

# **The Club**

**a comedy**

**by**

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**Cast**

**Chairman**                      **late 50s / early 60s male**

**General Manager**            **40s male**

**Public Relations**            **30s male**

**Coach**                         **50s male**

**Consultant**                    **late 20s female**

**Scene**

**The Club – the committee room.**

**People sitting around a table or around in a semi-circle. Some of them with files.**

**THE CLUB**

*[The characters come on stage and take their seats leaving the central chair for the chairman.]*

Chairman: I've called you all together because we've got to do something about this campaign the press is running against us about the boys' conduct.

General Manager: I don't know what's got into the press. Nothing has changed in years. We've always had these sex and violence incidents. All of a sudden the press is making a big thing out of them. Of course the boys get drunk. Of course the boys chase girls. They always have. What's the big change?

Chairman: We used to be able to shut the press up by offering them an exclusive interview or giving them a special photo opportunity, a few free meals or booze ups.

Public Relations: We still give them that but they want more material. I think it is that there are too many women sports writers these days. They don't accept things the way they are.

General Manager: Or too few boozers among the sports writers.

Chairman: That statement to the press that we might have to ultimately start locking them up in their rooms did not help. It makes our team sound like a batch of wild animals.

Public Relations: Perhaps that's the answer. We drive them to the ground in cages so that the public outside can see them as if they were animals. We bring them onto the field in chains perhaps with keepers with whips going alongside them and we take them out of their chains and we turn them loose of the field – ahh, can you see the crowd going for that?

*[They all stare at Public Relations for a moment without saying anything.]*

Chairman: I don't think that would go down too well with our biggest sponsors.

Public Relations: That's the bloody trouble. The sponsors are getting too sensitive. We give them the most exciting game that everyone wants to see which packs the crowds in and gives them publicity that they otherwise could never get. But you would think they want all the team to come onto the ground wearing dinner suits.

- Coach: I've tried to get them to adopt different attitudes, but you know the boys. You can't change what they always do. There are only three things in their lives. Footy, beer and sex. Who needs anything else anyway?
- Female consultant: You've brought me here and asked me to study the problem so I could give you some advice. If we could produce a change of social attitude that would be great. We would have to convince the players that women were NOT JUST a life support system for a cunt. They are human beings entitled to be treated as such.
- Manager: That sounds fine. But have you ever seen most of the boys talking to a woman. Even talking to their wives is pretty damn one-sided. Conversation and communication is not their strong point.
- Chairman: Can't we give them a pill or something to calm them down?
- Female Consultant: The traditional means of quietening down the libido of groups of males is low level dosages of barbiturates. That has a useful sedative effect. However, they will be nowhere near as energetic on the field, and a football team dosed up with barbiturates are going to come last in any competition.
- Chairman: Then what can we do about this problem?
- Female Consultant: It is all to do with male hormones, particularly in this case testosterone. It is testosterone which makes these men aggressive, it builds their male muscles and it gives them energy.
- Coach: It is what makes **men, men**.
- Female Consultant: But it has another side to it. Testosterone builds up the libido and is the vital hormone for sexual activity. The same thing that makes them aggressive, energetic and muscular also turns them into enthusiasts for sex.
- Chairman: They've all got wives or girlfriends. We give them front row tickets for home matches.
- General Manager: But it has always been a bit of a problem to take them away on tour.
- Public Relations: The wives or girlfriends get bored in hotel rooms by themselves while the boys are at practice and the boys want to go out with the team mates after the games. If the girls go, other team mates make passes at them, it has led to more fights and break ups of relationships than it is worth.

- Chairman: Well how do we stop the press making a fuss about the boys visiting a brothel? Any group of healthy young men who have the opportunity are going to try that, aren't they?
- General Manager: Perhaps we could bring a batch of prostitutes as part of the team support?
- Female Consultant: The trouble is that most of the team members would want them all at the same time or would want to work through the lot of them. Most of them would be a on real sexual high as they come off the ground whether they have won or lost.
- Public Relations: Can you think of the headlines: "Your ticket prices pay for the team's travelling brothel." Are these the camp followers of the 21<sup>st</sup> Century?
- Chairman: Yes, it does not sound a good idea unless it could be done very discretely.
- Coach: Discretion is not something you can ever count on from any of the boys. If they had loads of discretion they'd be in the diplomatic corps not in a football team.
- Chairman: Why do they get into so many fights?
- Coach: Do you mean on the field or off the field?
- Female Consultant: They get into fights because they are highly aggressive personalities driven by relatively high levels of testosterone. If they did not have a tendency to get into fights easily they would not be worth having in the team.
- Chairman: Could we put together a team who are less pre-occupied with sex?
- Coach: What are you talking about? A team of poofters?
- Female Consultant: If you could find a team of gay men of the right physique, background, strength and energy, unfortunately for different reasons gay men tend to get into fights just as often as fully androgenous males.
- Chairman: Well what the hell do we do?
- Public Relations: We'll have to go to the expense of giving them all minders. The stars in other sports have minders. We'll have to have a team of minders – probably one or two for each member of the team.
- Chairman: What the hell would minders do?

- Public Relations: Just the same as they do for the politicians. They make sure they are at the right places at the right time. They make sure they don't drink too much. They make sure that they don't talk to the wrong people. If they are talking to the right people they try to make sure that they don't say the wrong things and they arrange women discretely.
- Chairman: Then we better get some.
- General Manager: It's going to be a very expensive exercise. We'll have to have at least one minder on duty all the time for each team member. They will not come cheaply. They've got to have a good background in public relations and in dealing with the press. They've also got to be physically strong enough that when the bloke they are minding takes a dislike to being minded, they'll be able to still control the situation. I doubt whether there would be enough that we could employ in the whole of Australia to service even our top team.
- Chairman: Well we've got to do something to rescue the game. If all this press keeps on hitting at us, mothers won't let their children get involved in the game.
- Female Consultant: Mothers want their boys to play soccer anyway, not league. They live longer, they break less limbs and their ears look better.
- Public Relations: We've just got to adopt a new image. We've got to promote ourselves as the game of men. Our slogan is going to have to be something like, "Score your try, get your chick."
- Female Consultant: Well there is some truth in that. Some women seem to adore these muscular masculine macho men. I sometimes think they can smell the testosterone.
- Public Relations: Perhaps that's right. We could turn the tables on the press. The attacks on us for getting drunk or getting into fights or being a bit rough with a few girls – we put that forward as proof of what a man's sport this is.
- Female Consultant: It sounds to me like you are getting back to the idea of bringing them onto the ground in chains and unleashing them on the opposition.
- Chairman: Well it seems the only way to go.
- Coach: Well thank God we are going to stop dropping team members because they've chatted up some bird in the wrong way or got into a fight. We can't keep dropping team members or fining

Coach: (CONT) them for doing what's just part of their nature. It's not good for morale.

General Manager: Let's burn the newspapers, throw out the behaviour rules, tell all the press interviewers to get fucked, and just keep playing the game as well as we can with the best men we can find. That's what our patrons want.

*[They all burst into general agreement at this.]*

All: "Yes.", "The way to go.", "No choice.", "Right on."

*[Lights.]*