

We don't have the Blues this morning...

We'll start with a generic question: do the Saints have to always put us through so much misery and tension before we reach happiness at the end of the night?

It seems so. Saints supporters like me went to the Game at the MCG last night feeling pretty mixed. A win meant a home, Etihad, elimination final, a loss, meant a Sydney game and only some of the more intrepid Sainters would have made the trek. We weren't planning to go to Sydney, but I'll be on my beloved computer tomorrow at 9am booking for the game next Saturday night at Etihad.

Rina organised something different for us last night. A good mate of Rina's, Les H, an AFL Member, bought tickets for the four of us, and we sat in the centre on the fourth level, watching the Blues and the Saints go at it, from our lofty heights with the Gods. He was more sensible than us, arriving just before the game. We come an hour before the Carlton supporting Les, and enjoyed the view and the growing crowds. We shifted seats to be further back from the front seats (with the bars that restrict the view of shorties like us) and when I went back near our original seats, I saw Sainter friends from the park (dog walkers and friends with my daughter) and then my Uncle and Cousin, and envied them sitting next to all those Sainters in 4th tier all together (with barriers separating us like a different class of people).

We were surrounded by Blues supporters, mostly men and the most annoying teenage boy I have had the displeasure of sitting directly in front of. He will be a truly grown up obnoxious supporter once his voice takes on the full blast of hormones and meanness that he has the potential to be. His own father kept telling him to shut up, and then the father called his own players girls, which pissed Rina off no end and she rebuked him. Good on her. There were two other Sainters in front of us, who we befriended in the sea of enemy territory, and shared sugarless chocolate with them at ½ time in thanks for their presence.

There is only one way to shut up obnoxious opposition supporters and it works every time. Beat their team, and they ALL shut up pretty comprehensively.

It looked pretty bad the first half. Milne opened our account with a quick goal, but that was followed by 2 for O'hailpin and one from Kreuzer. We sank in our seats. It was going to be a long night. They missed 5, and we missed 2. We looked clumsy, and after the first few minutes, they looked faster and more confident. First quarter, miserly and misery:

Carlton: 3.5.23

St.Kilda 1.2.8

The Saints came back with more steam in the second, with another opening goal to Milne, then Montagna before Gibbs spoilt our party with the next two. They still had more shots at goal, and inaccuracy killed them. Steven changed the momentum by goaling the last of the quarter, we were still in it at half time.

Carlton 5.8.38

St.Kilda 4.3.27

I don't know what they put in the Kool-aid at half time but it worked for the Saints. They came out looking less bewildered and more determined and did some magic. The first goal of the quarter was Tuohy, but then Carlton went quiet and we got down to the pointy end of winning a game. Steven kicked another, O'hailpin kicked his 3rd, and then, it was raining Saints goals: Milne, Gilbert in a surprising and wonderful surge forward (Kreuzer was off so we had a spare big man. Ray was on for Gardiner who only played a half a game and it was wonderful to see him back.)

The Saints coaching was fantastic, to have a quicker player coming on in second half, with the speed of Ray, was inspired, as was the move to push Gilbert (and later Dawson) forward for some height and some speed and some diversion seeing Riewoldt was constantly surrounded (as was Betts) by two or three players at a time.

Gilbert's goal was followed by Dawsons, followed by big Kosi picking up his game. We went into the third quarter ahead for the first time by 6 points. Still too close, still a worry.

Carlton 7.12.54

St.Kilda 9.6.60

Goddard came out and pumped the next goal in, followed by Schneider magic. Simpson shot one back for the Blues to show they were still at the game, but it was followed by the second to Kosi. O'hailpin got his fourth and perhaps his selection into the finals team for the Blues, while Schneider got his second and the last goal from the match.

End score:

Carlton 9.12.61

St.Kilda 13.8.86

We couldn't believe it. A twenty point win, a home final, lots of singing and celebrating for us Sinters. The Blues behind us had slinked away and were thankfully very quiet in the second half. Haven't heard from my Blue family, son and daughter who followed their father's team. Haven't heard from my Blue friend from the park either. Funny about that. Bettya I woulda had we lost. Gotta love this game. Bring on the Finals.