

Saints v.s. Demons and the end of the world.

St.Kilda versus Melbourne

2.10pm, Saturday, 21st May

Ethiad Stadium

Yvette Wroby

If you believe some nutter in the USA, the world was going to end on May 21st 2011 at 6pm. If you believe all the footy pundits in the media, and if you're a player, coach or supporter of a poor performing team, the footy world is going to end.

The Saints and Demons took each other on today. One won, one lost and the world still ticks away.

The sun was shining, roof open, its Indigenous round, and my mob this week included my American mate Joanne who's never been to a game. Mum is with us again, she was disgusted at our last game (Hawks), happier today.

Whatever our mood from the previous poor games, you cannot seem to come to the football and not have hope in some measure. Otherwise, who'd come? Hopes a funny old emotion, and footy fans have it in bucket loads. As long as there is love of the game, of the adventure, of going and sitting amongst those in the same colour and feeling like a community, then the footy world goes on. Even in the darkest hours of footy life, with lost opportunities at Premierships, injuries, poor performances, scandals, embarrassments, there are always the new young men to watch and dream of a better football future. Perhaps that's why Indigenous players do so well with Aussie Rules. It's all about our collective dreamtime.

There was life in both the teams and a bit of the saint and demon mixed in all of them. This game was fast, enthusiastic, with quick goals to both teams to start the game. It seemed more energetic, both teams more involved. Most Demons were confident and fast. Then at times, both made such silly errors, handballed or kicked to the opposition, got distracted and played poorly. The fans alternately celebrated and tore their hair out.

The new boys of the Saints played with meaning. Siposs helped Milne with an early goal and got one himself, Stevens was fast and frequently involved, Winmar good for a first gamer, Cripps good goals. Armitage and Dempster kept improving. Polo, a former Tiger, made a show.

The injury depleted Demon boys tried their hardest, and were so fast at times our heads spun. Jetta, Jurrah, Martin, Evans on debut, Green, Gybert, Jones, Watts and Maric had good legs and plenty of effort.

The old boys for the Saints stepped up a notch, Peak, Milne, Montagna, Reiwoldt, Goddard, Del Santo, Jones and Shneider seemed more their old, less deflated, selves. Fischer was good in his ruck roving centre game. Kosi gets pushed out of contests or knocked out, at times, he's like a befuddled old man who looks around and the game has run past him.

Tapscott does his hamstring in the first quarter, there's only three points to the Saints at the end of a big scoring first term. I can't remember so much or so accurate scoring in a St.Kilda game, five goals each. In the second quarter, the Saints kick 4 more goals to Demons 2 . There's argy-bargy and an almost all-in scuffle at the end of the second, a few ripped jumpers, a few pumped up men. In the third, Demons and Saints kick 3 apiece. The lead helps St.Kilda stay on top and win by 20 points in the end. The Saints fans sing the song three times just for good measure and for the fact that next we face Freemantle in Freemantle, Collingwood, Bulldogs and Geelong. Who knows when we'll sing again.

Joanne makes two on the money comments about the Saints losing focus at times and not doing what they do when they begin to win, set up the ball accurately kick to kick or handball and keep it moving forward. Not bad comments for a first timer.

Today showed there is life for the Saints when they do what Goddard said in the after-match interview, " I just cleared the head ofall the bullshit , focus on all the things that make me a really good player for the team.....as well as individually." Good to see you and the boys coming back Brendon.

St.Kilda 5.4 9.5 12.6 16.10 (106)

Melbourne 5.1 7.5 10.7 13.8 (86)

Goals: St.Kilda: Riewoldt 3, Milne 3, Cripps 2, Montagna 2, Shneider, Siposs, Peake, Jones, Polo, Ray

Melbourne: Jurrah 3, Maric 2, Green 2, Watts 2, Newton 2, Gysberts, Petterd.

Best St.Kilda: Montagna, Stevens, Goddard, Riewoldt, Fischer, Milne, Siposs

Melbourne: Watts, Evans, Gysbert, Jurrah, Maric, Green and Newton

Our votes:

Montagna (3) Goddard (2) Watts (1)

Umpires: Stevic, Pannell, Dagleish