

“Just” ends up being good enough.

An English psychoanalyst Winnicott came up with the phrase “good enough mothering” where he relieved the anxiety of millions of mothers (and later parents) when he talked not about being a perfect mother (parent) but a good enough one. The difference was in being present and available. There is an inbuilt need that there be failure as well, to some manageable degree, so that infants can use that failure to develop their own capacities.

Yesterday’s match between North Melbourne and St.Kilda showed that the Saints were “just” good enough to get by, a vast improvement on the beginning of the season as we have limped and suffered and slowly healed from too many psychological and physical bruises and beatings. Perhaps our failures over the last few years are beginning to be used to develop our teams’ capacity. Perhaps loosing and playing poorly at the beginning of the season beats going well all year and failing at the end.

Now I do have to begin with the end and make a complaint about the last quarter, which has to be some of the worst football I have watched for a while. I’ll take the win any day, but do the Saints have to cause its supporters heart failure and panic every week? It felt like we were going to handball to opposition, kick backwards, and kick away the last quarter and hand North Melbourne the game that we basically controlled for most of the evening. We were so lucky that North Melbourne kicked inaccurately, kicking 1.4 in the last quarter rather than 4.1. Ok, that’s out of my system. Less of that please Saints, more of the winning bit thanks.

It was an away game for the Saints and we bought General Admission tickets and headed up to the skyline to watch. We are usually with the members in home games on Level 1, and this is such a different perspective, seeing the whole ground, knowing your players well helps because you can still recognise them (just) from this great height. I felt the God of football and I were on personal terms during this match, especially in the end of the second quarter, but I’ll talk about that in a moment.

The game can be split into sections: I liked the first fifteen minutes where the Saints kicked 3 straight and looked good in spirit and bodies. Milne kicked the first two, Polo the third. Then I didn’t like when North took control and kicked the next three of the quarter, drew Petrie took control and kicked the 4th and 5th, and Pedersen added the sixth. We went to the first break two points ahead and wondering about Riewoldts kicking. His marking and balls gets has improved out of sight, but those first kicks on goal were awful to behold and I got to that point of not wanting to watch and covering my eyes. (I saw on the replay later in the night that I wasn’t the only supporter thus inclined.)

In the second quarter, North Melbourne came out firing, with Leigh Adams getting his first of three (goal 7 of the match) and Harvey stepped up and kicked the next, his one and only, which is unusual for his form of late. Then the Saints fired back, thankfully, and Riewoldt kicked one truly, lifting all our spirits and his own, followed by one from Schneider. Leigh Adams fired his second and the games 11th goal, and Thomas got his first and the games 12th. This is a luxury to watch for a St.Kilda supporter, where goals are usually as frequent as hen’s teeth. And then a miracle happened. We

went on a goal spree. When Nick Riewoldt went for his second, and then his third, and goaled truly, it was game on. Brendon Goddard then kicked his one and only. At this stage, I kept saying (and footy god was listening) "Another one please, another one please" and Zamir looked at me strangely as St.Kilda kept producing each goal I asked for. It felt a little freaky but I kept asking and they kept giving. In these 8 minutes, there were five goals. Lynch kicked the next two and the siren went.

After the big break, we only kicked 2.2 (Gamble and Milne) and North kicked 2.3 (Hansen and Goldstein) so it wasn't as amazing as that second quarter but the lead had been established and St.Kilda went into defensive mode.

The last quarter, which I've already complained about, saw North get 1.4 (Swallow) and Saints zip. That right. Nothing at all. It was so strange and defensive and inaccurate and worrying but we held on and that 9 point victory was worth celebrating. We had beaten a much improved North with, as our coach said, an improved game from us.

Not surprisingly, the ride home in the train was happy for all the Sainters and we, for the first time in quite a while, watched the first half again before hitting our nice warm beds.

Yvette Wroby

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