

FLAGS

by Harry Dunn
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I'm driving home from the bowling club,
Not any old club, but the famous IBC,
Where three pennant teams are celebrating hard -
Two flag-winners and a gallant runner-up,
That's not too bad, I say, as I pass the Espy pub,
Two and a half from three!

The Invy Ones faced Philip Island Blues,
Favourites, of course, those Islanders,
They don't very often lose,
Or so a local bookie said before the game, today,
And quoted them odds-on
To lick Inverloch today.

Those upstart Inverlochers – juveniles and geriatrics ,
One Islander was heard to say,
With brash confidence and Island – type theatrics
'They're easy-beats when they play away,
Just like the bookie said, in his pre-match calls,
'If you back the Island Boys – Ten'll get yer five ,
And I'm the mug who'll have to pay
Unless, of course, someone takes a dive,
And gives the game away.'

But those Island bowlers got their come-uppance
When they met the Lochers on Leongatha's neutral green
In sweaty autumn heat,
And the Piper said 'You've had your tune and now it's time to pay',
And pay they did, those Islanders, and more than one and tuppence
So the Piper and the Bookies all enjoyed their day,
And Inverloch's Division One is now the team to beat.

So much for Divvy One, those clever little dicks,
The *Threes* rolled up at Korumburra,
To confront the Foster quicks,
That's Foster's Best Of Breed, their premier bowling team,
With record most impressive
And did our Threes, with nerves of steel and courage true
Wilt under bushfire sun, breathing mostly smoke and steam
And were they over-confident, and exhibit pride excessive?
Not at all – but they lead right from the start,
Ending nineteen up, and that was more than plenty
To get back where they belong -
Division Two, therein to ply their bowling art,
In Pennant Season Twenty Nineteen/Twenty.

Our quartet of bowling ladies,
The all-girl team in Inverloch's Division Three,
Managed to get up,
'And that shows just how chivalrous some bowling men can be,
To let 'em win like that!'
Said one poor jealous male, or so I have been told,
There's no way you'd hear such a dopey thing from *me*;
Ridiculous, of course – and I'd never be so bold.
So now, according to my reckoning,
That ladies' team moves up to Two from Three.
And is that a *ladies' Saturday Division One team* I see beckoning?

And now the Invy Fours,
Good enough to be there and good enough to win,
Playing for a flag, on the rinks at neutral Korumburra,
Where Lady Luck deserted us, without apparent reason
And two well-balanced teams met there on the greens
To settle their old scores, at the end of Pennant season;
Enter yet another Island team,
Another battle to be fought
In the never-ending Invy – Island wars,
The Trojans and the Greeks of the local bowling scene,
Where victory must be won,
And couldn't possibly be bought. (Just ask the bookie)

So, with eyes fixed firmly on a flag, and a chance to move to Three,
They suffered an unexpected slip, a slip twixt cup and lip,
A thing which sometimes happens on the greens,
To lawn bowlers, as it does to kings and queens,
But who are we to judge,
They won two rinks, and live to play again,
Runners-up this year, they gave that flag a nudge,
Going down to Philip Island Fours, who well deserved their win:
Down here at Inverloch, we suffer pain in silence,
And the Philip Island win is a thing we don't begrudge.

Now, a word about selectors,
Those brave souls who raise their hands,
Then daily have to face their peers and their electors,
And when Saturday's selections appear there on the board ,
There'll always be some disappointed chaps
Who'd like to see the scoundrels hang – those heartless vivisectors!
We curse them and we bait them,
We tell them, as selectors, they're a hopeless load of shite
And of course, we *have to* loathe and hate them,
But just occasion'ly - they do seem to get it right!
After all, two point five from three aint all that bad,
On this Finals night.

So the Inverloch Bowling Club,
In the year Two-o-one-nine
Entered five divisions
And got three up to the line,
They packed two lovely Pennant flags,
Plus a runner – up,
Into their spacious saddle-bags
To grace the club-room walls, at the annual wind-up.

Now that ain't a real bad season, and it's good to be alive
But now it's time to leave the bowlers, because the hour is late
And I know that I'm in a bit of strife
Perhaps a trifle over-refreshed, on this auspicious night,
So, I'll have to muscle up, and face
The ever-loving wife.....