that's made me really uncomfortable, angry, scared and upset. When I confront it (which I generally do, being a bit of an angry fucker a lot of the time...) the "It was only a joke" get out clause is usually used to defend the behaviour. Sometimes when they're being particularly twattish I just get abuse hurled back, which in a lot of cases is actually easier to deal with than this "it's just a laugh, lighten up you miserable cow" bullshit which is REALLY insulting. It's not a fucking laugh to me if I'm offended by it, and that's reason enough to stop doing it. Who are they to tell me what I should and shouldn't feel insulted by?

We as women have the right to define what is sexual aggression, what makes us feel threatened and what needs to be stamped out. Confrontation is the only answer, but it's hard to do so a lot of the time; when you're scared or embarrassed the last thing you want to do is kick up a fuss. But ignoring it helps no one and allows stuff like this to continue to be accepted. In an ideal situation those around you will say something to put them in their place but there's nothing snide about reporting to a steward or someone else if someone's acting up; if you can't deal with a situation on your own there's no reason not to ask someone else for help. Both clubs and supporters have rightly recognised that racist abuse and aggression in stadiums is abhorrent and should be dealt with. It's about time sexism was treated in the same way.

The queue forms for Issue 2.....



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