

## 10) TWTD Issue 64, Oct 2002: "Raydon hold family funday"

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Malcom Baggio has milked the udder of the Ramblings Cow to produce a pint of fresh Raydon news milk. Widespread fun manifested itself at this year's annual Raydon Athletic Fun-Day which was held at ClocktonPark on August 25th. The event included rides, inflatables, stalls, silly races, stocks, face painting, butter churning, and clowns for the children and a large beer tent for the adults.

The centrepiece of the event was Raydon's home match against Wenhaston Albion in the Eastgate Shopping Centre Cup. In a strategic ploy to create a more vociferous crowd, Chairman Lionel Stubbs decided to open the beer tent at mid-day, two-and-a-half hours before kick-off and serve half price beer. In another strategic move, Stubbs decided not to tell Wenhaston about the fun-day in case they brought along a larger number of supporters. The plan worked as nearly 80 beer-guzzling Raydon revellers arrived at mid-day to take advantage of the beer offer. By the time kick-off came round, there were over 200 Raydon fans around the pitch, many of whom were singing and chanting in support of their team, albeit at times in an inaudible, drunken murmur. It was an intimidating atmosphere for the Wenhaston team who had only brought along six supporters and they were three of the player's girlfriends with their babies.

As the Wenhaston players made their way onto the pitch they were subjected to a barrage of obscene abuse from large drunken sections of the Raydon crowd. The manager of Wenhaston, Frankie Warlord was so furious about the abuse that he quickly rounded his team up and led them back into the training shed. He refused to allow his team to compete in the match unless the drunken supporters were removed from the pitch side. Lionel Stubbs and manager Roland Peters had great difficulty in persuading them to leave. Eventually Stubbs managed to entice them into the beer tent with the promise of free beer throughout the duration of the match.

The match kicked off with Raydon attackers in rampant form. McManahammond, Mnunga and Mackinackie scored early goals to put Raydon three up. Meanwhile Raydon keeper Ian Buffalo was a bored spectator, so much so that he popped to the beer tent for refreshments. His absence had no negative impact on his team's fortunes, despite there being a five minute queue at the bar and Raydon conceding two corners and a free kick on the edge of their own box while he was gone. Buffalo was called into action shortly after returning to the fray carrying a bottle of lager. A Wenhaston player struck a speculative 30-yard drive goalwards. Buffalo tossed his bottle of beer high into the air and dived acrobatically to his right to tip the ball wide with his artificial arm. He then recovered in impressive fashion to launch his body to the opposite side of the goal and catch the bottle of beer in his left hand while in mid-air. Wenhaston pulled a goal back from the resulting corner.

Just before half time an RAF Sea King helicopter appeared in the sky and began descending ominously towards the pitch. Chairman Lionel Stubbs began panicking desperately as he suddenly remembered arranging eight months earlier for the helicopter to land at the ground as one of the day's attractions. He had forgotten to cancel the booking when he discovered that Raydon had a home cup match that day. Stubbs ran onto the pitch and explained the situation to the referee who duly blew up for half time a minute or two early to enable the players to clear the pitch so that the helicopter could land.

To make matters worse, as the helicopter landed, the wind generated by the rotor blades caused the beer tent to become detached from its moorings. It was blown high into the air and became stuck some fifty feet up a tree. The louts who had been residing in the beer tent were driven into an irrational, alcohol induced rage by the sudden disappearance of the tent and began overturning tables and chairs, throwing bottles and glasses and vandalising the bar.

Fortunately, one of the attractions on display at the event was a police car with two policemen. They used tear gas and plastic bullets to disperse the crowd and when more police arrived on the scene, 17 arrests were made.

After the situation had calmed down, there were still fifty potentially rowdy Raydon fans left who needed to be kept away from the pitch side so as not to jeopardise the progress of the game. A new beer tent was needed and was found in the form of a slightly smaller tent that was being used by the local scout group who were unsuccessfully trying to raise money for charity by selling hand-made spheres. Stubbs promptly commandeered their tent and relocated the scouts, some of them forcibly, with the help of some of the more burly boozed-up fans.

The second half started with the crowd bolstered by a group of tearful scouts. The helicopter crew had by this stage joined the merriment in the new beer tent and were unfit to move their aircraft, so the players decided to play round it. This favoured Wenhaston as the helicopter had landed ten feet in front of their goal and made it difficult for Raydon to attack. Most crosses invariably bounced off the helicopter and went out for a goal-kick or throw-in. Wenhaston piled on the pressure as Raydon lost interest. Many of their passes were now going astray with players increasingly seen looking longingly at the beer tent. Nevertheless it was Raydon who scored again as a simple looping backpass from a Wenhaston defender ricocheted off the helicopter's rotor blade and dribbled past the keeper. The unlucky Wenhaston defender was also carried off with a broken toe after angrily kicking the side of the helicopter in frustration. At four-one the game seemed won but there was yet another interruption when the helicopter's radio went off to signal an emergency at sea. Lionel Stubbs ran into the beer tent to retrieve the crew and emerged ten minutes later propping up the two drunken pilots. It took another ten minutes to get them the 100 feet to the helicopter. There were many worried faces in the crowd as the helicopter took off, swerving violently from side to side. It suddenly lost height and came within a millimetre of colliding with the training shed before regaining height again. The crowd cringed as they watched the helicopter disappear into the distance, narrowly avoiding power cables and a church spire.

The game restarted with five minutes left and the Wenhaston defence found it difficult to adjust to the absence of the helicopter from their goalmouth. Raydon capitalised with McManahammond and Kilkorkey scoring to make the result 6-1

to Raydon.

The fun really started after the final whistle, with Stubbs and his players heading towards the beer tent and other attractions. Roland Peter gave everyone a good laugh when he allowed himself to be put in the stocks and have rotten fruit thrown at him. Visiting manager Frankie Warlord proved that he was also a good sport by going in the stocks after Peters. Unfortunately Lionel Stubbs inadvertently announced this over the public address system (which hadn't previously been used all afternoon). This led to the majority of the drunken Raydon fans descending upon the stocks armed with slightly more sinister ammunition such as human excrement, broken bottles, offal and a bench. Unfortunately this tomfoolery coincided with the stocks jamming. The police were called into action again and by the time they had herded the crowd back into the manageable confinement of the beer tent, a heavily bruised and bleeding Warlord hung limp from the stocks. He was unconscious but still had a smile on his barely recognisable face. The smile was still there as he was loaded into the back of an ambulance still trapped in the stocks.

The drunken mayhem continued throughout the evening and into the early hours with no further notable incidents except for the abysmal live band 'To Hull and Back' being booed and then violently expelled from the stage half way through the introduction to their opening number. Dougie McManahammond was also sick into the butter churn.

By Daniel Harvey and James Powell