

**A HOPEFULLY UNNECESSARY  
WORD FROM THE EDITORS  
IN WHICH THE AUTHOR EXPERIMENTS  
WITH POSITIVE REINFORCEMENT**

The Shuttlecoque Sporting Club—rejoicers of the beauty and divinity of Sport and Devotion to it—has for the last thirteen weeks been broadcasting its rare and potent type of Enthusiasm over the airwaves of Portland, Oregon (see: KPSU-1450am) and through the catacombs of the mysterious internet (see: sportinghour.blogspot.com). For those who have so-far only experienced the splendor of our art in the written form (i.e. this informative pamphlet), allow me to briefly re-cap the most recent episode of the Shuttlecoque Sporting Hour and use that synopsis as the necessary introduction to what will most-assuredly resemble a quality piece of writing.

5:55pm—Burdened with the intense pressure to contain within sixty-odd minutes the entire majesty of seven days worth of athletic exhilaration, the hosts of the Sporting Hour begin to lose their collective cool. One co-host becomes so flustered that he removes his pants in the booth to reveal only the shortest of shorts and legs so pale that the black hairs on them resemble the charred forests of the Siberian Steppe.

6:00pm—The show begins to the fanfare of a sound-effect entitled “fan-fare.” A multitude of discourteous attempts at humor begin to melt the ice and before too long a genuine rapport is spotted upon a distant horizon.

6:15pm—After sufficiently boasting of our own immeasurable talents, we break for some music and self-reflection.

6:20pm—It is at this point that the veil of sophistication is lifted and the intrepid hosts fall headlong into a thoughtful discussion of the argument between Form (i.e. playing beautifully) and Function (i.e. winning). The point is made that the correlation between the two manifests itself differently in each sport. In soccer, for instance, it is quite often necessary to produce a bit of magic—a moment of inspiration—to find oneself with a clear goal-scoring opportunity. Conversely, in a duller game, American football for instance, victory is more often the result of a team’s ability to successfully execute the plays they have studied, practiced and memorized. Herein lies the fulcrum of the discussion: can an individual sport or game be quantified in terms of thrill and aesthetic pleasure based on the necessity of those moments of inspiration to that sport or game’s outcome? We at the Shuttlecoque Sporting Club and Sporting Hour believe it can, but will dedicate ourselves to investigating why we believe that. (For more information about this pseudo-intellectual conundrum refer to principle number 5 below).

6:45pm—After a bit more music and some outrageous and unprintable off-air hijinks the hosts of the Shuttlecoque Sporting Hour—wing-manned by the trusty Joel Strong, All-American correspondent—manage to cover with surprising lucidity the activities of the Portland Trailblazers, the NFL play-offs, and one English Premier League match (it was a good one though).

7:00pm—Exhausted, and damp with the residue of Radio Magic, your intrepid hosts retire to the nearest eligible drink-eria to sip scotches of unprecedented bogginess and flavor whilst slapping each other on the back and high-fiving.

To listen for yourself (live) tune in to KPSU-1450am every Sunday at 6pm or (for archived episodes or to download the podcast) visit [sportinghour.blogspot.com](http://sportinghour.blogspot.com) the next time you find yourself astride the internet.

—*Eamon ffitch*

**THE FIFTH PRINCIPLE**

To document and share amongst members such instances as illuminate the merit or further intensify the mystery of the first four principles. *Fides quaerens intellectum*, theologians call it: “Faith in search of understanding.” For we who have borne witness to great Enthusiasm, who have been seized by such pleasure as sport provides, there exists also the desire to recognize such experiences, whether by analysis, narrative, or praise.

**THE NEW ENTHUSIAST  
SPORTING WEEKLY  
EXALTING THE WORLD OF SPORT, CELEBRATING THE LIFE OF LEISURE**

**24 JANUARY 2008**

## THE NEUTRAL SUPPORTER IN WHICH THE AUTHOR LOOKS AFTER HIS FLOCK

*The African Cup of Nations is blowing up the spot in Ghana. Here, Carson Cistulli says almost nothing about it—but don't tell him that.*

Mama Africa may not be my mother, but that won't stop me from trying to watch certain of her more talented sons attempt to kick a ball into the back of the auld *kitunguu* bag. Reading *The Guardian's* preview of the tournament this past week has forced me to realize just how many of the Beautiful Game's Provocateurs came out of their mommy's tummies (or however they do it over there) in what the French refer to as “the continent we raped, pillaged, and left for dead.”

The African Cup of Nations is a riddle wrapped in a mystery inside questions of morality. It seems that, in what has unfortunately become known as “the African Way,” a number of the old Human Rights were violated leading up to this tournament—including a whole village on the outskirts of Kumasi, Ghana that was literally *burned to the ground* by a platoon of 200 policemen and soldiers, brandishing flame-throwers and machine guns. Coverage of said travesty a) oughtn't be neglected and b) appears in *The Sunday Times* somewhere on the internet inside your computer box.

However, here at *The New Enthusiast*—where no news is the best news ever—we unironically and unapologetically recognize the contradictions of sport. And with that, we turn our eye from the grim specter of injustice off the field to the geniuses who make us dream on it.

Among the tournament's many intriguing matchups, I can most heavily suggest—this week, at least—the one between the Ivory Coast and Benin. Cote d'Ivoire—as we call it here at Le Club—is home to some of Enthusiasm's greatest practitioners. Does the name Didier Drogba mean anything to you? Kolo, or Yaya, Toure? Tom Selleck? Well, 3 of 4 of those *ubermen* will play in this match—in addition to Aruna Dindane, a pacy striker whom I have seen unfurl actual wings and fly around a pitch in France's Ligue Un.

My sole interest in Benin, I'll admit, is Le Mans attacking midfielder Stephane Sessegnon, whose inspired play I caught on television during a fortnight of baguettes and *vin rouge* in France's Dirty South last winter. I'll say this about Sessegnon (or at least the little I've seen of him): he's responsible for more great dribbling in a single football match than I have produced during all the myriad cat naps I've taken on the Club's plush and expensive davenport.

Now that I've urged you to watch it, you might ask where the hell such a spectacle might be available in your channel lineup. The answer is: it's not. (Yes, I see the size of your cable package, and I'm not impressed). Instead, you'll have to do as I say and also as I do: steal it from the blessed internets. The best bet is the least illegal-seeming, *channelsurfing.net*, which also offers NBA basketball, football (American and otherwise), and, it seems, loads of snooker. If that's not doing it for you, google any combination of *p2p*, *live football*, *sopcast*, and/or *hopeless lawbreaker*. That should get you off on the right foot. Or arrested. Either way, you'll undoubtedly be expanding your horizons.

For more information about the tournament, just read Paul Doyle's excellent precap at [football.guardian.co.uk](http://football.guardian.co.uk). For that matter, read everything at [football.guardian.co.uk](http://football.guardian.co.uk). It's sort of like *The New Enthusiast*, except the authors are paid, are actual journalists, and watch the sport with some regularity.

—Carson Cistulli

## APOLOGY IN WHICH THE AUTHOR EXPRESSES SOMETHING LIKE CHAGRIN

Last week I, Carson Cistulli, made a rash edit to Eamon ffitich's use of the word *exulting* in the company motto (on the front page of this charming littlebook), changing it, instead, to *exalting*. After some heated exchanges, I now realize that I acted in a spirit prejudicial to the Club. I am sorry.

That said, I invite any reader to bring his (her?) attention to the cover, which still reads *exalting*, just as last week. I have done this to teach young ffitich a lesson: Carson Cistulli is too lazy to make such trifling edits.

## JOEL STRONG'S AMERICA IN WHICH THE AUTHOR PUTS HIS FINGER IN TOO MANY PIES

*After careful consideration, we at the Shuttlecoque Sporting Club have elected to rent some valuable New Enthusiast real estate to Sporting Hour regular and All-American Correspondent Joel Strong. This is the inevitable outcome. [Editors' note: We have no idea what Joel Strong is saying, but it hurts so good].*

In Joel Strong's America, The Citizenry concerns itself with lumps both small and large. While it takes no great excavation to stumble upon large lumps, especially large lumps on a larger lump, the discovery and exploration of small lumps on the same larger lump will bring great joy to The Citizenry. Therefore, large lumps on the Largest Lump in the Whole Wide Sporting World (The North American Footballing Super Bowl XLII) are dutifully ignored (i.e. Undefeatedness, Tom Brady's Limp towards GF's apartment, the Road Warriors AKA the Football Giants) because, really, these items should be left for the Joyless Fundamentalists that worship false idols. Instead, Citizens, there are three very small lumps that we should concern ourselves with when it comes to the LLitWWSW.

Three Tiny Little Lumps:

1) Tom Brady verses Eli Manning. This match up actually qualifies as a Large Lump given the much ballyhooed history between Brady and Manning's older brother, Peyton. But the smaller lump for The Citizenry to joyously devote energy exploring is that neither of these two players will ever be on the field at the same time other than the sportsmanly pre game and post game hand shakes. This little nugget is The Ideal Type A Small Lump.

2) SuperBowlGateGate. This scandal will require two Gates. But it has not been discovered yet. Nor does anybody know what it is. (Sometimes Lumps are smaller because they haven't happened yet, or should I say they have not yet been detected by probing fingers. Their current size has nothing to do with their eventual size. A Gigantic Lump starts out as an Itsy Bitsy Lump. It only becomes bigger as more people feel it or as more people can describe what exactly it is. This is an example of a Type B Lump.)

3) Joe Buck. The Citizenry doth worship Joe Buck and his colorful stamp on North American Footballing broadcasts. It is no secret that we admired collectively Buck's righteous praise of Wes Welker's older and less-talented brother, Short-Stop Baseballer David Eckstein, during the 2006 World Series. The Tiny Lump is the collection of adjectives Buck uses to describe the diminutive Welker's feel-good Triumph Over Size (T.O.S.) in a large man's game.

—Joel Strong

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DON'T  
EVEN ASK  
*SPORTINGHOUR.BLOGSPOT.COM*

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## WHAT TO DO AND HOW TO DO IT IN WHICH THE AUTHOR DABBLES IN SAGE WISDOM

*Last week, Eamon ffitich had the gumption to tell our readers how to roll. This week, Carson Cistulli has the temerity to do the same. What follows are some hot tips to help you live your life. Follow them dogmatically.*

1. Use the phrase *tensile strength* in a sentence.
2. Begin to think of all time as “me time.”
3. Behold Joel Strong.
4. Listen to the *Sporting Hour* like it was going out of style. [Secret confession: it has always *been* out of style].
5. Make all checks payable to the Shuttlecoque Sporting Club.