

ONE OF THE MOST RESPECTED COMEDIANS IN BRITAIN, IAN HAS BEEN PERFORMING STAND-UP FOR 29 YEARS. A REGULAR ON TV AND RADIO INCLUDING **MOCK THE WEEK** AND **FIGHTING TALK**, IAN IS A DIEHARD GOONER OF OVER 30 YEARS AND AIRS HIS MEWS ON THE CLUB'S GOOD FRIEND ALAN DAVIES ON **THE TUESDAY CLUB** PODCAST. IAN WRITES FOR THE OFFICIAL MAGAZINE EVERY MONTH.

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The Other Immaculate Conception

Josh James, who works on this august publication, came up with a rather curious fact about the latest 5-2 win over Spurs if I'm saying the phrase "latest 5-2 win over Spurs"). It seems that the second win occurred exactly 265 days after the first 5-2 win over Spurs. This period also happens to be the same length of time as the gestation period of a human baby.

I've been thinking about this. Let's say that a female Arsenal fan, shortly after Theo Walcott scored the fifth goal in the



first game, celebrated with her partner by doing what comes naturally. And when I say shortly after, I mean when the goal horns were retaking their seats. Personally, I've never celebrated a win in that way – for some inexplicable reason, my partner does not find my post persona immediately conducive to romance.

Anyway, this female Arsenal fan, if the planets were aligned and conception took place, may have found herself going into labour shortly after Theo scored the fifth goal in the second game.

Please write into the Magazine if this happened to you. Did you name the child Theo if it was a boy? Or Theosephine if it was a girl? This child

would be blessed. This child would, more than anyone walking the earth with the possible exception of Tony Adams and Arsene Wenger have Arsenal DNA and should be given a lifetime's supply of season tickets for him/her and all his/her offspring. And each time we play Tottenham, this child should be dressed in the latest kit, brought onto the pitch by the parents and paraded round the ground like a trophy. If there's someone around the Club who can remember how that's done!



Lesser Expectations

As our team finds itself slightly lower down the league table than we would like and we contemplate our worst start to a league season since football began, I've been trying to come up with coping strategies. Quite a few of them involve not watching football for a while and plainly, that was never going to work. Whilst the team suffers, I suffer. There was also a mild flirtation with taking more of an interest in DIY or car maintenance or any of the other things that men do. But when I thought about it for a while, I'd still rather watch us lose at home than spend two minutes in a DIY store. So that was out.

My friend Dennis, aka 'The Midfield General' has been adopting the 'thinking positive' thoughts at all costs' approach lately. This involves him covering his ears and singing 'these are a few of my favourite things' from The Sound of Music whenever the level of tension rises above a certain level. This doesn't work for me because I've never really been a fan of The Sound of Music and it I'm not deluded.

Then I realised that what I need to do is adjust my expectations. For the last five years, I've been labouring under the illusion that once March is over, we were in contention for major trophies. Whereas it now seems that we were doing really well just to stay clear for that long to teams that had spent billions of pounds on players.

That being the case, I've decided to try



and think like an Everton fan. David Moyes hasn't won a trophy since he's been there but no-one is having a go at him. It's just how it is if you support Everton. He often has to tell his best players too but it's understood that this is the way of things. When the top three or four teams come to Goodison, Everton don't expect to win but they'll give it a bloody good go and lately, they've done very well. And I'm sure they'd really like to kick in the top four but with

Sheikh Mansour and Roman Abramovich spending obscene amounts of money, it's probably unrealistic to wish Financial Fair Play becomes a reality. So they just muddle along in fifth or sixth and their fans accept that they're doing as well as they can in the circumstances. This may be the new reality.

On the other hand, we've just qualified for the knockout stages of the Champions League and if we get a favourable draw and a bit of a wind behind us...

Reasons to Laugh at...



With the whole football world seemingly laughing at us after being slain by the mighty Arsenal City, the only way forward is to reexamine obscure tactics and jokes fun at others. So I return to my Reasons to laugh at... series. This month, Chelsea. Danny Baker, the esteemed broadcaster once described Chelsea as the exploding clown's car of English football. This was back in the days before Roman Abramovich and although they've greatly added to their trophy cabinet since then, there's still something ridiculous about that club. So here are a few reasons to laugh at Chelsea.

1) They've just recruited their ninth manager in nine years. They sacked the bloke who won the FA Cup and the Champions League. The latest one was being demoralised against on his first day in the job.



2) One of those managers was Avram Grant, a man who has the motivational skills of an NSA tea towel. What's funnier is that three years earlier, Grant was about bringing non-backs in as an adviser to Rafa Benitez. I could see that going really well and I sincerely hope it happens.

3) They bought Fernando Torres for £30m and things haven't gone well for the poor lad. They did the same thing with Andre

Shevchenko. Although I feel sorry for these personally, their's something very pleasing about fanatically wanting people spending phenomenal amounts of money on something that doesn't work.

4) They left back, who I'm now prepared to admit is a very good player, once that a work experience boy at the training ground was on an air rifle. Knowing that the victim suffered no permanent damage, even writing that sentence makes me smile.

5) To fit the underachievement of their captain, leader and legend would take up way more space than I have here but I think it's widely accepted (except in a certain corner of South West London) that he is, as a matter of fact, a (insert your own word here)