

I always cherished the dream that I might produce (not that one can 'produce' anything) one international hockey player, but for B.R.G.S. to have turned out six in the last decade is an achievement beyond my wildest hopes.

The first boys to play hockey at B.R.G.S. later formed the backbone of Rossendale Hockey Club, and indeed do still. At one after-school practice they brought along Alyn Lamb, a friend who had recently moved into B.R.G.S. from the North East. This fourteen-year-old was destined to become the first of our England internationals in 1977 when he was selected at Under 18 level. His physical strength intimidated most opponents and it was as well to get out of the way when he struck the ball. He had an outstanding foil in Philip Taylor who could be relied upon to finish the moves that Alyn started, usually from deep in his own half. As a youngster, Alyn won a national skills competition and a tall leggy young lady (I can see her now!) undertook the missionary task to represent Green Shield stamps at the presentation in school. Throughout the length of the proceedings Alyn didn't speak a word: he turned taciturnity into a fine art.

September 1980 saw the arrival in the first year of a boy who was round, well fed, and the apple of his mother's eye. John Spencer persisted with hockey despite occasional fitness problems and the fact that his team disintegrated around him in the fourth year. Oddly enough, or perhaps not surprisingly, many returned to hockey after they left school. In terms of on-the-ball skills he was the best player we have yet produced; as he appeared to roll the stick round the ball he would send opponents in all directions, yet frequently return to beat the same player two or three times. He represented England at Under 16 level in 1985 and was desperately unlucky not to do so as an under 18 two years later.

Alastair Birch - 'Ali' to almost everyone - followed John into the England Under 16 squad in 1986 and actually graced the World Cup stage in the same year when he played in an exhibition match against Wales. Ali turned to hockey in the first year when he forgot his soccer kit. In his early days it was difficult to forecast whether he, Matthew Cook or Mark Brazier would achieve stardom. With legs like emaciated drumsticks Ali is mercurial and waspish at the same time, with the ability to buzz around the opponents' circle for a while before stinging with dramatic effect. On his day, he is a joy to behold as he weaves and darts the length of the field.

Nick Welby was this year's England Number One. He is the perfect example of the highest motivation realising the highest achievement. I suspect he decided he was going to keep goal for England when he was in the first year. One of the two hockey players to become T.V. personalities (the other is Sean Kerby), England and G. B. keeper, Ian Taylor, became Nick's hero. Ian must have been irritated by this precocious schoolboy seeking his advice. He now knows, however, that Nick has made the grade and should be on the England circuit for many years to come. A pity he's deserting B.R.G.S. for arch-rivals, Merchant Taylors, next season.

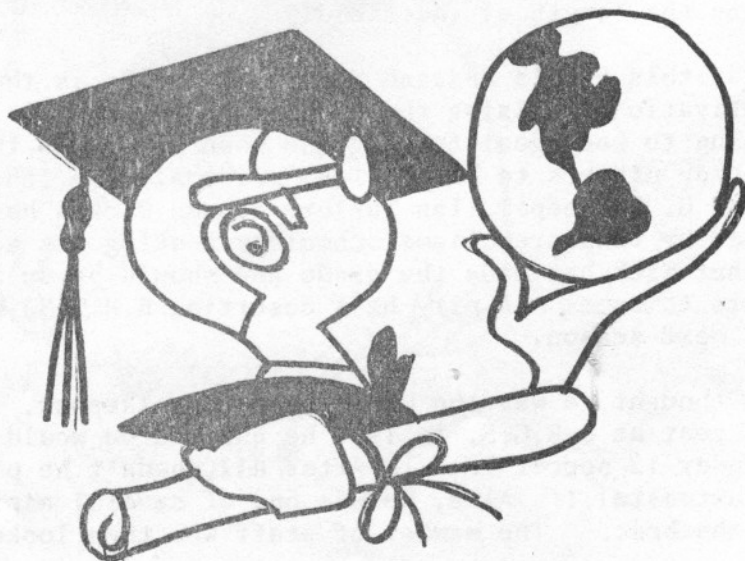
Someone else thought he was the world's best goalkeeper. When Nick Clark entered the first year at B.R.G.S. in 1974 he assumed he would occupy that position in the Under 12 soccer team. After all, hadn't he played in goal for St. Mary's, Rawtenstall! Alas, he was one of several aspirants for the position and not the best. The member of staff who then looked after the

Under 12 team didn't appreciate that he might have been useful in some other position - so Nick, like many before and since, turned to hockey. That he achieved more than any other B.R.G.S. player is not in dispute: Captain of England Schools and over 50 caps at junior and senior level. He had scored over one hundred goals before he got to the third year. In terms of on-the-ball skills he was not as good as John Spencer (or David Greenwood?) but his great qualities were an ability to read the game and the knack of reducing error almost to zero. These skills have taken him all over the world playing the sport. I recall taking Stuart Crisp and Nazrul Talukdar to watch him play for Preston as a sixteen-year-old. From the sideline one said to the other: "Nick's not a great player - yet he is".

Sharing the same birthday is not the only attribute that John Furlong has in common with his illustrious predecessor. The England coach converted John from a midfield player to a back good enough to hold his place in all eight Under 16 international matches this year. A natural ball player, John has so much time to play the ball. Too much at times; he has the infuriating habit of trying to send his opponent the wrong way only to discover that he is not intelligent enough to be sold John's dummy and so unknowingly comes away with the ball. His look of total amazement at this apparently illegal act does little to calm the nerves. John's high pitched grumble as B.R.G.S. Captain - which later changed for the better to a low pitched growl - will stay in the memory. So will the magnificent aerial pass from which Warren Holt made a goal against King's School, Macclesfield, on an autumnal evening at Skelmersdale.

I look forward to reading in the national press of the future successes of our players, a countless number of whom have represented the Red Rose county with honour and two recently faced each other in Oxford v Cambridge. In the year 2000 the players currently in our first and second year should be at their peak. See you then.

P. L. Clark



ORIGINAL CONTRIBUTIONS

"An English Reader Review" or "How Not To Get On In English"

"Beyond Lies the Wub" from "Constellations" - a third year 'Reader'.

Plot: The story (if that is the right word is that a star-cruiser lands on an uncharted planet as the crew are short of food. They go hunting, and they find a pig. The crew haul the pig back to the ship and are ready to carve it into Bernard Matthews-size pieces when the pig starts talking to them! The pig says that it is intelligent and possesses E.S.P. and so on, begging them not to eat him (it). Eventually someone shoots the pig and apparently it tastes delicious. (End of so-called story.)

Criticism: Criticism is the right word here. Believe you me, I have tried hard to commend the story on something but the simply atrocious story-line cancels out any chances of this story being recommended by me. Dialogue would be okay but it is mostly the pig talking so it seems ridiculous. Description is just non-existent - no description of the star-cruiser, the planet or even the mysterious talking pig. I am sure most ten-year-olds could write better stories than this.

Conclusion: I give it 0 out of 10. The human dialogue is all right, the pig's is not, the result is drivel!

Marcus Linney, 3S

(I can assure you that this was handed in as part of a reader assignment - and his mark? Well, that would be telling. Ed.)

Collective Nouns by 1R

A torture of teachers.
A P.T.A. of parents.
A panic of pupils.
A warlock of witches.
A cauldron of cackles.
A frisky of whisky.
A riot of recorders.
A trigger of guns.
A potty of prefects.
A hoard of homework.
A rampage of rooms.
An argument of politicians.
A chatter of children.
An orgy of oranges.
A hell of homework.
An igloo of ice-cream.
A waterfall of wellies.
A folly of full stops.
A query of question marks.
A brain of brackets.
A point of pencils.
A common room of commas.
A puddle of puppies.

The Snow

Snow is falling softly down,
On the windows, on the ground,
On the gate and in the trees,
Snow is blowing in the breeze.

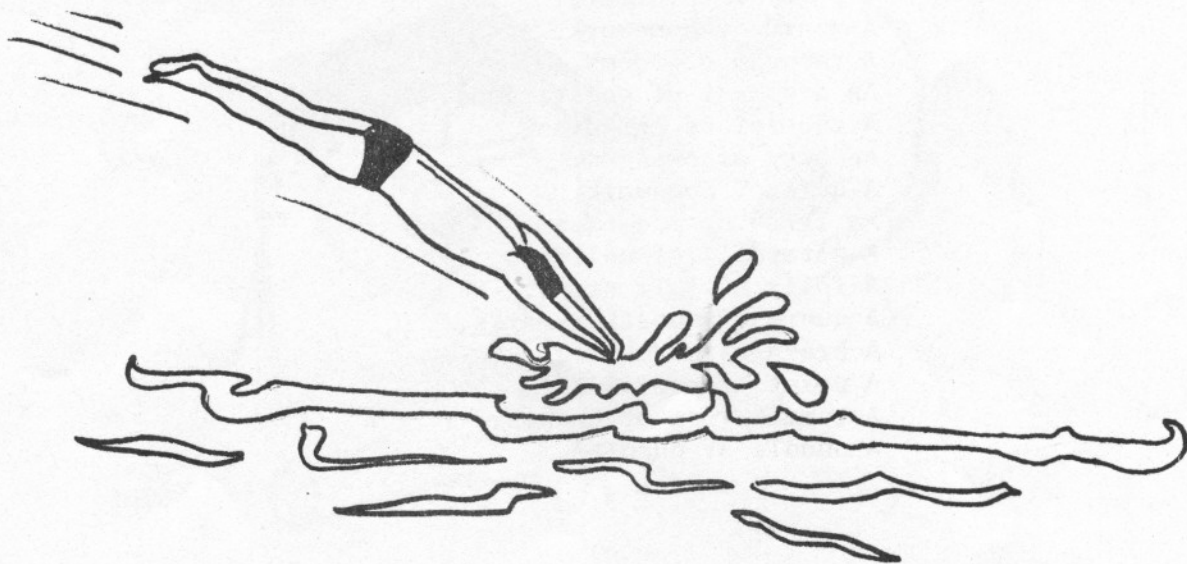
Snow is gentle, snow is white,
Snow is falling in the night,
Like a blanket all around,
Very soft and not a sound.

Beverley Lydon, 3G

Swimming

We were standing on the side,
Ready to dive.
The whistle blew, we were off!
I was splashing and dashing,
And pacing for racing,
And going and flowing,
And faster to catch her,
And paining and gaining,
And puffing and panting,
The public were chanting,
I was breathing and heaving,
And driving and diving,
To turn through the water,
And back up the baths.
I was tiring and slowing,
And sucking and blowing,
Going faster,
I've passed her,
I'm swimming for winning,
I've won!

Joanne Armstrong, 1R



Limericks

There was an old man called Fred,
Who couldn't help smoking in bed,
Fifty a day,
Without delay,
But now the poor fellow is dead.

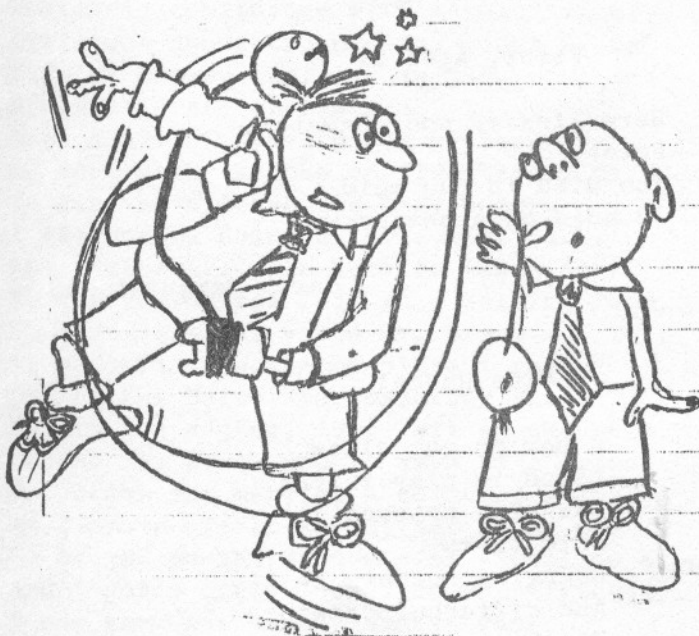
Paul Quinn, 1S

There was a young lady from Gloucester,
Whose parents thought they had lost her,
From the fridge came a sound,
And at last she was found,
The trouble was how to defrost her.

Jason Coan, 1S

There was a young fellow named Plonkers
Who spent his spare time playing conkers,
But one morning oh, tut!
He cracked his own nut,
And now he's gone stark raving bonkers.

Jason Trippier, 3B



There was a young lad called Tony
Who loved to eat macaroni,
He got very fat
But he didn't mind that
'Cos he bounced when he fell off his pony.

Steven Fitton and Robert Bloomfield, 1B

There once was a young man named Clyde
Who travelled to the hot sea-side.
He jumped in the sea,
"Oh, no!" said he,
As he was swept away with the tide.

David Harwood, 3G

Humorous Verse

A very flash young pig,
They say she was a smasher,
Suddenly ran
Under a van,
And now she's a gammon rasher.

Simon Lewis, 3B

In Memory

Peter, Ages 2 $\frac{1}{4}$

Here lies my poor hamster,
Peter,
Who died in the cold
In need of a heater.

Sarah Dewhurst, 1S

The Rascal

A boy in our class
Loves to play tricks,
Changing crosses
Into ticks,
Bringing spiders in
And different creatures,
Flicking rubbers
At the teachers,
Banging desks,
Smashing glass,
That's the boy in our class!

Paul Quinn, 1S

An Owl

Darkness.

High in knobbly oak tree,
A ghostly shadow, watches and waits,
Sitting motionless, silhouetted against the full moon.
Silently, big, yellow eyes scan the dark forest.
The owl does not move, except to blink.
A sleek, red, cunning fox, prowls, menacingly
Through the jungle of undergrowth.
His hungry eyes, flashing round looking
For a kill.
Then suddenly there is a sharp rustle
In the grass below.
A feeble rodent scuttles around in the
Dry leaves.
The ghostly shadow takes off, swooping
Downward, silent and swift, yet deadly.
Instantly its enormous talons snatch up
The terrified vole.
Struggling and trembling the vole squeaks
Loudly,
As the owl devours its prey.

Kate Riley, 2B

Conduire

The night before my driving test,
I went to bed to get some rest,
Dreaming about the Highway Code,
Prohibitory signs along the road,
Concentration, responsibility and anticipation,
Patience, confidence with acceleration.
All these thoughts spinning round my head
Made me uneasy as I lay in bed.
My test is due at ten a.m.,
Hope I haven't passed out by then.
My instructor knocks confidently on my door
To give me a lesson an hour before.
I was uneasy doing a three-point turn,
But, after all, I'm here to learn.
My instructor was left in a waiting room.
My test-examiner was a Mr. Broom.
At a distance a number plate I read.
Sat in the Metro, the examiner said,
"Start the engine, turn left at the bend,"
On the way I stopped to wave to a friend.
Mr. Broom sat marking a coloured sheet,
As I drove off at speed, sat in my seat.
He banged on the window - my signal to stop -
And I got a dirty look from a traffic-cop.
I now know how most learners feel,
As I clung for dear life on the steering-wheel.

Mirror, signal, manoeuvre, I'm off again,
Doing fifty m/p/h up a one-way lane.
Position, speed, roundabouts and junctions
After all this work I will malfunction.
Accelerater, footbreak, handbreak, clutch,
All this work is a bit too much.
Manoeuvring along a bumpy road,
I missed a cat and splattered a toad.
At last I'm back where I started from,
The oral test has just begun.
The test now over, Mr. Broom said
Awful things that stuck in my head.
I've failed on this and failed on that,
Murdered a toad but missed a cat.
He was so disgusted he 'phoned the R.S.P.C.A.
To take me and the poor toad away.
Suddenly I woke up getting out of my bed,
So all was a dream what you've just read.
I apologize for wasting your time
And passed my test the very first time.
I now can smile about that weird dream,
As I'm the proud owner of a new Sunbeam.

Andrea Sugden, 3B

Aberfan

Have you ever heard of Aberfan
And the slag heap disaster there,
When it slid like a torrent of mud
And left the whole hillside bare?

After days of floods from above,
The slag heap began to sitr,
To move like a giant, old turtle,
To slip, to slide and to slur.

Far down below in the valley,
Breaking the peace, the school bell rings.
Small feet are heard, pattering, running,
Childish, high voices shout and sing.

One final cart of coal dust dumped.
It shifted, then slid, gathering speed,
The children work, playing below,
Did not know they were children in need

Like a thick, black, coating of tar,
It lay on the school, Moy Road beside,
A crushing envelope of mud,
Killing innocents, justice defied.

One hundred and sixteen children
Of Pantglas Junior School
Were suffocated and smothered
By our country's most treasured fuel.

Remember October 21st,
In that fateful year '66,
When a hundred and forty-four died
Like fruit in a coal, mud-cake mix.

Elizabeth Ratcliffe

And They Say Colour Doesn't Matter.....

Just because
You are the black man, and
I am the white,
It's automatically assumed
That you're always wrong, never right.
And they say colour doesn't matter.....

If a girl is raped by a man, merely "a man",
Then it becomes a shame.
But if by "a black man", then, oh,
What horror! Suddenly everyone feels the pain.
Both are criminals, where the difference?
And they say colour doesn't matter.....

Poor white girl, condemned as a slut
For committing the crime of being in love
With a black man.
"Traitor, she should stick to her own kind.
She isn't 'one of us' any more.
Nigger lover."
And they say colour doesn't matter.....

I'm thinking of you, and
You're thinking of me.
We're near yet worlds apart, thinking
"Is this how it will always be?"
And they say colour doesn't matter.....

In other countries, over-ruled by whites,
Not allowed to vote, even though
It's their future being voted for;
Treated like dirt,
No say in anything -
And they say colour doesn't matter?
Rubbish.