WHEN SATURDAY COMES

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As I write this I'm looking at two pictures which just about sum up everything that's right and everything that's wrong with British football today. One is of Pat Nevin and the other is of Ken Bates. They're both smiling, but Pat's smile says: 'I'm doing something I love', and Bates's says: 'I've fooled you all'. I could go into detail, but I'm sure you know what I mean. Some people are in football because it's what they do best and what they enjoy doing, others are in it to squeeze every last drop of prestige, power and money out of it - and at the moment the Squeezers are having a fine old time of it.

Right, hopefully that'll be just about the last bit of moralizing and pontificating in this issue. This paper isn't going to be any sort of crusade, which is just as well, considering how many people are likely to read it, but I thought I ought to sketch in a bit of background first, in case you thought I was coming to laugh at football's funeral. Of course the game's in a bad way, but if everyone's just going to be miserable about it and go around wringing their hands all day, then there's not much point trying to save it at all. It's meant to be fun for Chrislake.

OK, definitely no more preaching. Maybe I should try to say what I want 'When Saturday Comes' to be, or at least what I don't want it to be. It's not going to be clighted, hackneyed, lazy journalism, it's not going to be banal ghostwritten platitudes, it's not going to be tedious, whitewashing interviews, it's not going to be full of statistics or match reports, and it's certainly not going to indulge in petty rivalries, though it must be fairly obvious already where my sympathies lie! All that sort of stuff is available in abundance elsewhere.

* Some bits of it might be!

What it might be a bit more like is the sort of thing you talk about in the pub. Gossip, stories, arguments, some serious things that never get discussed anywhere else, like racism at football, but mostly not. It depends a lot on what other people contribute - obviously I really only know about things that go on in London, so I really want to hear from other places. Why do Forest (and Mansfield) supporters chant "One, One, One" when they get a corner? What exactly is a Ferrie? What is it about certain clubs (e.g. Liverpool, Ipswich, Arsenal) that attracts so many players with big noses? Does anyone in football actually like Ron Saunders? What sort of crowds do Steinhousenur get? These are the sort of questions I've always wanted the answers to, but no publication ever tells me. Maybe 'When Saturday Comes' will, it's up to you.

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Well, go on then...

'When Saturday Comes' is an offshoot of 'Snipe!' fanzine, available from the same address. Although 'WSC!' is coming out at the same time as 'Snipe!' no. 3, I don't know if they'll always appear simultaneously. It depends on the demand really. For the moment we'll just take every issue as it comes. At the end of the day I'll always give 110% and you can't ask for more than that really, can you?

Seeing as I don't fancy taking my chances selling 'WSC!' alongside 'Bullhead' on the Pulman Road on a Saturday afternoon, it's going to rely completely on mail order sales. So if you think you could get rid of a few for me, it would be more than welcome. I don't know why I bother to say this really, just tradition, I suppose.

Please don't bother to turn the page if your name is: Jimmy Bill, Brian Moore, Bert Millhchip, Ted Croker, Robert Maxwell, Kevin Keegan, Clive Thomas, Don Revie, Ron Saunders, Ken Bailey, Irving Scholar, Don Howe, Bobby Gibson, Jack Charlton, John Bond, Bob Wilson, Graeme Souness, Ron Noades, Howard Wilkinson, Ron Atkinson, or anyone else who thinks they know what's good for us. You wouldn't enjoy it, anyway, at least I sincerely hope not.