

Collingwood vs St.Kilda

Ethiad Stadium

Friday 3rd May 2013 7.50

Oh Brother....thou art here.

Part 1

Five days ago my brother Andre flew in from the USA for a three and a half week break with Mum and my sister and I. Plus all the other family who will catch up with him during his stay. We realised, sitting at the Docklands Stadium last night, that the last time he'd been to a football match together was the heartbreaking Geelong vs St.Kilda Grand Final loss in 2009. He's flown all the way over, watched the Preliminary Final and then the disappointment of watching us lose another winnable game. Not a good omen as it turns out. The Pies cooked us last night. He's reassessing his plan to watch us play Carlton next Monday night. After all, this is supposed to be a restful holiday. Being a Saint though, he is used to this road. At least he was at 1966.

We, my usual footy family, had away game tickets, but forgot to pre-book seats, so Andre and I got to the ground early, 5.15, to queue up to get good general seats. Uncle Bob and Gary joined us at 5.30. Andre and I had started chatting to Michael and Terese, AFL ticket members, Michael a Collingwood man of many years standing, like my uncle, and Terese, a Bomber fan. They attended each other's games. Another nice Collingwood man, this is doing my head in. Andre told me later, that he realised that he had a strong rush of anti-Collingwood feeling that overwhelmed him after living overseas for 35 years. More of this later. We rushed up to Level 3, got our seats, and when there were Saints fans nearby, we went down to eat at one of the restaurants, having a chance to catch up before the game. Rina came later and found us in the heavens, we put our radios on to here that our beloved Lenny was out injured and was replaced by Newnes. Very sad. Very bad. And watching the replay today of when he may have been injured, and it looked so innocuous, he just kicked the ball.

Newnes first touched the ball and handballs it to Collingwood. Not a good omen either. Witts, Collingwoods' new young gun, wins a few almost immediately too but it's defended. We could already see the nature of the match. It would be tough and messy and that's exactly how it turned out. Lots of mistakes, misses, handing the ball to the opposition, more so for the Saints, close game until the last quarter when Pies ran away.

So I'm going to skip the game details and concentrate on what was good about the night, seeing it wasn't the style of game or the winning of the game that gave us any pleasure.

1. The Barramundi dinner I ordered was delicious
2. I was at the footy with my big brother, and he was vocal and noisy and irritated the Collingwood supporters in front. It's always better if the noisy one is on your side.
3. We met Michael and Terese, and got to talk all about footy while queuing.
4. My sister Denise had travelled to Flinders Street with us on the train and took an awesome picture of the three of us that was actually flattering to all.
5. We got great seats, in the centre, up with the gods, and with a quiet crowd (except Andre).
6. We got to see a fabulous Riewoldt, yet again playing a magnificent captains game.
7. We got to see an improving Collingwood, they have some stars, Witts, Pendlebury, Krakouer, Blair, Jolly, Cloke, Seedsman, O'Brien. A very good determined team, unfortunately for us.
8. We got to see improvement in some of our players, Gilbert (who later injured himself), Montagna, Robertson, Siposs. There were goals from Armitage, Kosi and Milne too. Milne

was still quiet, as was Dal Santo. Steven is getting very very good, and Newnes will learn and improve, as will Murdoch and Wright with more experience, which they will get as other more experienced soldiers keep falling.

9. Riewoldt kicked four goals, took fabulous marks, played so hard that he was exhausted in the last quarter.
10. Too many of our players were quiet, like Saad who seems to have lost his magic and mojo. Is missing in front of goals now. It was Riewoldt that the Pies fans booed for taking too long to kick.
11. Collingwoods starts stood up and their pressure worked.
12. We get to have to keep trying new young men and get experience into them.
13. We played on a Friday night, and we can now forget about the Saints until Monday week, and watch the rest of the weekend of football with less stress.
14. We can make other plans for September with total ease and comfort.
15. We can enjoy lack of expectation. IF enjoy is the right word. It's actually painful to see a team that three years ago was part of two years of premiership hopes and dreams, languishing four from the bottom of the ladder, with only 1 win out of 5.
16. There was moments of quick, good play from St.Kilda, likes Milnes first and only goal. Roberton had defended well, to Montagna to Armitage to in front of Milne, Riewoldt shepard-ing it safely through. It gave us hope, that we knew how to score, how to steal, how to outplay. At half time, there was only 2 points the difference. We were still in the game, but Pies kicked 5 goals to our three and then another five again to our three and the Pies superior strength just shone through.
17. Watching new young Saints like Newnes, Saunders, Ross, Saad, Murdoch, Wright and Roberton. Learning about their styles. Kosi played better but will be rubbed out for poor behaviour. Could have been rubbed out for poor first kick for goal. Completely shanked it.
18. Saints won the first quarter. We were 11 points ahead in the second. They were worried. We were in it for $\frac{3}{4}$ of the game. We knew that because the Pie supporters around us were very quiet until the runaway Pies final quarter.
19. There were moments of Saints play that made us proud, manic tackling, good running. Possessed, hungry individual effort.
20. Before our front neighbours were cranky at my brother, they took a good photo of the five of us.
21. After the game, to avoid crowd, we hung back and Andre ate jam donuts and I bought hot chips and we relaxed.
22. There were thinned crowds on the way to Southern Cross but we still managed to bump into our cousins, all mad Pies, and got the ribbing over and done with and then lost them in the crowds. Yeah.
23. The train was empty and we got seats. Everyone was quiet and tired. It was late.
24. We, as Saints supporters, have even less expectations to worry about and manage.
25. We have the Hall of Fame tonight, I am going to be flanked by Almanacer Stephanie Holt and her daughter, Uncle Bob and Andre, and new Saints mates from my exhibition. It will be another great diversion.
26. There's only 17 matches to go and we have to win some of them.

Yvette Wroby

7th May 2013