

MELBOURNE UNIVERSITY BASKETBALL CLUB
DRIBBLING BALLS

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And so the year staggers on. For those of you who enjoy entertaining and enlightening journalism, accurate and objective reporting, incisive and articulate editorials, forget it. We'll have none of that, and none of that either. Instead, a flying frap doodle through the world of basketball...

V.B.A. DIV. 4 (Wed. 19/3)

Blackburn 41 d. Uni 31

Perhaps the highlight of this game was the prematch players' meeting where all that we were doing wrong was discussed. Consequently we looked forward to the game, confidently expecting to get it right and be a real force during the Winter season. Obviously talking about it and actually doing it are not the same thing, and consequently we were badly beaten for the following reasons (1) we were beaten on the boards (2) we ran the offence badly (3) we lacked team cohesion. It must be stressed that it was only the first game and the absence of Mal and Simon (makes the heart grow fonder? - Ed.) did not help. Henry and John McKelvie tried hard. I'd like to mention more about the game, but horror stories are not my favourite pastime.

Henry 10, Pete 8, John 6.

C.Y.M.S. Championship (Sun. 23/3)

Oakleigh 91 d. Uni 67

I've got some good news and some bad news. First the bad news. This was the last game of the season before the finals, with us in fourth place facing Oakleigh in fifth. Now the good news, we were far enough in front of Oakleigh so that even if we lost we would still stay in the four. Following on from that, we lost in very convincing manner. A very ordinary team performance was turned in here, and at no stage after the first 5 minutes did we even remotely look like winning. One good thing from this game was the debut of Mungus in the Sunday night team, he played a ball tearer of a game with some excellent shooting including 2 three pointers. I knew he was in for a good one when he went up to Oakleigh's big black man and told him that joke (How many white men does it take to drive a tram?) Anyway, after he recovered he dominated. Simon also shot pretty well under pressure and Les did a good job both ends of the court. It seems fortuitous that we have a two week break before finals to get Bowlesy and Chris fit.

Mungus 18 (2 three pointers), Simon 16, Les 14, Paul or Haggis 14.

C.Y.M.S. Championship (Sun. 6/4) Semi-final

Uni 77 d. Footscray 60

Having finished in fourth spot on the ladder, as is our usual convention in this competition, we were invited to participate in the first semi final. This we so did. The first 6 minutes or so were quite well contested, and we trailed by a couple of points, but as the half progressed we proceeded to establish our superiority. Les was playing a blinder of a game, providing us with offence when we were struggling and his 12 points for the half was the major reason we led by 7 at half time. Burkie hustled well and J.C. fired up a few three pointers and we looked solid. In the second half we started with a perfect Slippery Sam, and kicked on from there to lead by 15 for most of the half. Chris made a couple of useful drives when we looked as though we might be in trouble and Les continued to dominate. Bowlesy performed one of his usual coast to coasts (but the other guy will apparently live) and we ran out easy winners to face Bisleri Lions in the preliminary final next week. The A grade ladies also won their semi final just before us in convincing fashion, but the B grade men lost theirs. I'm not mentioning either of those teams though, let them write their own match reports.

Les 20, J.C. 17 (5 three pointers), Paul 16, Chris 10.

C.Y.M.S. Championship (Sun. 13/4) Preliminary final
Bisleri Lions 77 d. Uni 65

Having managed to fight our way through to the preliminary final as we usually seem to do, we managed to lose it, as we also usually seem to do. We played a good first half, especially in defence with our zone limiting their inside scoring opportunities. In offence we were very ragged and struggled against an effective man to man defence. Burkie was our best offensive player for the half with his usual aggression and some strong boarding. Bowlesy was also in great touch around the basket and made some fine baskets from strong moves and rebounds. It was 31-31 at half time and things looked set for a tense second half. Unfortunately we trailed for most of the half, and spent a lot of time trying to fight back from 10 point deficits. Our defence let us down in a number of cases and our offence continued to run on a rather hit and miss basis (though not necessarily in equal proportions). We got it back to 5 points a couple of times near the end but could get no closer. J.C. hit 14 for the half and Chris made some excellent drives when we needed baskets near the end, but we basically just weren't good enough.

J.C. 16, Paul 11, Chris 10, Simon 9, Bowlesy 8, Les 7, Haggis 4.

C.Y.M.S. Championship (Sun. 20/4)

Someone d. someone else (and we weren't involved)

I didn't see this game, and I don't really care what happened, but since there were all these other reports about C.Y.M.S. finals I thought readers might like to know the outcome. Best part about losing was we didn't have to play Jetz.

A COMMITTEE : Is a body which takes minutes but wastes hours. After last week's MUBC elections I think we might be set to break that record. Yes, the A.G.M. was big, big, big, and I think I can say big. The day Clint Eastwood gets elected as mayor of Carmel California (well, it's easier to spell than Cadzow) our own Magnum Force gets elected president - unopposed. The results of the MUBC Academy Awards were :

President's Trophy for the most violent film : "Dirty Laundry" starring Clint Eastwood and Geoff Bowles, a film about two rebel cops who threaten baskets full of smelly sweat socks (and committees) with big guns.

Vice-President's Award for the shortest film (under 5 feet 6) : Ingrid Bergman and Judy Knight in "War and P", a film where two people take frequent trips to the toilet during a discussion about new tops.

Treasurer's Trophy for the biggest budget film : Matt Wellington starring in the Agatha Christie thriller "Murder on your American Express", a film where seven of the world's foremost mathematicians add up a column of figures and try to get the same answer.

Secretarial Award for the best ongoing performance : John Campbell in "Friday the Thirteenth, Part 10, (Chapter 4, Verse 23)". A real horror movie which fails to shock any more. The plot is wearing a bit thin.

Assistant Secretarial Award for the best screenplay : William Shakespeare, Leo Tolstoy and Bernadette Burke for their classic work "National Lampoon's Noddy on Vacation", a film where a little gay man with a pointy hat makes racist comments about a golliwog and insults a stupid policeman.

Social Secretary's Plate for the most entertaining film : Trevor Smith, Pauline Murphy and Clarence the cross-eyed lion in "Strawberry Daktari", a film set in a wild life compound in Africa and shot on location at the clubrooms in Brunswick.

General Representative Trophy for the best documentary : David Attenborough, Harry Butler, David Liddle and Linny Ellis in the thought provoking story of the dismissal of the Whitlam Government "Gidget Goes to Canberra".

Junior Reps Award for the best children's film : Michael Johnson and Tracey Bradley in "The Odd Couple", with guest appearances by Andy Warhol and Devine as the Everly Brothers.

If you have anything you want discussed, derided, denigrated and discarded by the committee then simply tell one these simple award winners listed above and they'll make sure it happens. Remember - they're your committee, I mean, it's your fault - you elected them.

PORTLAND 1986 : This tournament will be held on June 10,11 and 12 at Portland (BLF permitting). It looks like being as popular as ever, with at least 5 men's teams and 2 women's teams lining up, but there could be more if more people sign up in a hurry. Let someone know at your training session. What happens at tournaments? What doesn't? For a slightly perverse idea of what happens at tournaments, we are greatly indebted for this following four volume report from Geoff Bowles - the man who's done for humour what the Hindenburg did for airships...

MT. GAMBIER 1986

These are the voyages of the Citradore Enterprise. Its four day mission, to seek out strange new tournaments, to boldly go where no MUBC team has gone before.

Captain's Log - Stardate 32861

From the moment Mal turned up in a "shitbox Commodore", I knew this was going to be no ordinary tournament. "It's 280 mile to Mt. Gambier, we've got a full tank of gas, half a pack of Yoplait, it's Easter and we're wearing sunglasses". So we hit it! Driving to Geelong was fun, (it's amazing how people react to seeing a white Commodore with Yoplait containers on the roof in their rear vision mirrors) and when we passed Ray's Tent Exchange the Clubmobile jokes were running thick and fast. By the way, how many yellow traffic lights are there in Geelong, Mal? The remaining few hours of the drive tended to bear a marked resemblance to the to the first hour - the jokes were certainly the same.

Our arrival in Mt Gambier was relatively uneventful and after a beer or two at the Sth Australian annexe of the Clubrooms we headed off to the Blue Lake Caravan Park to wait for the O'Smiths and erect a tent or two. Hugh had his up in near record time (what about his tent?) but my constructional efforts were distinctly hampered by a complete absence of anything remotely resembling a tent pole. I still maintain it was Sandy's responsibility to ensure that I didn't forget anything, but I don't think it would stand up in court. A quick trip back to Ivars' place to borrow his tent and we were in business - not quite as big as my tent, but Mal said I could go on top the first night, so it could have been worse. The Smith family rolled up a good 6 minutes before our first game, so we had plenty of time to psyche ourselves up for what we suspected would be a tough weekend, although I did promise that I wouldn't be bitchy and slag the pathetic sissy girly sperm-burp virgins who wimped out of going at the last minute (especially Fisher - apparently he knocked his own teeth out rather than support his mates).

Arriving at the stadium full of confidence we were more than a little surprised when we saw the draw. the popular belief on the way over was that we had been entered in B Grade. For reasons known only to the Mt Gambier ABA there was no A Grade and A Reserve and B Grades had been combined. All of which meant that we were playing as one of the top 8 teams in the tournament!

Having recovered from this minor shock, Mal decided to use the two and a half minutes remaining before our first game to explain "the offence" to our two youngsters, Rod and Ivars. Two and a half minutes later when Mal said "Now, is that clear?", Rod's "What was that bit after now listen carefully?" and Ivars' "Whatever happened to 'run and gun'?" set the scene for the rest of the weekend.

And it was a weekend full of "Holy Mackerel". Highlights abounded in the first game, against Central Districts : Mal's "None of that, and none of that either" double rejection (sounds more like what Mungus was told in the tent at Ballarat to me - Ed.), Rod's pre-announced 3 point airball, Smithy's fluke save and touchdown pass, Ivars' flying frap doodle and Hugh's amazing horizontalization were all fairly spectacular. Ivars' shirtfront to stop the fast break and subsequent "What did I do? What did I say?" look of innocence was a classic, as was Rod's towering tip in. But the real highlight of this game (and all the others) was the running commentary we provided. Cries of "Brick" and "Ask him ref" certainly kept us amused in otherwise depressing circumstances. The only other real sensation of this game was the "That's too lightweight, get that out of here!!" monster rejection from Ivars on the buzzer. Our final score was 49 points, but I seem to have neglected to take down the opposition's score (the score board probably stopped at 199 - Ed.) Leading point getters were Mungus (the scoring machine) 20, Mal 10, Rod 9.

The first night was spent sampling the local greasy comestibles and settling into our home away from home. We couldn't find any local beer (well, we didn't actually look) so we had to drink CUB and Jim Beam.

Game 2 was interesting in many respects. Perhaps the most notable (and noticeable) being the pregame warm ups - 4 hours of "Coonawarra lay-ups" (without the ball? - Ed.), a new training technique developed by experts which I think will really catch on. (How long does it take to get from Redman's to the stadium, Mal?) The highlight of the winery crawl was surely the "Strawberry Hula Cooler" at Mildara, destined to become BIG, but I'm not sure where or when. Also impressive were Hugh's knowledge of the intricacies of the "Coonawarra Cigar-box" nose evident in the local reds, and the sheer class of Jen's Hotel radio ads for skins, but I'm not sure which is going to become the more important moral and social issue as we enter the 21st century.

Which brings us back to game 2, remember game 2? I hope someone does. This, the game which saw Rodney "Rocket Heels" Short dubbed the "Penetrator", certainly had its moments. Like when a person who shall remain nameless, although his initials used to be a worry for the medical profession until trendier acronyms like AIDS came (or however they arrived) along, dropped what can best be described as "a medium Union Carbide with extra onions and anchovies" in the middle of the key as one of their guys was taking foul shots. And believe me, they weren't the only thing that was foul. Rod's 3 point airball made another brief appearance and Mal won the "best intentional slug after the whistle without being ejected from the game" award. But the classic of this game was when Smithy was defending yet another fast break on his lonesome. "Three on one!" was the call, but when the pass rocketed out to the wing, the cupboard was bare and the ball ended up two courts away. "Only two on one, guys" says Trev, "Sucked in!" I certainly laughed. Out of a total of 42 the big contributors were Mal 16, Hugh 14, Rod 6.

And so it was, back to the showers again - "four showers, no waiting" - no wonder, water's cold again. Question : Why was Hugh the only one not complaining about the lack of BTU's squandered on heating the water? Answer : Because after 5 minutes of running around under 4 showers he still hadn't got wet! Now I'm not saying he's skinny, but he's the only person I know who can't get automatic doors to open for him.

I was going to mention the Chinese meal we demolished on Saturday night, but I decided not to.

Sunday dawned on us, and we're still trying to get the stains out, with the prospect of several hours needing to be killed before our next game. And kill them we did. In true tourist type fashion we saw the Blue Lake, the Little Blue lake, the Mainly Blue With Just A Few Green Slimy Bits Round The Edge Lake, the Leg Of Mutton Lake and of course, Hell's Hole. How much would you expect to pay for this set of 12 hand-crafted lakes? Don't answer! You also get 2000 bikies staying in your caravan park!! We'll also throw in a few dozen screaming kids to wake you in the morning in case the bikies let you get to sleep before 4 a.m.!!

And what better to do after looking at lakes all morning than to play another game. Game 3 was looking good after about 2 minutes, we were 8-2 up. From then on things didn't improve. They didn't even stay the same. In fact, I guess you could say they got a bit worse. Having used up most of our highlights in the first two games, we were really having to scrape the bottom of the barrel to come up with something to please the crowd. So it was left up to Mal and his now famous reverse basket to provide some comic relief. And when I say reverse, I really mean reverse! Those of you with more than a smattering of knowledge of basketball will recall that most baskets are made my virtue of the fact that the ball travels through the ring starting above it and finishing below it. Not so in this case. In fact it was a game in which convention was thrown in roughly the same direction as the rule book. Ivars made one of the nicest outlet passes I've seen in years, the opposition player he made it to was fairly impressed too. And speaking of impressive, if only Henry had been there to witness the best charge I've ever not had called on me that I can remember. The "Bomber Wellington" award for long range scoring excellence goes to the scoring machine who planted no fewer than 3 three pointers, with Trev coming in a close second. Our final score in this game was 48 : Mungus 26, Mal 10.

After such a fine series of performances in the preliminary rounds (i.e. 3 losses - Ed.) we naturally found ourselves in the finals with a big chance. Matched up against Sth Adelaide Rockets, who until then were undefeated, we were quietly confident (I can believe the bit about confident, but "quietly", really Geoff! - Ed.) I wouldn't say this was a violent game, but there were more charges than in Russell Street. I did my best, coasting to 4 fouls at a very early stage, but it was left up to Rod to make the classic move of the game - he grabs the ball, pivots left, down goes one opponent, pivots right and down goes another, then falls over himself. Talk about last man standing! I only had 3 charges against my name, Ivars had picked up a couple and there had been just the odd tech foul when the ref called for both captains and explained that they had tried red courts and it just didn't work.

So having made certain of the outcome of the game, it was show time at the forum. All sorts of long shots were going up (some even went near the ring) and both defences became a bit casual. When I saw the opening and went for the monster drive to the basket it became apparent that even South Australians prefer living to being demolished, as the sea of red singlets parted and I had a brief insight into how Moses must of felt (full of bullrushes? - Ed.) As the second half drew to a close, Ivars and Rod were

banished from the game and we were left with four for the only time on the weekend - just as well we're so fit. The thing that impressed me most in this game was in the dying minutes (us and the game) when I got a rebound (that in itself was remarkable) and saw the opportunity to have my name up in lights. Faced with an open court, I took off. Reaching the centre line several seconds later, it became apparent that one of the opposition was positioned directly in my path at about foul line level. Poor fool was smiling, too. And to make matters worse, Mal complicated things by charging down the sideline and calling for the ball. Damn cheek. I didn't have time to avoid the unfortunate soul in my path (whose smile, by the way, was beginning to falter), much less control the ball enough to even consider passing it to anyone. So with my usual finesse and grace I closed my eyes and tried to coax the ball roughly basketward in terms of direction. The rest is history - I got two shots and he was left with a severe case of shell shock. Our final score was 38, composed mainly of Hugh 18, Trevor 11, FF24 7 (bringing Mungus' total score for the four games to 78, not bad for a youngster!)

With the tournament being well and truly over, game-wise, it was our big chance to let go. To really paint Mt. Gambier red. And when it comes to excitement on Easter Sunday night, where better to go than Javed's Country Bunker - an Italian restaurant with both kinds of music. You guessed it, country and western. And what a highlight this turned out to be. The band were playing "Rockabilly Rebel" when we came in, and things just kept on getting worse. Not only didn't the band know "The Wreck of the Ol' 97" or "Theme From The T.V. Show Rawhide, Thankyou", but they claimed they couldn't play "Stand By Your Man" because their female singer was home with a wog. I know it was an Italian restaurant, but really Javed. Anyway, it was a beautiful place, and we knocked back a few beers and watched the floor show. Now there's nothing wrong with dancing with your grandmother, and I know we were in the country, but I don't think I've ever seen a 16 year old girl wearing leather pants and desert boots at the same time. Amazing place, really.

Just for a change we went back to Ivars' place for a quiet drink and a video or two, and what better video to watch after dining at the Country Bunker than the Good Ol' Blues Brothers. I hadn't seen it for a couple of weeks, so I found it enthralling but obviously it lacked something for most of the others. I've seen more people asleep in front of a video, but only at the Clubrooms. Mal insists that he was only resting his eyes and that he hear every word, but judging from the fact that his snoring was a good semi-tone lower than his brother's, I find it very hard to believe.

And that's about it for good old Mt. Gambier, the trip back was a good deal quieter than the trip over, although Hugh managed to break us up with his pitiful attempts at song writing. I guess he didn't do too badly, but if anyone would like to introduce him to the concepts of rhythm and metre, it might make next year's drive a little more bearable. But what tournament report would be complete without a collection of the most quotable quotes of the weekend (a good one, I hear you say?) Don't worry about losing too much sleep if you fail to understand any of this - I know I don't.

"Mal, can I get into the boot please?"
"The light was yellow, officer."
"Whatever happened to 'Run and Gun!'"
"Sissy girly virgin!"
"Brick! Nice brick though."
"Have you got any heat rub, Trev?"
"What's this??"
"Fix the cigarette lighter."
"Ask him, ref."
"The '83 cabernet, I think."

"It has that lovely cigar-box smell."

"Skins are the latest treat, that you can eat, at Jen's."

On a more serious note though, we must thank Kathy and Ivars for their generous hospitality throughout the weekend and also assure them that we won't be bringing 35 ratbag basketballers round to their place next year. Thanks also to both Rod and Ivars for coming out of varying degrees of retirement to help us out of a potentially difficult situation. I would like to assure them that next year we will have a complete team, but I can't, so keep those bodies in trim guys!

1986 Mount Gambier Gift Selection - 7 specially selected wines soon to be released in an attractive gift box, to commemorate the outstanding quarter final performance in Mount Gambier. Tasting notes :

1954 Short's Folly Cabernet Sauvignon - Magnum

A prolific medal winner in two states (pissed and paralytic? - Ed.) this full-bodied wine has a strong wood aroma integrated with complex fruit. Well balanced, if a little thin on top = drink immediately.

1955 Zvirgzdins' Para Liqueur Port

Another old favourite not lacking in body. After several years of indiscriminate cellaring, this dark tawny exhibits considerable bottle variation. While this vintage is generally even tempered, the occasional bottle is technically foul - handle with care.

1957 Short's Estate Shiraz

A limited quantity of this wine was recently discovered in an obscure Adelaide cellar. Removal of the heavy crust has revealed that some of the earlier body has been broken down but plenty of the old sparkle remains - try this one again in 5-10.

1958 Five Fouls Brute de Brute - Methuselah

Made by the traditional brute force method (methode chergenoise), this over-bodied bubbly has become a favourite from "coast to coast" - 12 bottles of this and you're anyone's.

1960 Smith's Gully Generic Drink - half bottle

Never mind the height, feel the width. What this liquid lacks in character it makes up for with a pungent "Mexican Red-eye bean" aroma in the morning - needs doctoring.

Nicholson's Rhine Reisling

Exhibits some botrytis character so common in Coonawarra whites of recent vintages. Wood not yet knitted fully with the fruit, but continues to score well interstate - cute bottle.

1967 Virgin Hills Sandie Cooler

A presumptuous young upstart typical of its genre. Lacking in body when compared with some of the more experienced wines in this pack, but shows potential - optimal drinking 3-5 years.