



# Winnipeg Wasps Rag

## Xmas 97 Edition

### In this issue:

Letter from Mac, with a pat on the back that feels conspicuously like a push forwards...

Miles Jones explains that he was surprised not to receive the New Zealand scholarship. "If I'd known I wasn't going to get the damned thing, I would have been a lot rougher on the Skett and the Saracens at the banquet!"

In response, Skett promised to look for a way to send Miles away soon.

We review Knudsen's new book "I went to Korea and didn't gain weight!" in which he attributes his lack of weight gain to having to carry Karl Federsal home every night. That's also how he stayed unmarried, he claims in his next book- "I went to Korea and Didn't Get Married."

The Exodus- the continuing story of club members leaving the province.

Ron "Stinger" Enberg and Bill "Buzz" Bien take their dancing Wasps show on the road, offering to be mascots to the NBA Hornets, but get stuck assisting spelling contests on the Learning Channel. Ron quips "It's showbiz. Buzz and I got bitten by the 'bug', heh heh, after the Hallowe'en bash at Mondetta. It can't be long until Letterman realizes that a couple of giant wasps have more potential than that Buttman guy." Bill's first televised line? "Bee(sic) is for bouncer, it's good enough for me!"

Women's Rugby Division contracted Cole Summers to run a training program starting in December. How many of you have started training for next season? Thought so.

Condors Snow 7's- Free Registration for out of town teams!! Darren Carter vows to return to help Wasps defend their double title- **TOURNEY VICTORS** (over the Grads) and **MOST SLURRED ACCENTS**.

Harland relieved of Secretary position at AGM. "There was a meeting?" asks the poster boy for cranial scar tissue. Miles will do most of the work, but he claims that he types slower than a week in jail. Call Scott at 237-4559 if there are any changes or additions to be made to the phone list. Let us know if you didn't receive a Rag, so we can feel bad.

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# Letter from Mac

This is the original text of the speech I had prepared for the club dinner. I cut it short as I had grown tired of listening to others talk, though this is one of the few times that we make a concerted effort to thank those that need to be acknowledged for the contributions they have made this past season. It is one of the few times that we reflect on the season past. It is the time to visualize the future. But, most importantly, it is the time to celebrate the wonderful camaraderie of the game of rugby football. In my attempt to avoid dragging the speech portion of the evening on I left out a few things- not intentionally- so to those individuals I left out I apologize. So here is the whole damned thing, minus the greetings and bad “jokes”!

Could we all take a moment of silence in memory of the “late Don Innes” although there are reports circulating that he was spotted in Brandon refereeing a slow motion rugby game, just last week.

The Speech:

The Wasps Rugby Football Club has, for as long as I can remember, made a commitment to a high standard of play, yo being as good as we possibly could, to seeking new challenges, to measure ourselves against the highest standard we could find. As I reflect on the season just concluded let me begin at the ending.

I enjoyed the second division final this year. The team I coach had a fine first half, and the team I created had a fine second half. I think that the best team won the day, but the other team showed that they were not far behind them. Yet I find it almost ironic that the only undefeated team in 1997 (Wasps II) almost did not qualify for the Division II playoffs. In my conversation with the Barbarians, there was a lot of respect for our performance, especially the defence in the centres and the work of our back row. They were pleased with their own performance. They were disappointed with the outcome, mostly because of the start they had, digging themselves into a hole, but they were pleased that they had enough sense to stop digging. They were quite elated by the fact that they appeared to have a higher level of team fitness than their opponents. Throughout the game I wore a Wasps ‘coaching’ shirt’ and carried a Barbarian jacket on my arm, as it was a win-win kind of game. I’d like to thank Miles Jones for the kind words in the latest edition of the Rag. Thanks Miles, I much appreciated your insight into what the game meant to me.

The Premier Division final was a disappointment for me, as I’m sure it was for every member, past or present, who has ever bled ‘gold an black’, and for almost every fan at Maple Grove Rugby Park. However, credit must be given to the Assassins-they didn’t quit, they did what they had to do. There have been some other days when we have played not quite to our standard, and perhaps did not deserve to win, but not this day. I believe that we control our own destinies, we didn’t get it done when we had the chances. The game reflected in many ways this has been a most inconsistent season, for which we have only ourselves to blame, e.g., in the Grand Final Mark, Sid, Todd and Darren were playing together, for the club, for only the second time. Maybe we had some legitimate excuses, but excuses are for losers, and the fact that we had fallen below the standard that we had set for ourselves as a team, and the fact that the Assassins did what they had to do, greatly influenced the outcome of the game. I wish I could say it was the players’ fault, but I think it was mine, because in many respects I didn’t provide the right leadership this season.

The game was lost, but the sun did come up on Sunday, at which time I was reading “Deano” ( the story of Dean Richards, No. 8 for Leicester and England), which I had bought just before the finals. There is a section in which Dean Richards talks about Leicester losing two cup championships (the John Player and Pilkington Cups) to arch rival Bath in a period of seven days, and I quickly thought of our two ‘cup’ losses to the Assassins (league and Patrons). When I read it I just changed club names; Wasps for Leicester, and Assassins for Bath, Manitoba for England and Canadian for Five Nations:

The story is familiar now. We were leading into the final minutes, indeed we had led for most of the game- and we were moments away from landing the cup...The convert had taken Bath one point ahead. The game ended 16-15 and they had piped us for the second time in seven days...When we came to analyse the Cup final in the cold light of day, we felt that we’d had a lot of pressure but had failed to make it count...And full credit to Bath. It enabled them to frustrate our desire to get the ball quickly and play a more fluid game, so clearly the tactic worked.

In some respects the game of rugby football is totally unrecognizable from the game of only 8 years ago, when I returned to the club as coach. If you opt for the open style of play that I have preached for the last several years, and that Sid Roberts had envisioned during his two years as coach, the players need constant practice. Constant practice with the club was not a trademark of this year’s side. My concerns started in April or May when we had training sessions with sometimes only two players. Early I was encouraged by turn-outs at the University of Winnipeg, but soon became frustrated and discouraged by the commitment of players.

I know that over the last two years many club players benefited from their participation in an excellent provincial program, for which Garry Nicholson and Jack Brogan need to be acknowledged and thanked for their commitment to the game of rugby football in Manitoba. The achievement of the Senior Men XV is something that has been a dream of many in this province ever since the first Tier II event. Congratulations to Garry, Jack and every Wasp who was a member on capturing the Canadian Tier II Championship. I’m sure that every Wasp who has ever worn the Manitoba Strip will stand proud at this achievement. I think that this club’s commitment to the Provincial

programs over the years has made our club the standard bearer for all of Manitoba rugby. If individual players can not motivate themselves to prepare for the upcoming Tier I championships in 1998, I fear nothing will.

For me, there is much more to a great rugby club than just results. Sure, winning the last match of the season makes the winter seem more bearable. Individual matches, famous tries, infamous plays and long to be remembered players will come and go. Significant parts of this club's folklore include; the "May Long" in Edmonton, SNAFU with the Pirates (where ever we go), bus trips and tours, snow rugby, "the Rag", inaccurate phoning lists, unpaid dues, excuses for missing training, friends for life, and the 'Bridge, to name but a few.

As results seem to be of increasing importance in the modern day game, the future of the Wasps Rugby Club will not be assured by tradition or past accomplishments alone- the Wasps will need to prove that they are dominant where it matters: on the playing field. So what does the future of the Wasps hold, what is down that road? I think that tradition will be far less important, and that may be good because that means that any- hopefully that will also mean the Wasps- really ambitious club will, if they can find financial backing and organize themselves well, with the right people in charge, will be able to reach the top. A good administration will be important. I believe that the heart and soul of a rugby club is its people, especially the loyal servants who have laboured behind the scenes in the name of the club. This is one of the true strengths of our club. We need to thank all the past and present 'labourers' for the time and effort they have committed, and whose consistently high standards have given the Wasps our current prominence in the rugby world. To this year's executive, thank you for your efforts. The club would surely like to hear from anyone willing to sit on next year's executive. To next year's executive I challenge you to surpass the standard.

I don't want the club to focus on, or worry about winning games. All I want the club to think about is making a commitment to excellence, being the best we can, that's where it all starts. Winning will then take care of itself, it certainly has in the 1990s; let's do the little things well first.

Lou Holtz, former football coach at Notre Dame, suggests that there are four things that any organization needs to possess to be number one:

1. Make a commitment to excellence
2. Pay complete attention to details
3. Be fundamentally sound
4. Be disciplined

I think that because we have committed ourselves to a high standard of play some clubs in this union have taken a look at what we have done as a club and tried to emulate us, the Assassins being the best example. They sat down 4-5 years ago and reorganized their programs based on what we had been doing. I for one have no problems congratulating them on their achievements this year- "They did it our way". Believe me, that does not mean to imply that they are as good as we are. I don't think that there is any point in criticizing others for their success, you just have to try harder to match them (e.g., the Assassins commitment to their high schools and their colts programs is now paying off for them the way it has for us in the past). I think that it is time that we re-assessed our program, because any organization committed to excellence, as we claim to be, should never be looking in their rear-view mirror, but down the road to what is to come, and the future for rugby football is greatly different from anything that existed in the past. We can leap forward to keep up, or stand still and get passed.

Our recruitment program needs to be stepped up, because we must find the quality players required to not only strengthen our first team, but our first team squad. This is the secret of any successful club, its depth of talent and its recruiting program. Nothing can be achieved if you don't have replacements who are of as good quality as the the players they are replacing.

I know of a half-dozen or so changes that will be required to the 1998 first XV, as players have either moved out of town, or retired: Grant Cooke, Todd Andrews, Darren Raeside, and Ron Enberg, and maybe there are several others. I need to thank them for their belief in me and for their commitment to the club. I want to thank Ron Enberg for his great job as club captain for the past two years. I don't have the words to express what your efforts have meant to me, but he did a great job of taking care of business on the pitch. It was a pleasure working with you. At this point, I would just like to announce that there will be a plaque, in the Wasps' dressing room, listing all the club captains- my way of saying thanks to all those players who have undertaken this major task. I just hope that the club organizes a painting crew to do something about our 'home' before next season starts.

Of course we want to develop our game in the future, and I am sure we will. We know that if we are to win championships we will need a good all-around side, which will require that we are significantly fitter. Once again I'll borrow words from Dean Richards:

It may mean as many as eight training sessions a week with plenty of work in the gym, but that is the price we must accept. We at Leicester aspire to becoming the best club side in the world. We are not prepared to consider a target any lower than that. But to achieve it, we are going to have to be probably the fittest club side, too.

To anyone who aspires to playing for the Wasps' Premier side next season the training should have started already. You are either getting better or you are getting worse, but you aren't staying the same. What are you doing to ensure that you are getting better?

I'd like to take a few words from "A Championship Season at Notre Dame" (about football coach Lou Holtz) Holtz constantly challenges his players not to be average!

Are You Average?

“Average” is what the failure claims to be when their family and friends ask them why they are not successful.

AVERAGE is the top of the bottom, the best of the worst, the bottom of the top, the worst of the best. Which of these are you?

AVERAGE means being run-of-the-mill, mediocre, insignificant, an also-ran, a nonentity.

Being AVERAGE is the lazy person’s cop-out; it’s lacking the guts to stand in life; it’s living by default.

Being AVERAGE is to take up space for no purpose; to take the trip through life, but never pay the fare; to return no interest for God’s investment in you.

Being AVERAGE is to be forgotten once you pass through this life. The successful are remembered for their contributions, the failures are remembered because they tried, but the AVERAGE, the silent majority, is just forgotten.

To be AVERAGE is to commit the greatest crime one can against one’s self, one’s humanity and one’s God. The saddest epitaph is: Here lies Mr. Or Mrs. Average- here lies the remains of what might have been, except for their belief that they were only AVERAGE.

I’d like to take a moment to pay tribute to two club members, who I am proud to call “friend”, but can’t be with us tonight in body, but are no doubt here in spirit because I can’t see Al Hall or Tony Coy missing a gathering of Wasps. I’m sure they would enjoy our company. I challenge the club to keep their memory, and the memory of any other Wasp who has passed on, alive, for they were not average.

Last Saturday the Legends XV journeyed to Brandon for the inaugural match of G.O.R.U.M., (Golden Oldies Rugby Union of Manitoba) and the B.O.B.(Barbarian Old Boys) XV at Canada Games Park. Like the All-Blacks’ “Haka”, the pre-game cheer of “BOB’S YOUR UNCLE” will surely bring fear to the hearts of all future opponents of the B.O.B. XV. However, Paul Harland wasn’t listening to the cheer and showed no fear, but he did play right into the B.O.B. XV game plan- they made him score three tries,, all on long runs, early in the first half, and then he was too fatigued to be a factor in the rest of the game. Needless to say, Paul Harland, with some help, defeated the B.O.B. XV, thus the club won the final game of the season, winter will be so much more bearable now! Don Innes was sighted-acting as a referee! If you are 35+, or even real close, watch for more G.O.R.U.M. information.

I’d like to thank Dan Hotel for the terrific job he did this year. As players you surely have no idea how much work goes into getting this club onto the playing field. I’d like to thank our wives, Nickie and Katrina for their patience, and their understanding of the demands of the game of rugby football. I’d also like to thank our children for their patience- Ashley, Luke and Jolene.

In conclusion, I’d like to answer the question regarding my future as coach of the Wasps RFC. Definitely, yes, maybe, I’m not sure, no! I don’t know. The end of this season marks the end of my 24<sup>th</sup> season coaching rugby, the end of my 10<sup>th</sup> season coaching the Wasps. I’m very proud of what teams I’ve coached have managed to accomplish. The success of the 1990s has made it much more challenging to coach, I’ve created a monster, that’s what happens when you have success. The more success you have, the more it demands of you. The more it demands of you the more you wonder how in the world you are supposed to keep being successful and how you are going to relax and enjoy it. Life is very comfortable for the coach of an AVERAGE team. As I struggle with the demands created by our success, I’ve grown increasingly impatient and frustrated with the lack of commitment to practice, training and even playing the games. How hard can it be: for 32 years the Wasps have practised on Monday, and for many years Wednesday; the Wasps have always played games on Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday, Saturday or Sunday; this is the first year that games were only on Thursday or Sunday. I’ve grown tired of having to make 118 phone calls in a 48-hour period trying to find 15 players, only to have two not show up and we play short, again. I will certainly be part of the club in 1998 probably involved in coaching. If anyone would like to take over coaching the club, or helping coach (senior, colts, high school) the executive would surely like to hear from you. I challenge you to commit to excellence.

God bless you all.....Mac....

### **Important Notice**

The club executive, and all involved, would like to apologize to **Dennis Malthouse** for the oversight at the banquet in acknowledging his important support of the Wasps over the years. His sponsorship helps fund many of the Club projects, and his assistance is essential for this club to continue. This very rag would be difficult to produce without sponsors like Dennis, so if you actually like this publication, thank Dennis when you see him, or better yet, buy a vehicle from him.

## **DINNER, DANCE AND ROMANCE ANOTHER LIST OF HEADLINES FOLLOWING THE ANNUAL WASP BANQUET**

“M.C. SCORES PRESIDENTS DAUGHTER!”

“ ERH DONT YOU KNOW HIS A FILTHY ENGLISHMAN, ME DEAR?”

“ACCENTS OFFENDED FOLLOWING M.C.’S INSENSITIVE SPEECH”  
SKETT, MACLEOD, ROBERTS AND ANDREWS PLAN DEFAMATION SUIT, COCHRANE CONSULTED.

“ANDREWS AND JONES AT HEADS FOLLOWING BOTCHED THREESOME ATTEMPT”  
“FIRST YOU RUIN ME DINNER THEN YOU RUIN ME NIGHT, TRY GOD PLEASE NOT TO RUIN ME LIFE!”

Firstly it must be mentioned that the evening as a whole came of quite well, safe the music debarcle and the offending of the Wasp Women in attendance. The diner was the usual fare though only two bottles of wine per table (thank you Tony Gardner), luckily I sat at the head table with the brass of the rugby establishment which apparently entitles you to a couple of extra bottles of wine. (note: I use brass in the monkey testicle sense of the word) The speeches came of at record pace and all in attendance would agree if anything Ray Skett should have spoke for longer. President Nolan’s speech was short and sweet with just seven erh’s, Andrews spent most of his speech waxing lyrically of both his life and times as a freeport merchant seamen and his excessive abuse of his once wonderful car the Mazdarati . Sharone Topf, in what we can only hope will be her last club speech presented a shocked Robin Smith with an award, while offending newcomer Lawrence “Black Magic” Eta, with the biggest baby award. (Sharone are you sure that was a baby?) Not long after the speeches ended was the M.C. accosted by those he had offended. In reply I simply stated “At what point did I lie!” no response came from any of my accusers. The Dancing was great all had a good time. The after party continued at Barskes place with Roddy Macleod insulted all women and all else present with his loose tongued verbal assault on a defenseless man. Obviously scorned by the harsh words expelled in his direction just hours earlier at the banquet, his true feelings emerged. As did those of an offended Andrews following a heinous crime of passion in barskske’s spare bedroom, nuff said. Yacko’s cock blocking antics continued following his failed game of six person naked twister. The night of course was complete following a forty dollar cab ride with five drunk idiots. The Cox Jones residence floor looked like a U.N. mission gone wrong with an Englishman, Scotsman, South African and Canadian passed out near dead. Another passage written in the Wasps capers of life.

## THE CAMBRIDGE HOTEL BRINGING JOY TO THE WORLD



Welcome and thank you to generous new sponsor Tropicana,

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## Santa's Wasp List

The Rag sent investigative journalists on a difficult mission- no, not get Sid to show up at snow-rugby, something even more strenuous, find Santa! After frequent fights over the difference between magnetic and true North, a scrap with an elf sentry, and a toy battle that was a cross between Dante's Inferno and the Nutcracker Suite, our reporter's managed to escape the Jolly Fat Man's Fort (no, not Bill's apartments on Victor Street), with the much sought after Wasps Wish List. We can not publish the list in its entirety, due to Dave Fraser's thirty two page request (Dave, your desire to have M.D. after your name cannot be granted by St. Nick, you're stuck with W.D. for witch doctor, sorry). But here are a choice few from the Wasps wants as sent to Mr. Claus:

Roddy MacLeod wants to borrow the big red sleigh for those trips to Red Deer, "If that fat git can cover the world in a single night, it's got to be good for a three minute jaunt to visit me bonnie lass". Well, Roddy, at least you bonnie doesn't lie over the ocean, or over the sea.

McKim just asked for patience, lots of patience. And maybe teeth.

Nicholson wants airfare for the provincial players who left after winning Tier II's. Just enough tix to attend a practice a week for a few months.

Lawrence Eta wants a meat tenderizer for his hands.

Simone wants just a little decency at the 'Bridge.

Stu Cox merely wants to be understood. Even when he's drunk.

Cam Knudsen wants an inflatable replacement for the River Heights Posse to keep him company at the 'Bridge, now that even Scoop Macaulay is passing up Bridge nights to hang out in Winkler at the bowling lanes.

Todd Andrews would like a job that pays him a ridiculous wage for doing naught, allows him to travel at will for as long as he desires, with an impressive title such as Ph.D. Merry Christmas you scoundrel. (ed. note, he also wanted a Hair Club for Men membership)

Blake Morden timidly asked for self-confidence, as well as a bigger mirror, and a book of self-aggrandisement quotes.

Davey Bowen and Kris Buddick requested that God save our souls. And for better sets of Abs.

Pete Nolan wants a by-law in the Wasp Constitution prohibiting relationships between players and executive members' daughters, and for a supercomputer to figure out the Wasps financial morass. (ed note, good luck, Stu. Hahahahahahaha!)

Scoop Macaulay wants at least one iota of sympathy for three years of shoulder complaints (ed note, quit your whingeing). He also requested the establishment of a booze can in Winkler, so that he can visit Sonja without spasming.

### Coaching seminars:

#### Theory

Jan 17, Feb 14, Mar 14

#### Level 1 Technical

Jan., in Winkler area

Feb 19 - 22 Level 1 theory and technical in Winnipeg

Mar 21 Level 1 technical

Call Pac-man for details, 925-5664

President - Craig Peters

Vice-President - Ron Enberg

Treasurer - Stu Cox

Secretary - Miles Jones

Maple Grove Rep - Pete Nolan

Members-at-large - Roddy McLeod, Andy

Young, Guy McKim, Casey

Lockhart (and welcome to the Club to Casey). Can

use one more and some

people to help out with organizing different functions.

**High Schools Rugby meeting** Jan 24 at Sports Admin Bldg 200 Main. Wheel will be calling to confirm and arrange coaching for all high schools and Colts. We have talked about taking the Colts on a trip with a mens team. If you're interested in coaching, contact Andy Young (Wheel)

**Bingos** Jan 5 and 29

Rugby Manitoba **AGM** Jan 31

Saint will be organizing an adhoc committee aimed at arranging corporate sponsorship. Could use some help. 253-7817.

The Club is looking at arranging a tour to the 1999 World Cup which would include a few games. Looking for people who are interested in the trip and interested in working with Pacman to organize it.

### 1998 Executive

