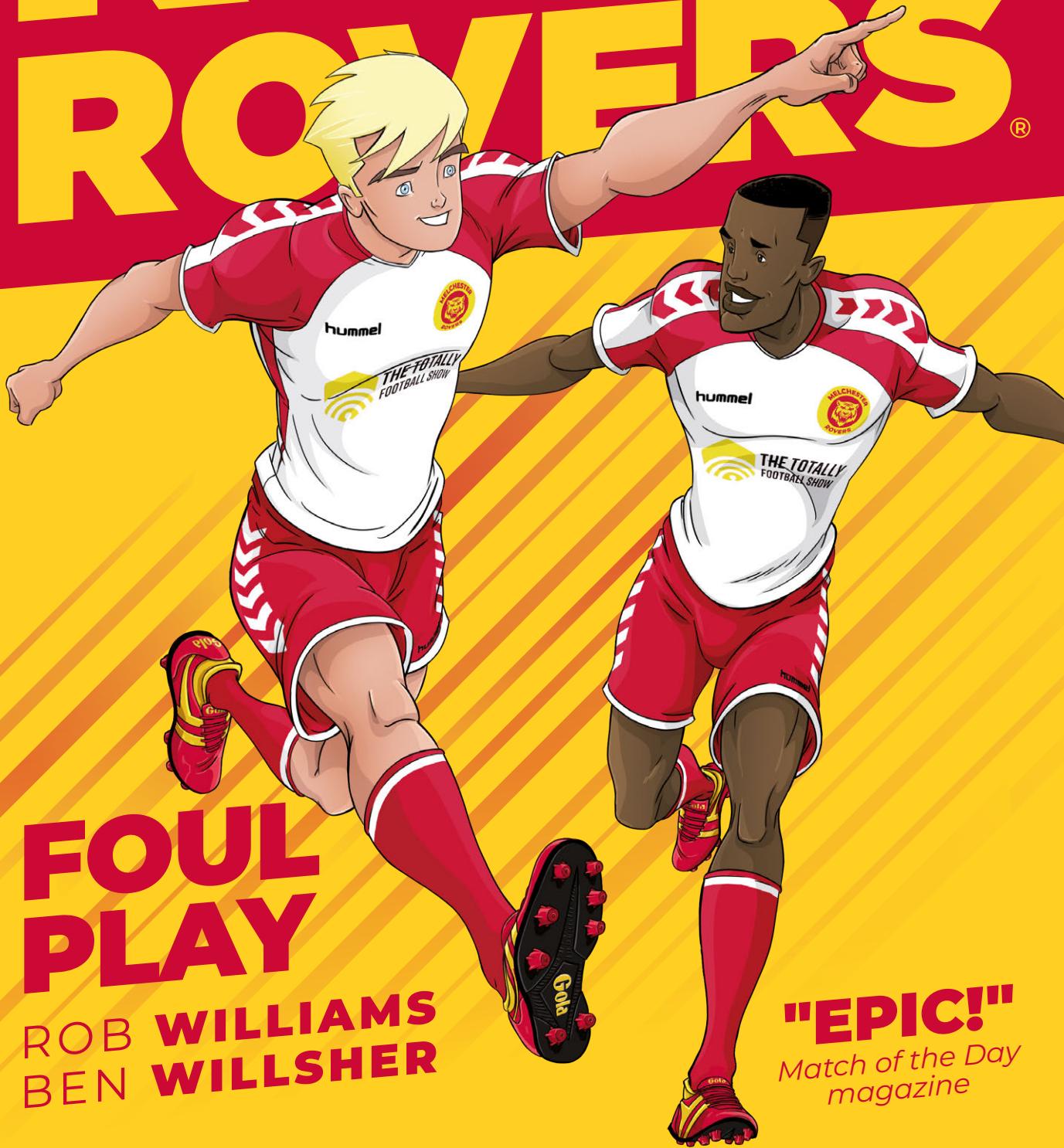


ROY OF THE ROVERS



**FOUL
PLAY**

**ROB WILLIAMS
BEN WILLISHER**

"EPIC!"
Match of the Day
magazine







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ROY OF THE ROVERS®



FOUL PLAY

ROB WILLIAMS BEN WILLISHER

B O O K T W O
FOUL PLAY

Script
ROB WILLIAMS

Art
BEN WILLISHER

Letters
JIM CAMPBELL

Colours
JOHN CHARLES & GUILHERME LINDEMBERG MENDES



AND RACE HINTS IT...

OH! OH MY WORD!

THAT...THAT IS UNBELIEVABLE!!

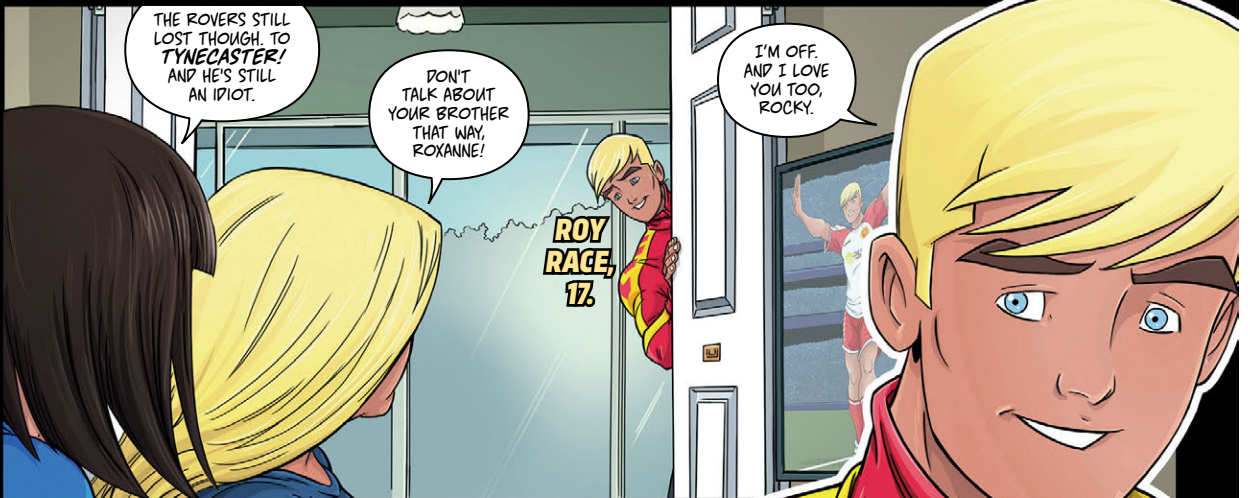
IT'S A ROCKET!



THERE HAS TO BE A WAY TO PELETE THIS.

DON'T YOU DARE, ROCKY. THAT'S YOUR BIG BROTHER ROY'S GOAL! ONE OF THE BEST 3RD ROUND FA CUP GOALS OF ALL TIME, THEY SAID!

UGH...

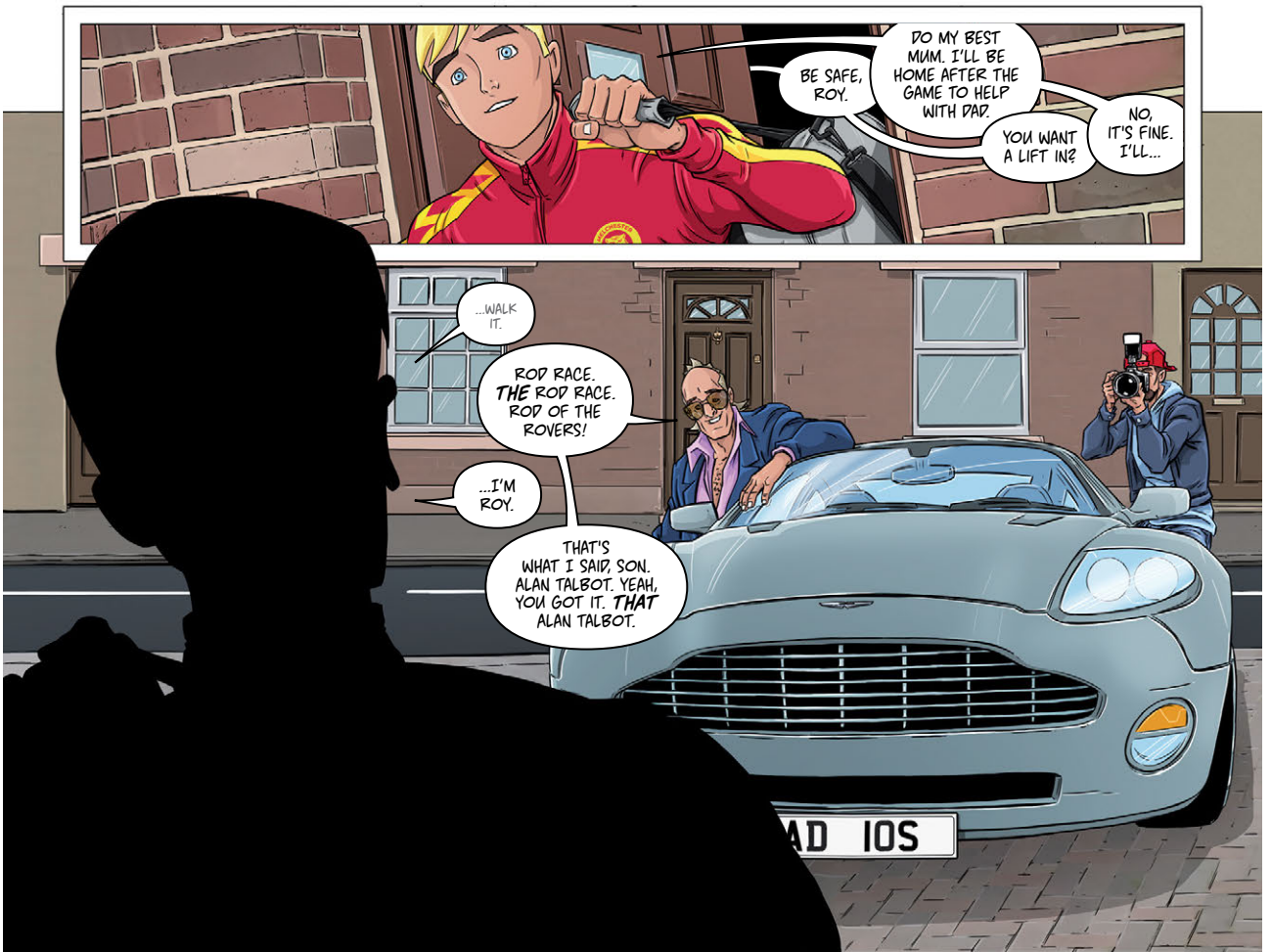


THE ROVERS STILL LOST THOUGH TO TYNECASTER! AND HE'S STILL AN IDIOT.

DON'T TALK ABOUT YOUR BROTHER THAT WAY, ROXANNE!

I'M OFF, AND I LOVE YOU TOO, ROCKY.

ROY RACE, 17.



DO MY BEST MUM. I'LL BE HOME AFTER THE GAME TO HELP WITH DAD.

BE SAFE, ROY.

NO, IT'S FINE. I'LL...

YOU WANT A LIFT IN?

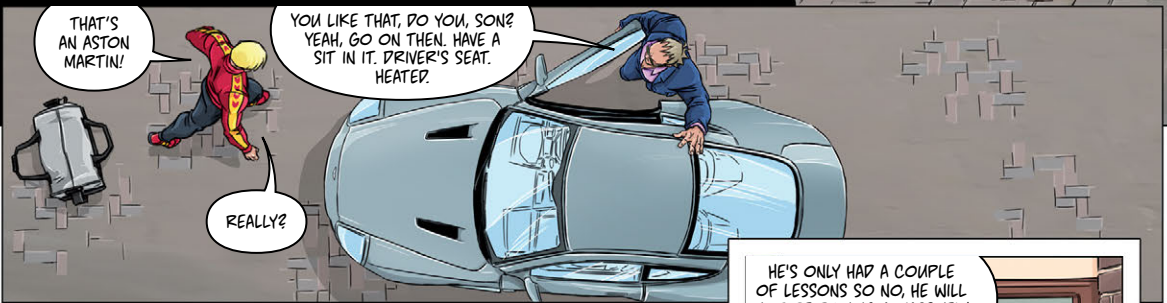
...WALK IT.

ROD RACE. THE ROD RACE. ROD OF THE ROVERS!

...I'M ROY.

THAT'S WHAT I SAID, SON. ALAN TALBOT. YEAH, YOU GOT IT. THAT ALAN TALBOT.

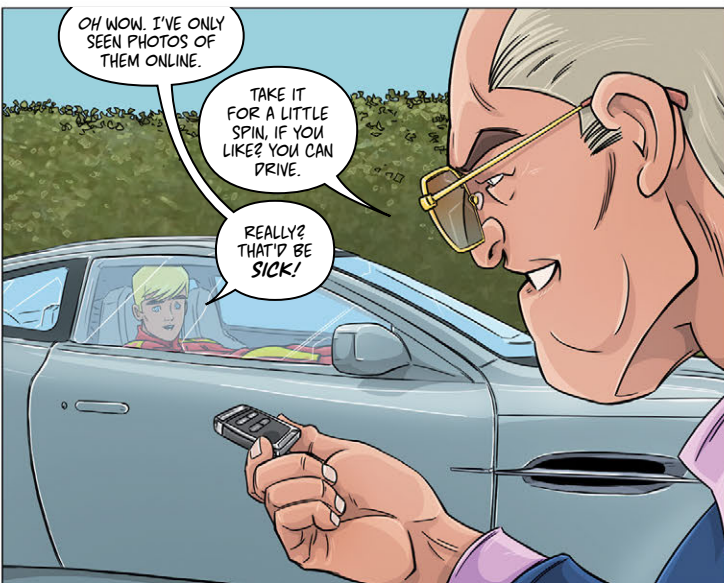
AD IOS



THAT'S AN ASTON MARTIN!

YOU LIKE THAT, DO YOU, SON? YEAH, GO ON THEN. HAVE A SIT IN IT. DRIVER'S SEAT. HEATED.

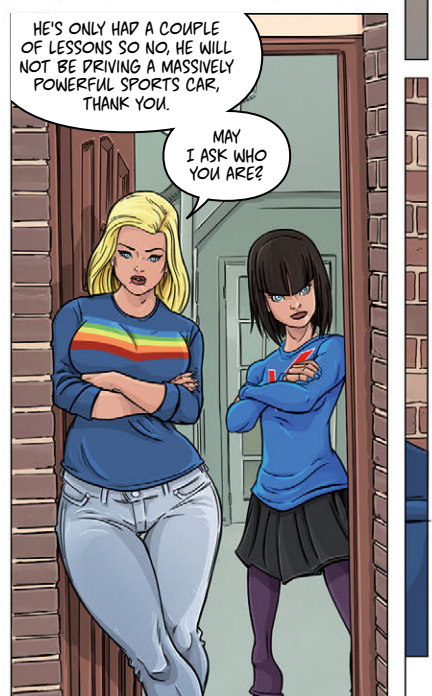
REALLY?



OH WOW. I'VE ONLY SEEN PHOTOS OF THEM ONLINE.

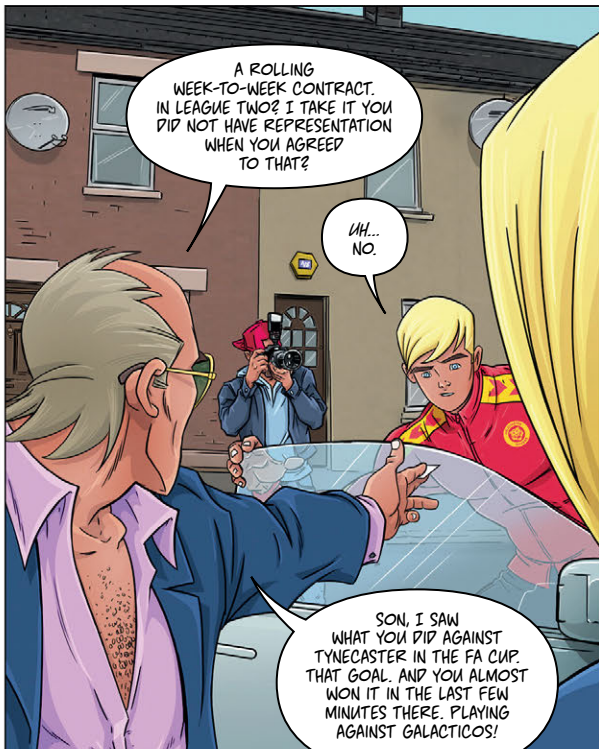
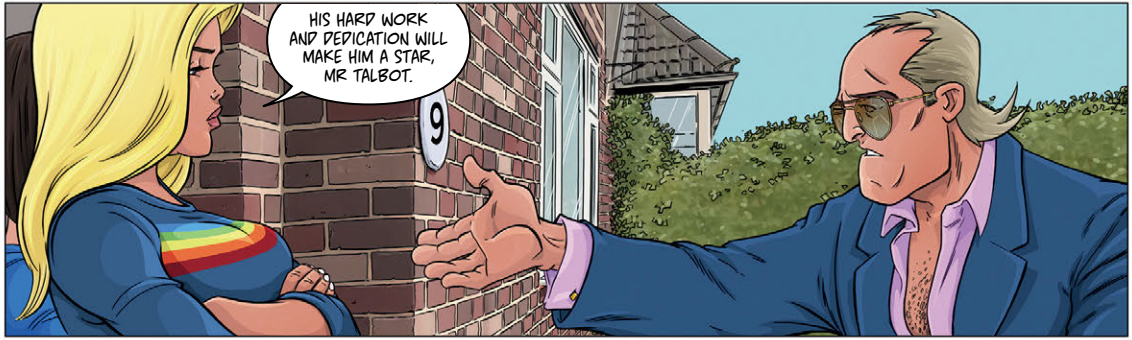
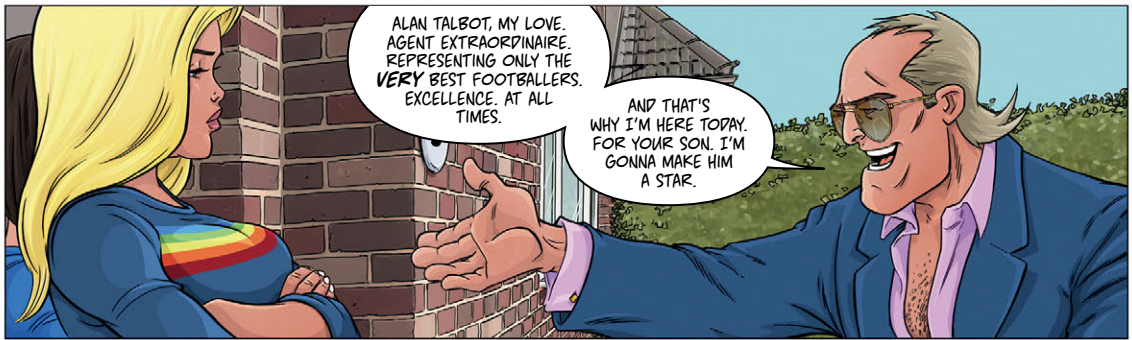
TAKE IT FOR A LITTLE SPIN, IF YOU LIKE? YOU CAN DRIVE.

REALLY? THAT'D BE SICK!



HE'S ONLY HAD A COUPLE OF LESSONS SO NO, HE WILL NOT BE DRIVING A MASSIVELY POWERFUL SPORTS CAR, THANK YOU.

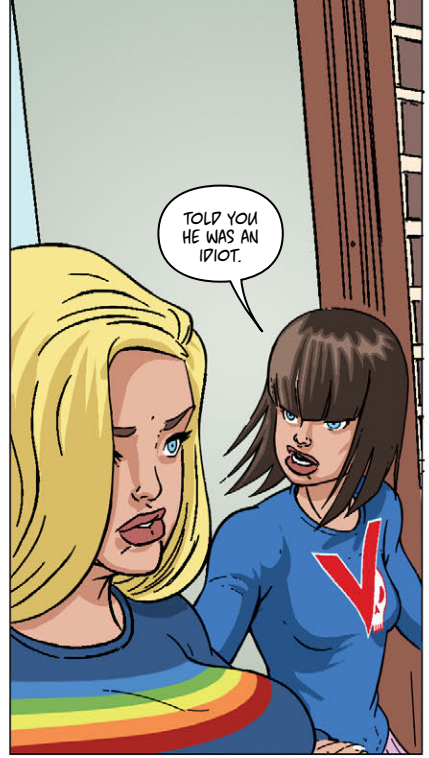
MAY I ASK WHO YOU ARE?



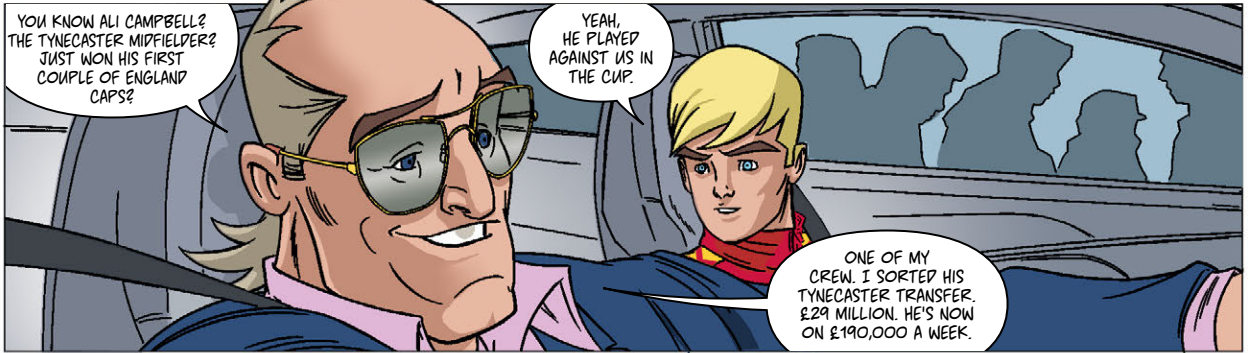


I'LL TAKE GOOD CARE OF HIM, MRS RACE!

BYE, MUM!



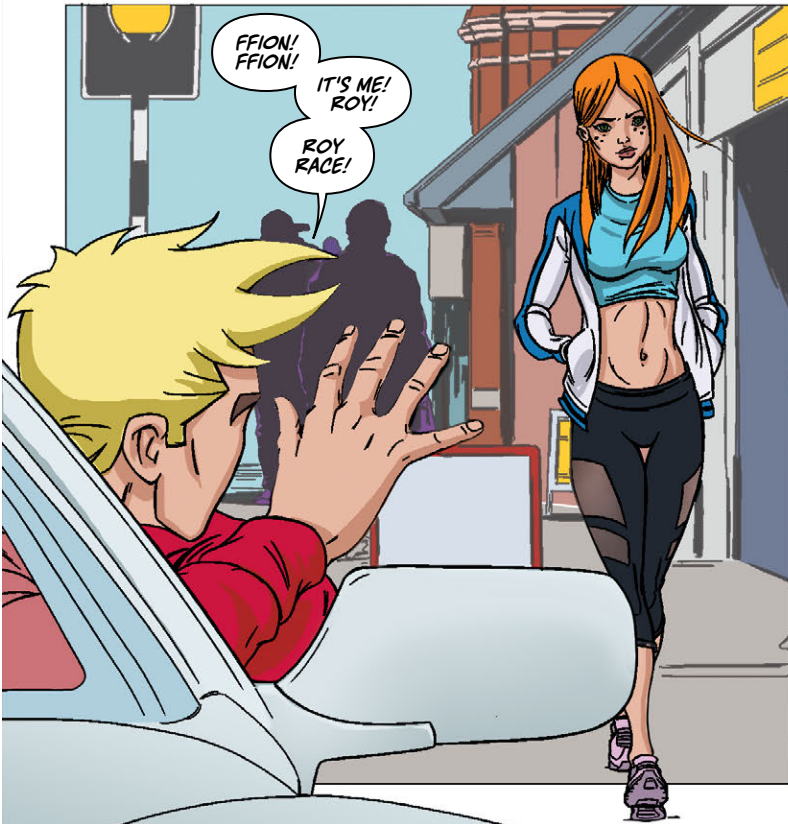
TOLD YOU HE WAS AN IDIOT.



YOU KNOW ALI CAMPBELL? THE TYNECASTER MIDFIELDER? JUST WON HIS FIRST COUPLE OF ENGLAND CAPS?

YEAH, HE PLAYED AGAINST US IN THE CUP.

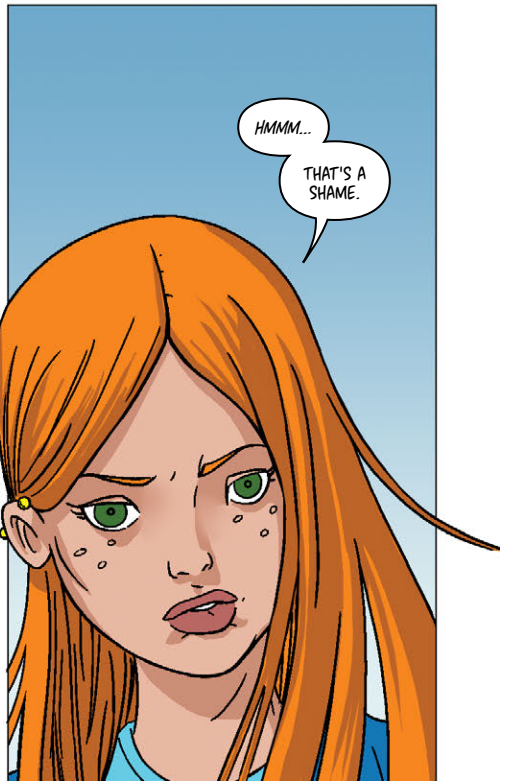
ONE OF MY CREW. I SORTED HIS TYNECASTER TRANSFER. £29 MILLION. HE'S NOW ON £190,000 A WEEK.



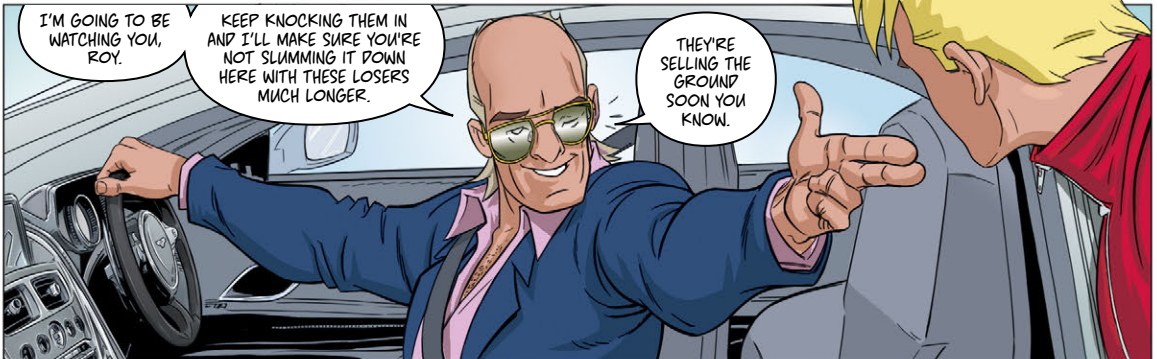
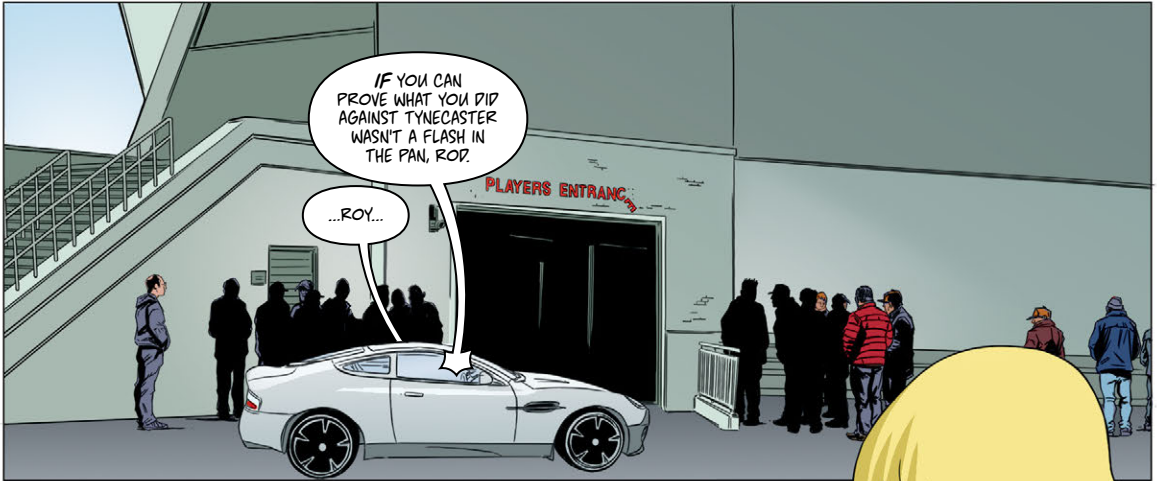
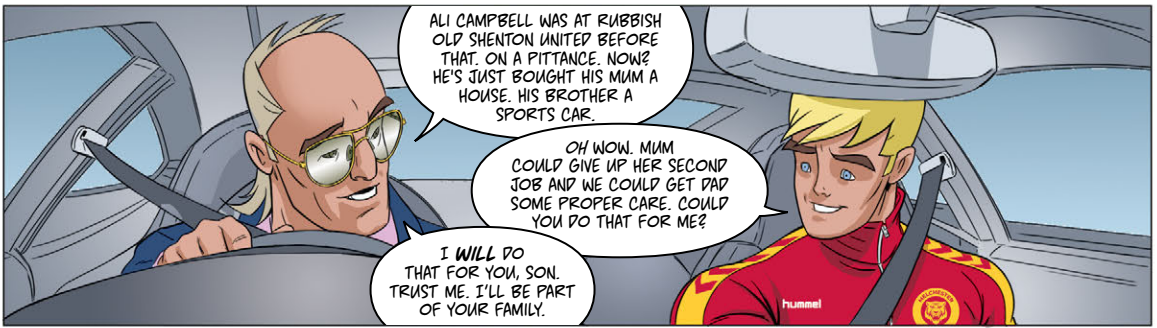
FFION! FFION!

IT'S ME! ROY!

ROY RACE!



HMMM... THAT'S A SHAME.





ROY RACE!

MEL PARK, THE IMMORTAL MEL PARK.

GET INSIDE ITS HALLOWED BOWELS! NOW!

**JOHNNY DEXTER,
MELCHESTER ROVERS
FIRST TEAM COACH.**



ALAN TALBOT? ASTON MARTINS? YOU'VE ONLY SCORED ONE FLASH GOAL ON TV, ROY RACE OF THE ROVERS. DON'T GET CARRIED AWAY.

HE JUST TURNED UP AT MY HOUSE. NOTHING TO DO WITH ME, GAFFER!

HMM... BEFORE YOU BUY YOUR OWN HELICOPTER WITH BUILT-IN DEEP FAT FRYER MAY I REMIND YOU THAT WE'RE STILL IN THE RELEGATION ZONE?



TALBOT SAID SOMETHING ABOUT THE STADIUM BEING SOLD?

THAT SORT WILL SAY ANYTHING IF IT MAKES THEM MONEY, RACE. MY OLD AGENT ONCE PROMISED TO BUY ME A PANIPA.

BUT HE NEVER DID... LYING GIT.



UH... JOHNNY SOUNDS GENUINELY UPSET.

HE MUST LOVE PANIPAS. AND HE'S NOT BEEN THE SAME SINCE WE LOST AGAINST TYNECASTER.

HE REALLY HATES TYNECASTER.



BUT LOFTY PEAK, MELCHESTER'S EXCITING YOUNG CENTRE-HALF, WHO GOT RAVE REVIEWS FOR HIS PERFORMANCE AGAINST TYNECASTER, GETS A LONG-LEGGED FOOT IN.



AND WESTON COULD GET CAUGHT HERE! THEY WERE ON ALL-OUT ATTACK!



PACO DIAZ FLICKS IT FORWARD WITH...OH...THAT'S AN OUTRAGEOUS TOUCH!



AND ROY RACE IS IN ON GOAL!

JUST THE GOALIE TO BEAT... IS IT TIME FOR THE ROCKET?



YES!
THERE
IT IS!

LASHED IN
OFF THE UNDERSIDE
OF THE BAR!!

AND THE
MEL PARK FAITHFUL GO
MAD! SUDDENLY THEY
HAVE SOMETHING TO
SHOUT ABOUT.



THAT'S
HOW YOU DO
IT, GUTHRIE.

PROPER
STRIKER
PLAY!

YOU'RE
GETTING A BIT
COCKY, RACE! BUT
KEEP SCORING AND
I CAN LIVE WITH IT.



**KEVIN 'MIGHTY' MOUSE,
MANAGER.**

THEY'RE PLAYING WITH SOME
CONFIDENCE NOW, JOHNNY, LARD.
THREE POINTS HERE! WE'LL
NEARLY BE OUT OF THE
RELEGATION PLACES.

...PANDA...

YOU'RE NOT
STILL DEPRESSED
AFTER LOSING TO
TYNECASTER, ARE YOU?
YOU'RE THE FIRST TEAM
COACH. YOU'VE GOT TO
INSPIRE THE BOYS!



IT WAS TYNECASTER,
MOUSE. YOU KNOW
WHAT THAT
MEANS...

TYNE.
CASTER.

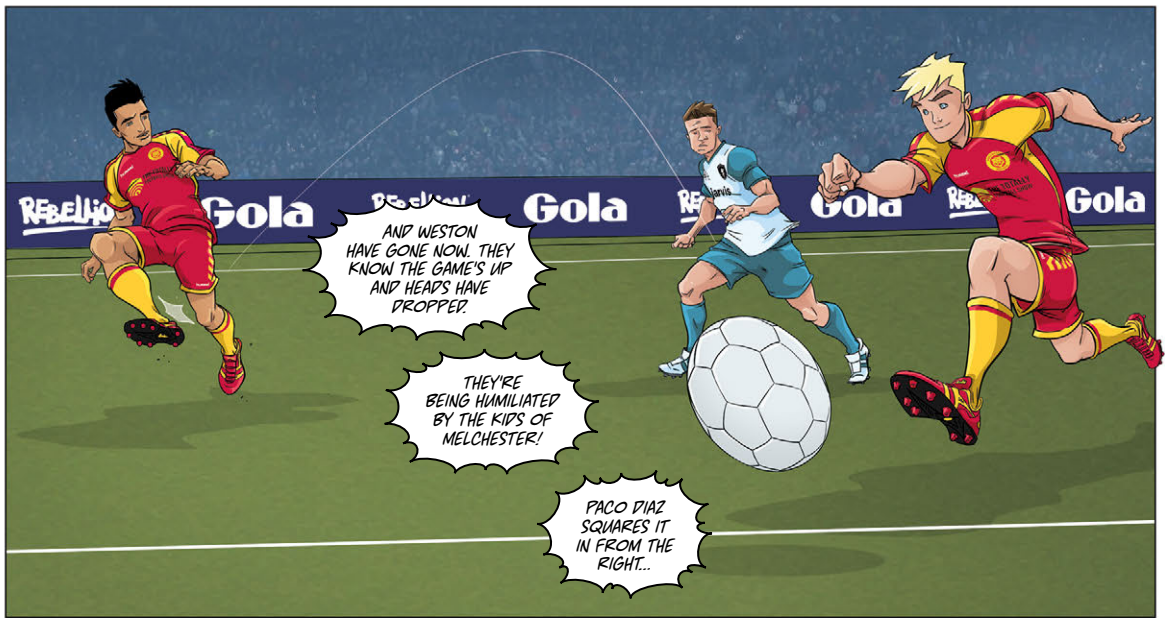
...

TYNECASTER.



I WORRY ABOUT YOU
SOMETIMES, JOHNNY.
TOO MANY HEADERS
BACK IN THE DAY.

OOP, HANG
ABOUT, WE'RE
IN AGAIN!



AND WESTON
HAVE GONE NOW. THEY
KNOW THE GAME'S UP
AND HEADS HAVE
DROPPED

THEY'RE
BEING HUMILIATED
BY THE KIDS OF
MELCHESTER!

PACO DIAZ
SQUARES IT
IN FROM THE
RIGHT...

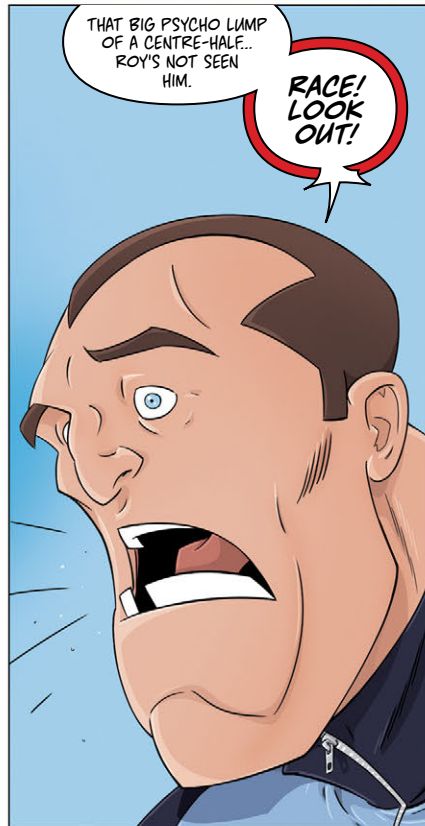


ROY RACE
DINKS IT OVER
THE KEEPER...



HA...
SECOND ONE
TODAY...

HE'S
GOING TO
ROLL IT INTO
AN EMPTY
NET...



THAT BIG PSYCHO LUMP
OF A CENTRE-HALF...
ROY'S NOT SEEN
HIM.

**RACE!
LOOK
OUT!**





AH... IT'S...IT'S NOT BROKEN IS IT?

STAY DOWN, LAD. LET ME LOOK.



AND, YES, IT'S A RED CARD FOR NAYLOR.

SHOCKING CHALLENGE. FRUSTRATION GOT THE BETTER OF HIM THERE.



OH, YOU! YEAH, YOU!

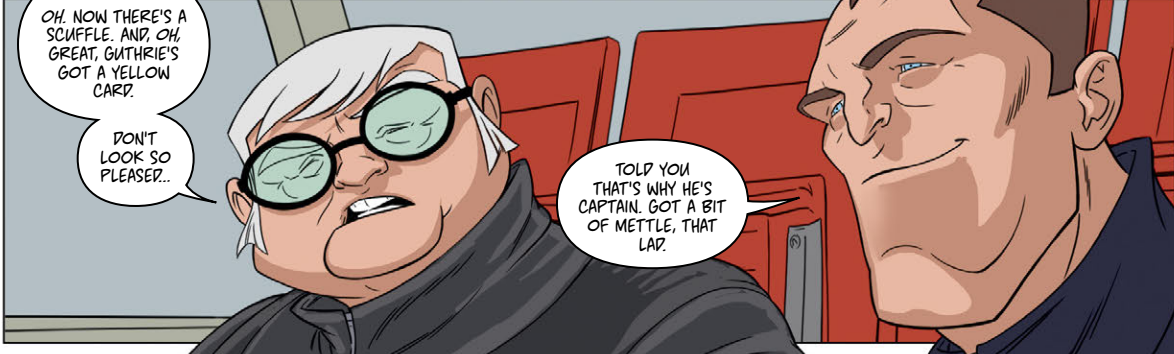
DON'T YOU HAVE PAYCARE TO GET TO, SONNY?

TOOK YOU TO SCHOOL, DIDN'T WE? HAVE A LOOK AT THE SCORE, CAVEMAN.



MESS WITH ONE OF MELCHESTER ROVERS AND YOU MESS WITH ALL OF US. GOT IT?

COME ON, VIC. LEAVE IT.



OH. NOW THERE'S A SCUFFLE. AND, OH, GREAT, GUTHRIE'S GOT A YELLOW CARD.

DON'T LOOK SO PLEASER..

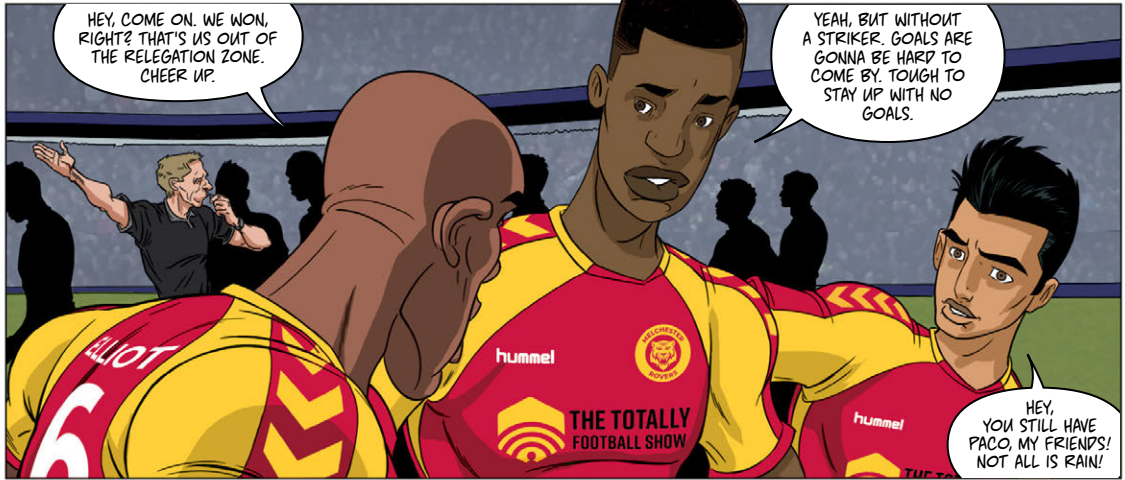
TOLD YOU THAT'S WHY HE'S CAPTAIN. GOT A BIT OF METTLE, THAT LAD.



HOW BAD IS IT?

DON'T KNOW YET, LAD. WE'RE GOING TO GET SOME X-RAYS DONE. MIGHT BE LIGAMENTS.

I THINK IT'S BROKEN.



HEY, COME ON. WE WON, RIGHT? THAT'S US OUT OF THE RELEGATION ZONE. CHEER UP.

YEAH, BUT WITHOUT A STRIKER, GOALS ARE GONNA BE HARD TO COME BY. TOUGH TO STAY UP WITH NO GOALS.

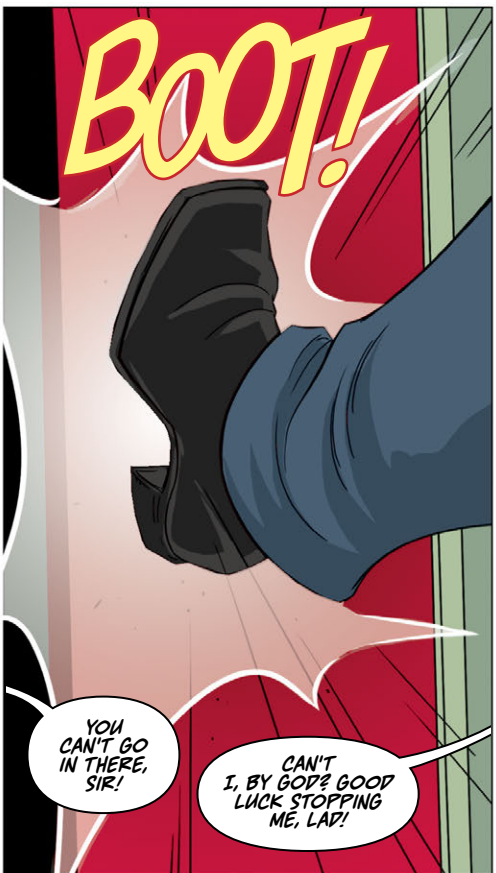
HEY, YOU STILL HAVE PACO, MY FRIENDS! NOT ALL IS RAIN!



THEY WON 3-0 AND THEY LOOK GUTTER.

OUT OF THE CUP TO... THEM. ROY INJURED. WHAT ELSE COULD GO WRONG?

I'LL GET THEM IN THE CHANGING ROOM, JOHNNY. YOU GO WITH ROY TO THE HOSPITAL. WE'RE GOING TO HAVE TO KEEP THEIR SPIRITS UP! **NOTHING** ELSE CAN UPSET THEM. YOU HEAR ME?



YOU CAN'T GO IN THERE, SIR!

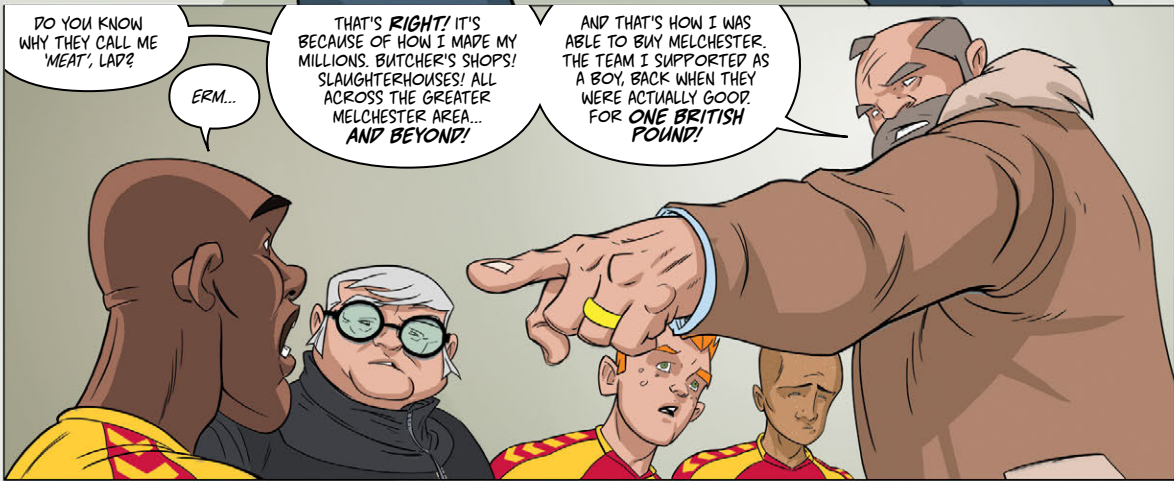
CAN'T I, BY GOD? GOOD LUCK STOPPING ME, LAD!



THIS IS MY HOUSE!

ALRIGHT BOYS, LISTEN UP MY NAME IS **BARRY 'MEAT' CLEAVER!** AND I'M THE FOOL WHO PAYS YOUR BLOOMING WAGES!

I OWN MELCHESTER ROVERS!



DO YOU KNOW WHY THEY CALL ME 'MEAT', LAD?

ERM...

THAT'S **RIGHT!** IT'S BECAUSE OF HOW I MADE MY MILLIONS. BUTCHER'S SHOPS! SLAUGHTERHOUSES! ALL ACROSS THE GREATER MELCHESTER AREA... **AND BEYOND!**

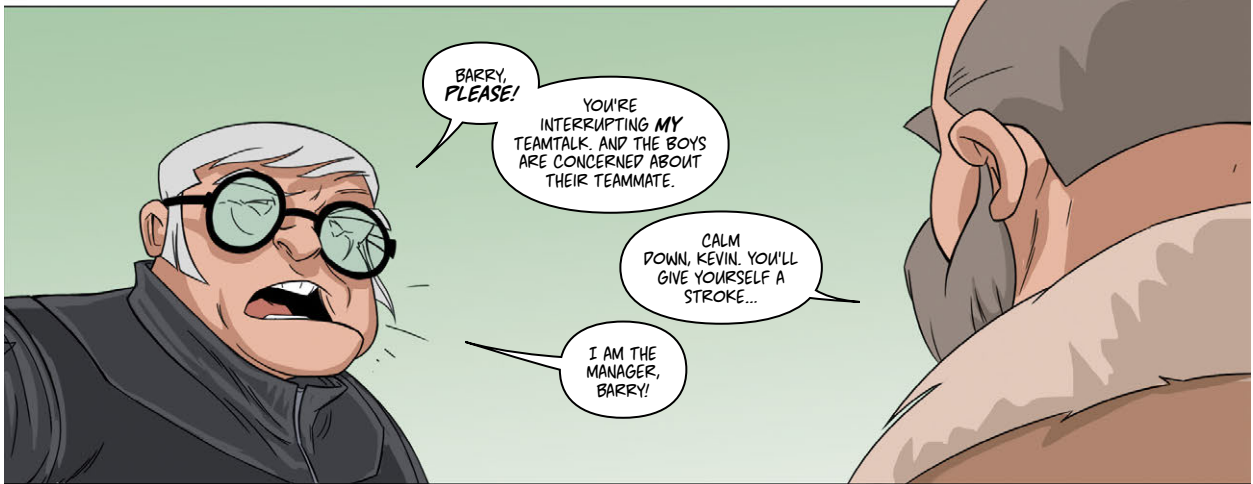
AND THAT'S HOW I WAS ABLE TO BUY MELCHESTER. THE TEAM I SUPPORTED AS A BOY, BACK WHEN THEY WERE ACTUALLY GOOD FOR **ONE BRITISH POUND!**



COURSE, I HAD TO TAKE ON ALL THE DEBTS BECAUSE THE CLUB HAD FALLEN INTO ITS CURRENT **WRETCHED** STATE BY THEN...

UH... BARRY.

BUT THE **GOOD TIMES!** OH, THEY WERE SOMETHING! THE TROPHIES! EUROPEAN COMPETITION AT MEL PARK. NOT THE BUNCH OF CARTHUSES YOU GET IN LEAGUE TWO...



BARRY, PLEASE!

YOU'RE INTERRUPTING **MY** TEAMTALK. AND THE BOYS ARE CONCERNED ABOUT THEIR TEAMMATE.

CALM DOWN, KEVIN. YOU'LL GIVE YOURSELF A STROKE...

I AM THE MANAGER, BARRY!



... THAT YOU ARE, KEVIN. THAT YOU ARE.

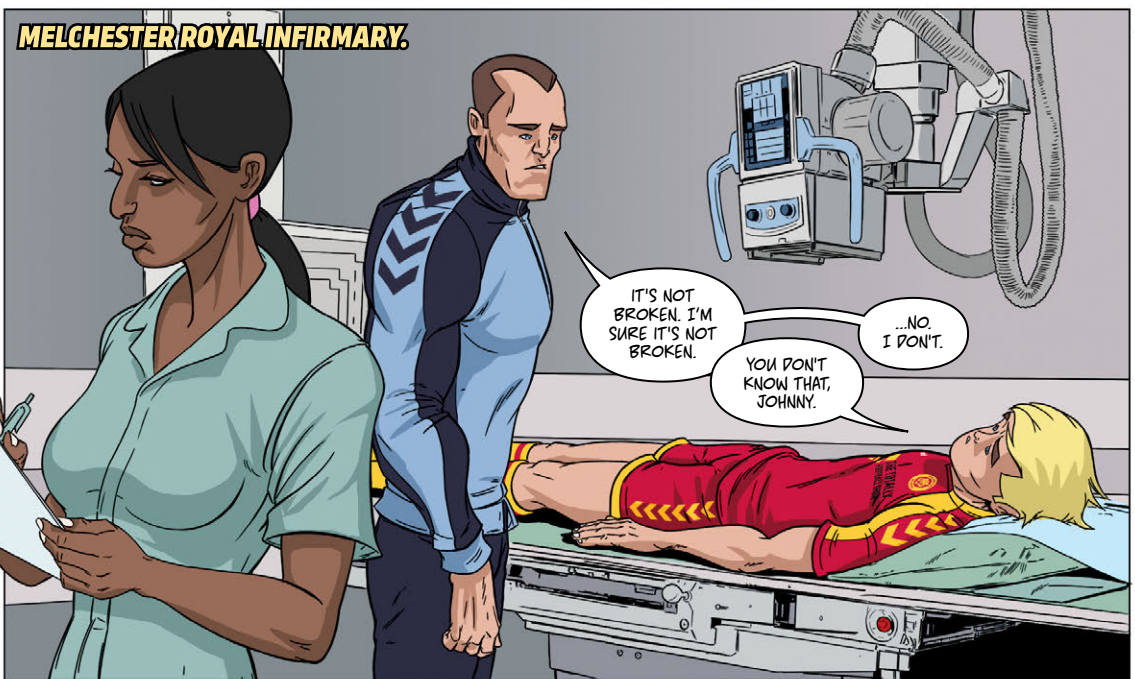
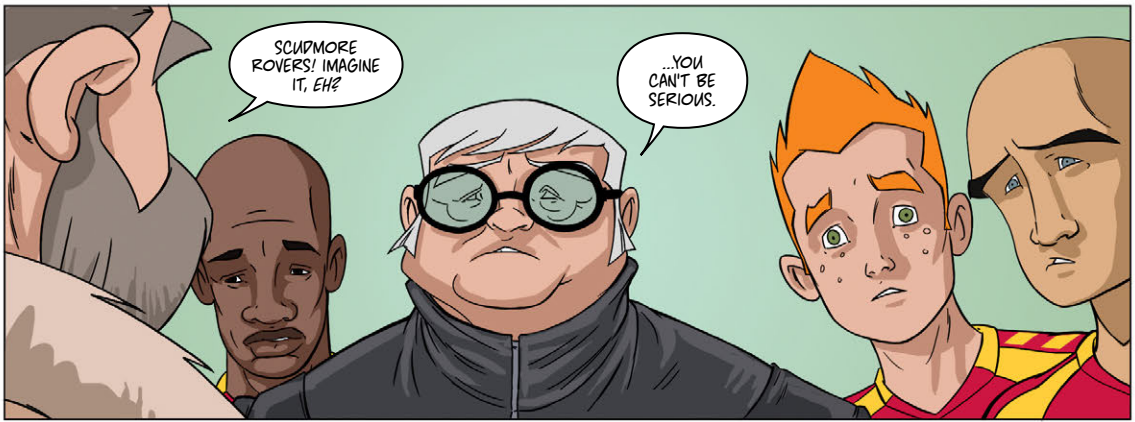
AND AS LONG AS YOU KEEP WINNING... YOU WILL BE.

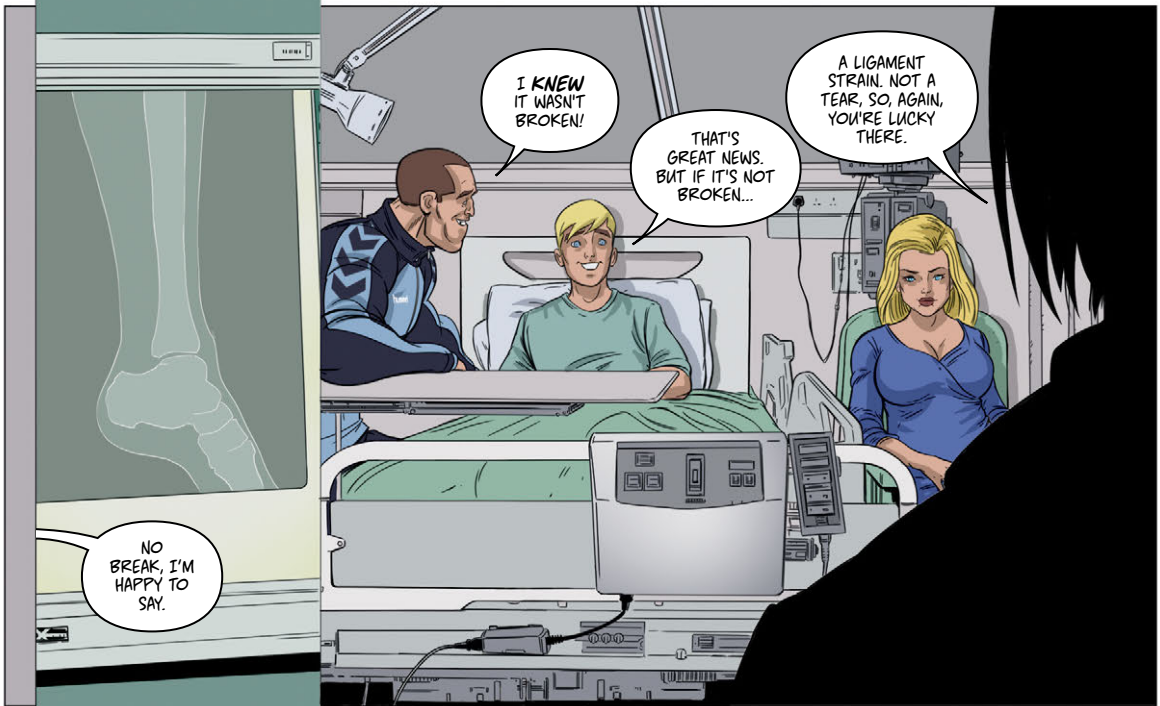


I CAME IN TO CONGRATULATE YOU BOYS ON THE WIN TODAY, AND TO OFFER YOU A LITTLE ENCOURAGEMENT FOR THE REST OF THE SEASON.

I'VE HAD A **VERY** SUBSTANTIAL OFFER FOR THE MEL PARK LAND FROM AN INTERNATIONAL INTERNET SHOP. THEY WANT TO BUILD ONE OF THEIR MASSIVE WAREHOUSES HERE. DRONE DELIVERIES AND THAT.

I'VE LOOKED INTO IT AND THERE'S LAND OUT IN **SCUDMORE** THAT'S CHEAP AS OVEN CHIPS. AND THE TOWN'S VERY KEEN TO HAVE ITS OWN FOOTBALL TEAM...





I KNEW IT WASN'T BROKEN!

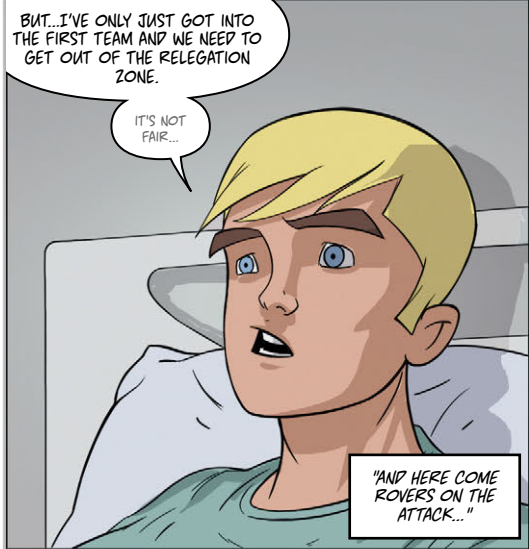
THAT'S GREAT NEWS. BUT IF IT'S NOT BROKEN...

A LIGAMENT STRAIN. NOT A TEAR, SO AGAIN, YOU'RE LUCKY THERE.

NO BREAK, I'M HAPPY TO SAY.



I'M AFRAID YOU WON'T BE PLAYING FOR THE ROVERS FOR A WHILE, ROY.
REST, A WALKING BOOT AND THEN PHYSIOTHERAPY.



BUT...I'VE ONLY JUST GOT INTO THE FIRST TEAM AND WE NEED TO GET OUT OF THE RELEGATION ZONE.

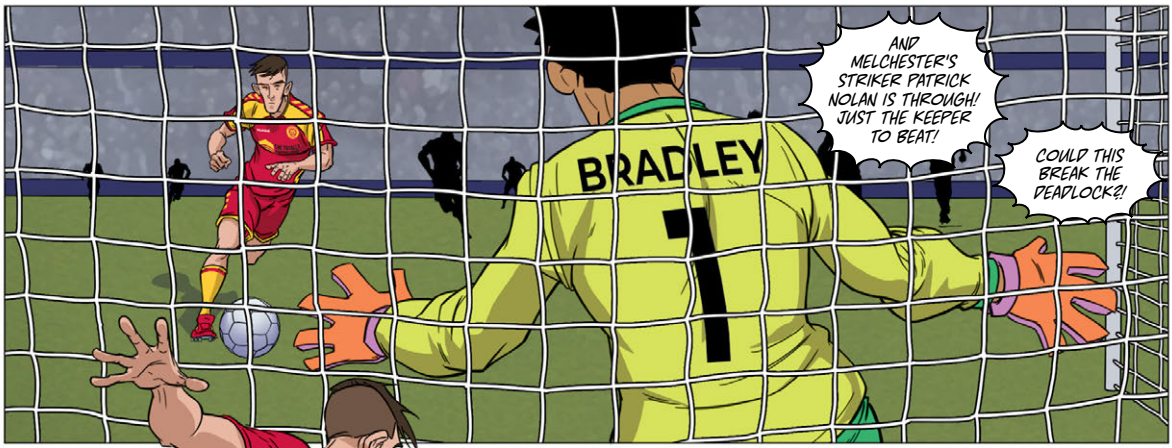
IT'S NOT FAIR...

"AND HERE COME ROVERS ON THE ATTACK..."



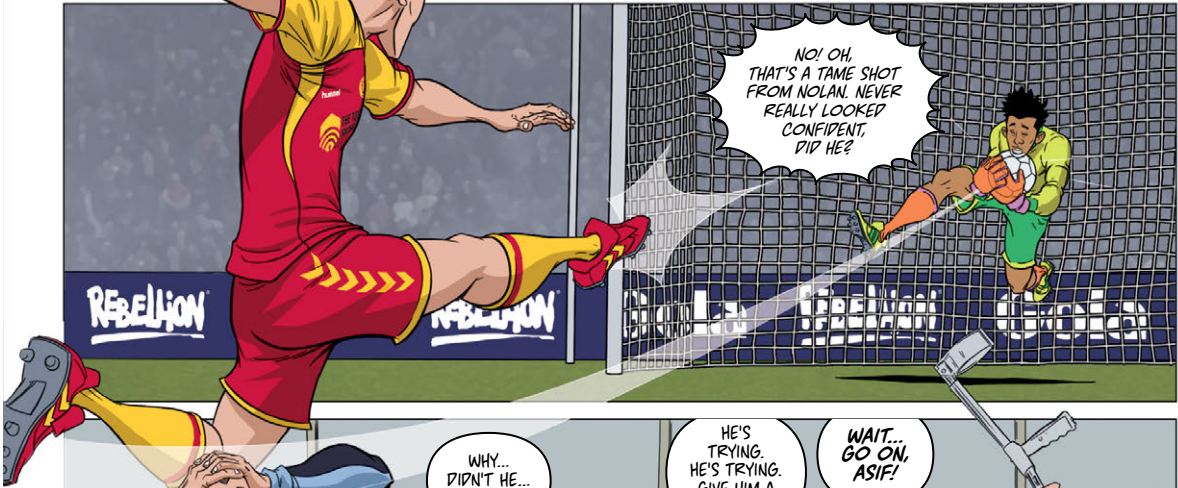
TEN MINUTES TO GO AND MELCHESTER HAVE BEEN BANGING ON THE DOOR REPEATEDLY, BUT IT'S STILL 0-0 AGAINST FELLOW STRUGGLERS ESTWICH TOWN.

NEAT LITTLE PASS BY THE INVENTIVE PACO DIAZ!

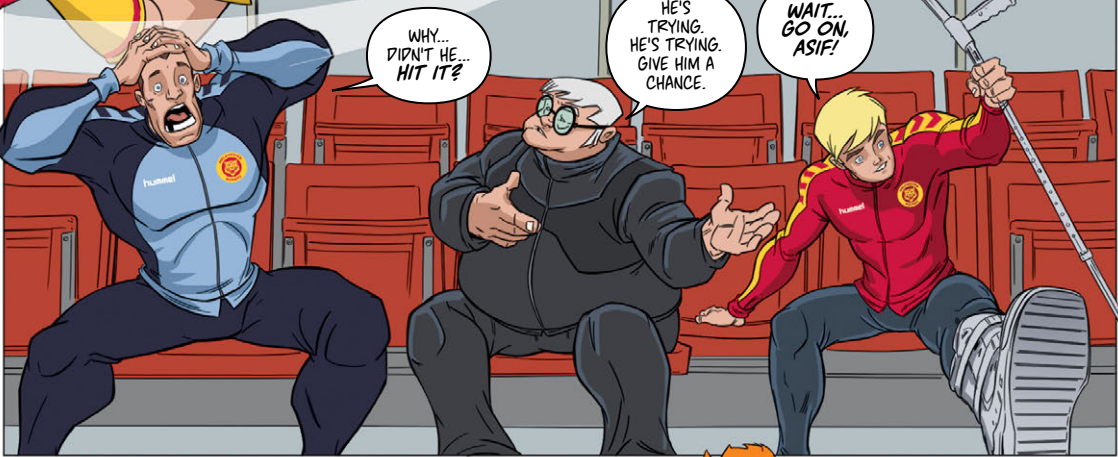


AND MELCHESTER'S STRIKER PATRICK NOLAN IS THROUGH! JUST THE KEEPER TO BEAT!

COULD THIS BREAK THE DEADLOCK?!



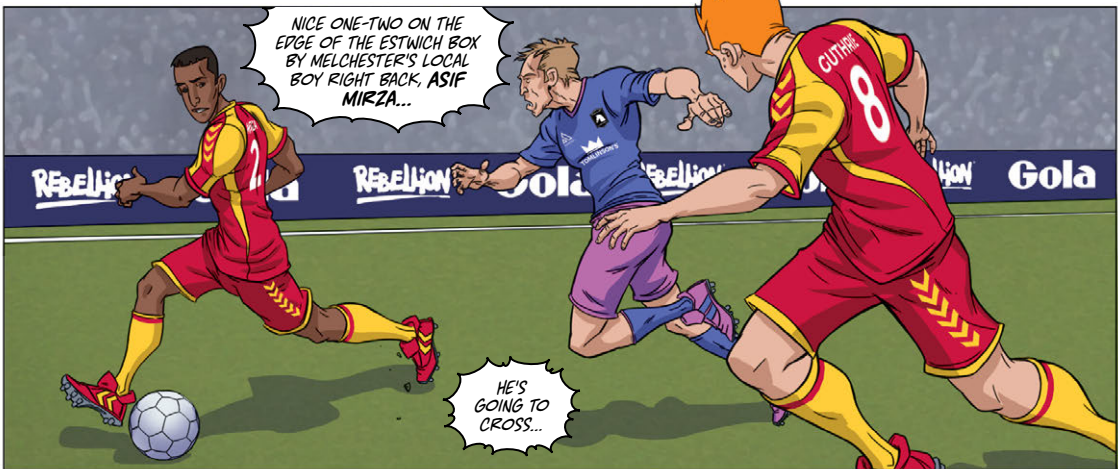
NO! OH, THAT'S A TAME SHOT FROM NOLAN. NEVER REALLY LOOKED CONFIDENT, DID HE?



WHY... DIDN'T HE... HIT IT?!

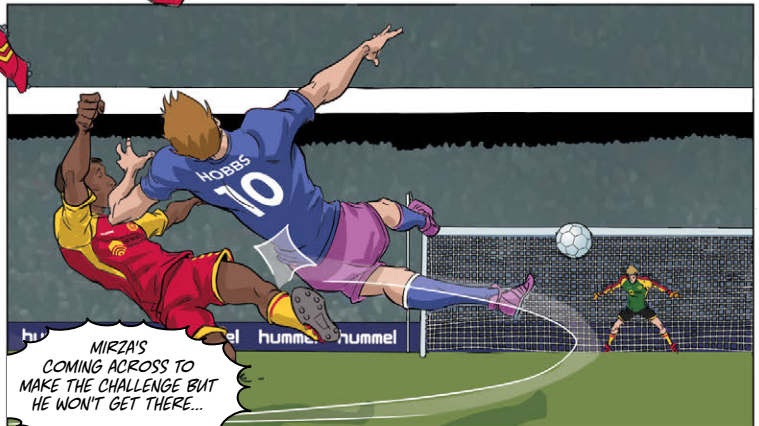
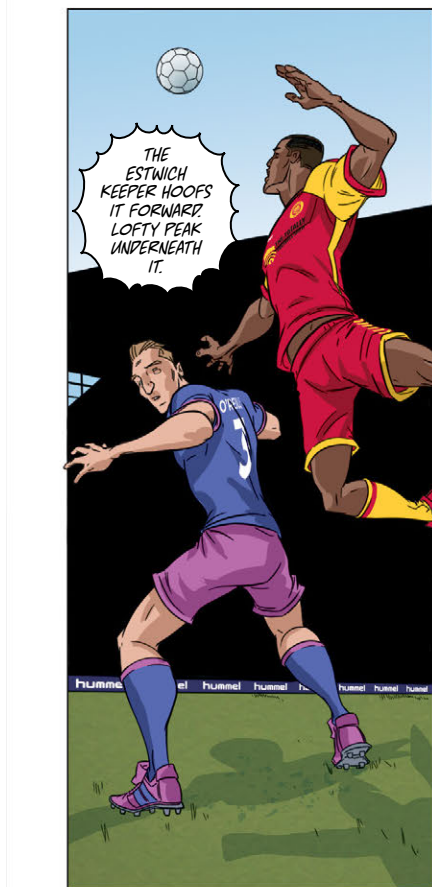
HE'S TRYING. HE'S TRYING. GIVE HIM A CHANCE.

WAIT... GO ON, ASIF!



NICE ONE-TWO ON THE EDGE OF THE ESTWICH BOX BY MELCHESTER'S LOCAL BOY RIGHT BACK, ASIF MIRZA...

HE'S GOING TO CROSS...





AND IT'S IN!
ESTWICH HAVE
WON IT?



HARD LUCK,
PATRICK. IT
HAPPENS. YOU'LL
GET 'EM NEXT TIME,
YOU WILL I HAVE
SEEN THIS.
YES!

I LET
THE TEAM
DOWN.

YEAH,
YOU DID.



OI, VERNON!
NONE OF
THAT!

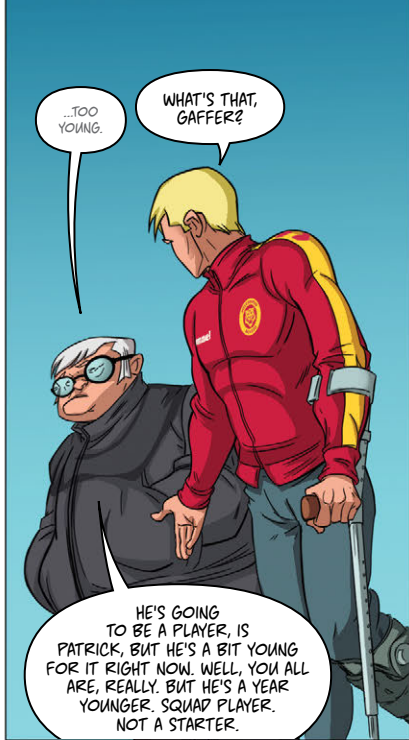
WE'RE A
TEAM, ALRIGHT?
MELCHESTER ROVERS!
WE WIN AS A TEAM. WE
LOSE AS A TEAM.
GOT IT?

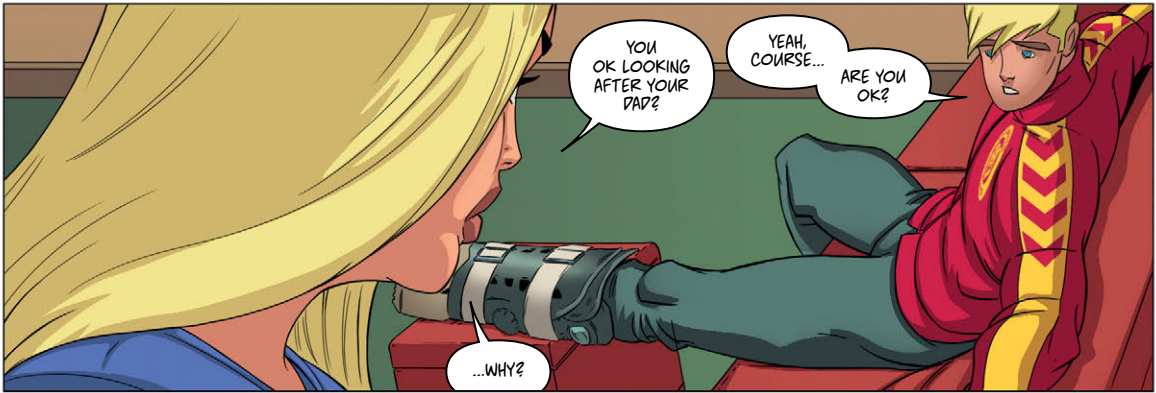


YEAH,
YOU'RE
RIGHT...

SORRY,
PATRICK. THAT
WAS OUT OF ORDER
OF ME JUST A
BIT GUTTED
IS ALL.

NO WORRIES,
VERNON. ME
TOO...





YOU OK LOOKING AFTER YOUR DAD?

YEAH, COURSE... ARE YOU OK?

...WHY?



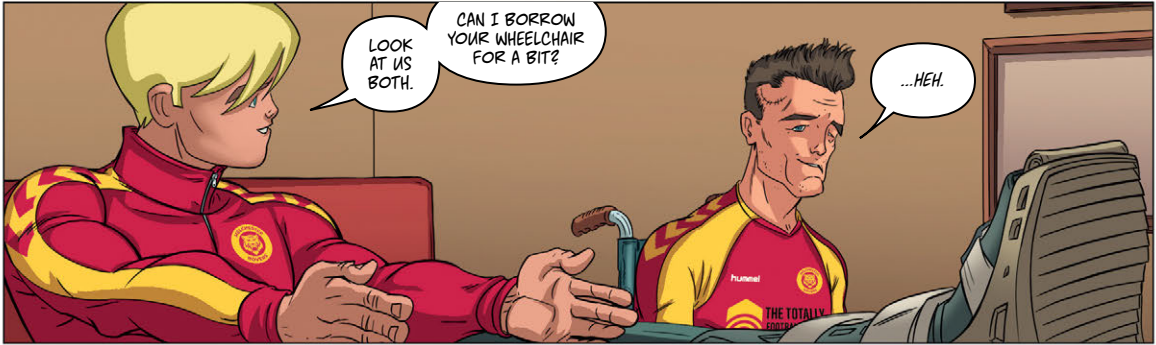
YOU LOOK A BIT TIRED, IS ALL.

WISH YOU DIDN'T HAVE TO WORK SO HARD!



... YOU'RE A GOOD LAD, ROY.

I'LL SEE YOU LATER.



LOOK AT US BOTH. CAN I BORROW YOUR WHEELCHAIR FOR A BIT?

...HEH.



Riiiiiiiiing!

SOMEONE'S AT THE DOOR.

ALAN TALBOT
FOOTBALL AGENT
SIMPLY THE BEST
phone: 00-1
email: ala



UH...
...HELLO.

WHAT ARE YOU DOING HERE?

...FFION..

AND ME, ROY. I'M HERE TOO, YOU KNOW. YOUR SISTER. YOU REMEMBER.

HELLO, ROCKY.

WHAT ARE YOU... ?

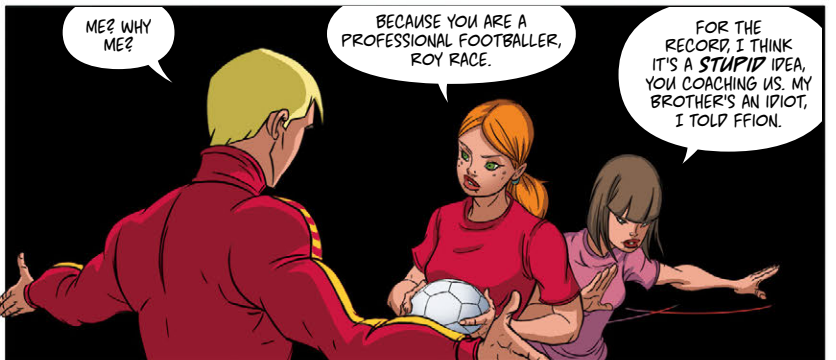


ROY, YOU KNOW OUR FOOTBALL TEAM. SOWERBY.

...YEAH.

WELL, OUR COACH HAS JUST HAD TO LEAVE. HE'S MOVING TO HORBY. WHICH IS A SILLY THING TO DO BUT THERE YOU ARE.

ANYWAY, WE NEED A COACH. AND YOU'RE NOT DOING ANYTHING AT THE MOMENT, ARE YOU? APART FROM YOUR PHYSIO-THERAPY.



ME? WHY ME?

BECAUSE YOU ARE A PROFESSIONAL FOOTBALLER, ROY RACE.

FOR THE RECORD, I THINK IT'S A STUPID IDEA. YOU COACHING US. MY BROTHER'S AN IDIOT, I TOLD FFION.



HELP COACH. I'D BE PLAYER-COACH, ROY. BUT A GOOD EYE ON THE SIDELINE WOULD HELP OUT.

I LIKE TO THINK YOU'D LIKE TO GIVE BACK TO THE COMMUNITY A BIT. NOW YOU'RE DRIVING ROUND IN ASTON MARTINS, LIKE.

YEAH...OK THEN.

TWO DAYS LATER.

ROCKY!
TRACK
BACK! TRACK
BACK!

FFION!
NICE TOUCH!
VERY NICE
TOUCH!



ROY
RACE...YOU SAY
MY SISTER HAS A NICE
TOUCH AGAIN AND
I'LL BATTER
YOU...

VIC?
WHO'S YOUR
SISTER?



FFION! FFION'S
MY SISTER! SHE'S
WELSH, MUN! SHE
HAS RED HAIR!
LIKE ME! SMALL
HINTS!

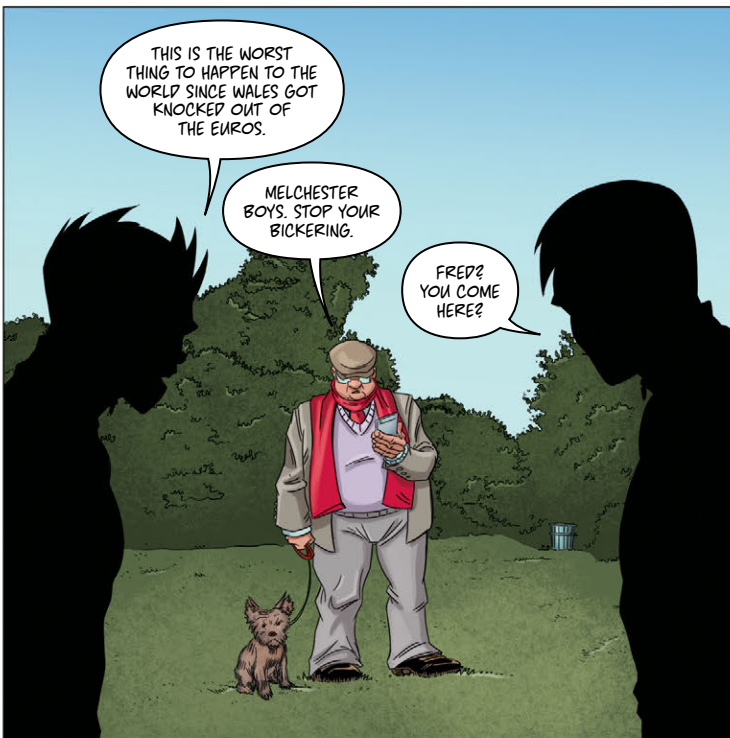
WHAT?
SHE CAN'T BE YOUR
SISTER. SHE'S...
NICE.



THIS IS THE WORST
THING TO HAPPEN TO
THE WORLD SINCE WALES GOT
KNOCKED OUT OF
THE EUROS.

MELCHESTER
BOYS. STOP YOUR
BICKERING.

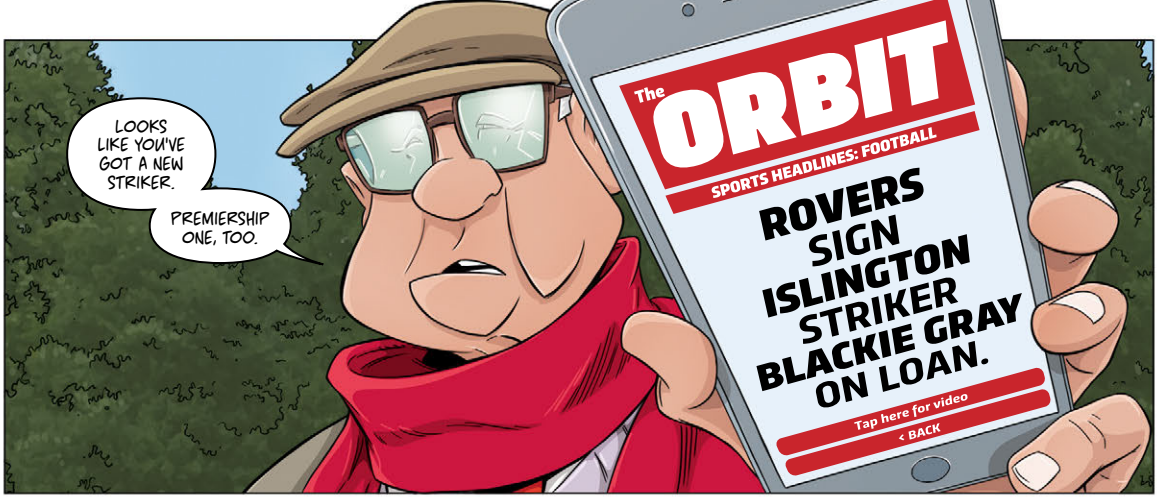
FRED?
YOU COME
HERE?

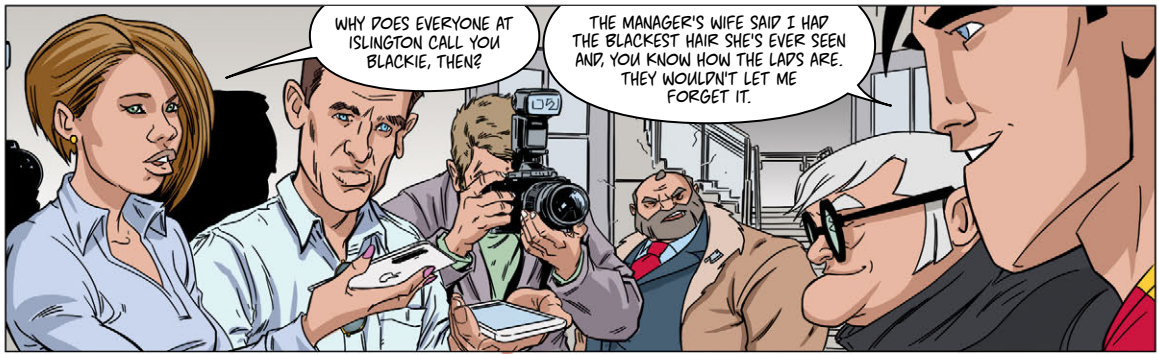


I WATCH EVERY FOOTBALL GAME
IN MELCHESTER, YOUNG ROY
RACE. I'M RETIRED AND HAVE NO
LIFE. AND MY GRANDPAUGHTER'S
THE LEFT-BACK. SHE'S
RUBBISH.

SOMETHING
HERE YOU'RE
GOING TO WANT
TO SEE.







WHY DOES EVERYONE AT ISLINGTON CALL YOU BLACKIE, THEN?

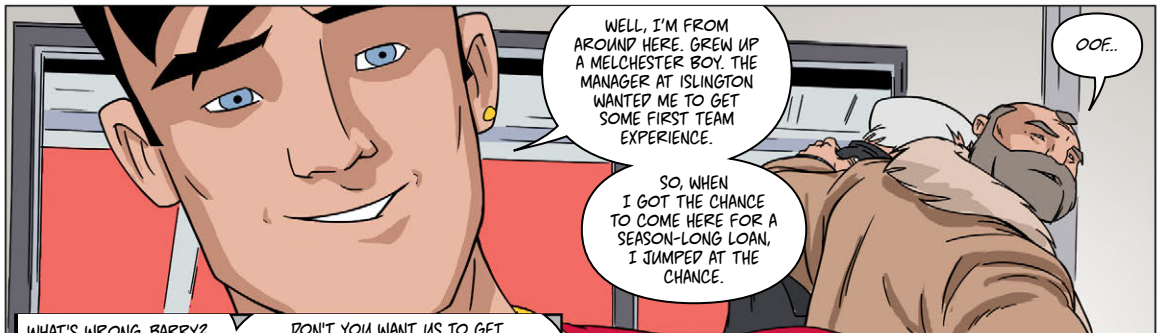
THE MANAGER'S WIFE SAID I HAD THE BLACKEST HAIR SHE'S EVER SEEN AND, YOU KNOW HOW THE LADS ARE. THEY WOULDN'T LET ME FORGET IT.



MOUSE! HOW MUCH IS THIS COSTING ME? WE'RE POTLESS, MAN!

NOTHING, BARRY. FREE. I CALLED IN A FEW FAVOURS.

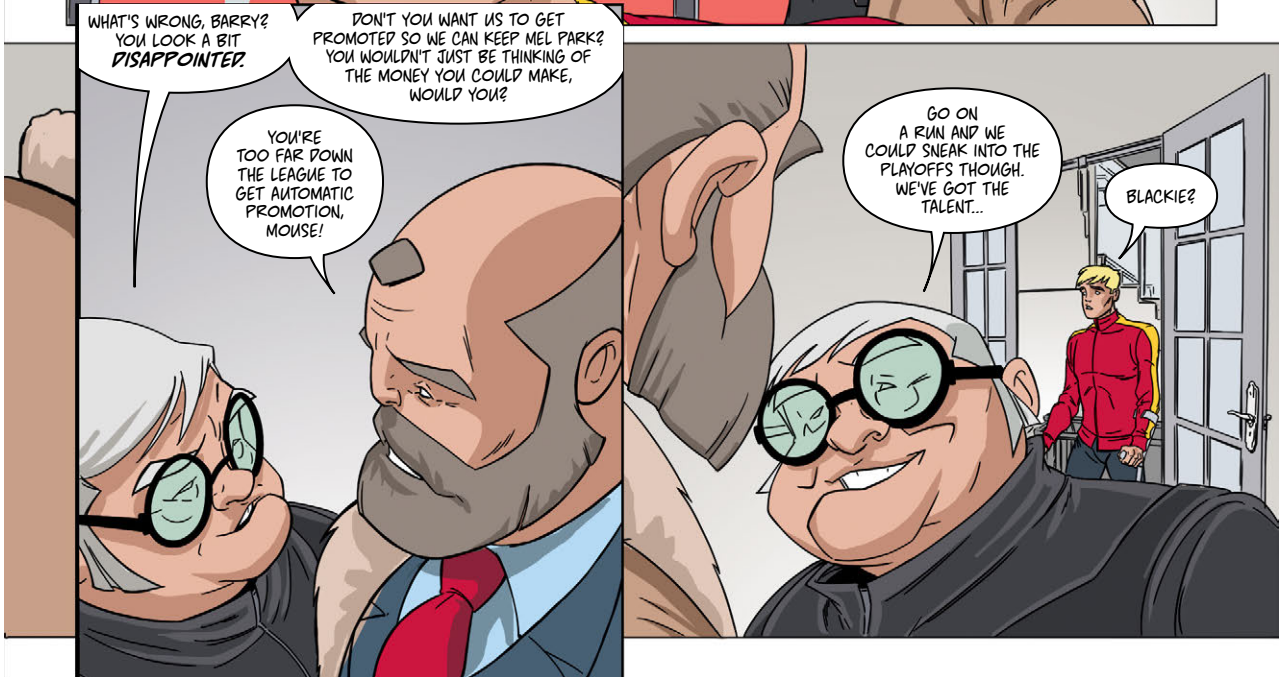
BUT HE'S PREMIERSHIP. IN THE ENGLAND UNDER-17 SQUAD. WHY WOULD HE COME HERE?



WELL, I'M FROM AROUND HERE. GREW UP A MELCHESTER BOY. THE MANAGER AT ISLINGTON WANTED ME TO GET SOME FIRST TEAM EXPERIENCE.

SO, WHEN I GOT THE CHANCE TO COME HERE FOR A SEASON-LONG LOAN, I JUMPED AT THE CHANCE.

OOF...



WHAT'S WRONG, BARRY? YOU LOOK A BIT DISAPPOINTED.

DON'T YOU WANT US TO GET PROMOTED SO WE CAN KEEP MEL PARK? YOU WOULDN'T JUST BE THINKING OF THE MONEY YOU COULD MAKE, WOULD YOU?

YOU'RE TOO FAR DOWN THE LEAGUE TO GET AUTOMATIC PROMOTION, MOUSE!

GO ON A RUN AND WE COULD SNEAK INTO THE PLAYOFFS THOUGH. WE'VE GOT THE TALENT...

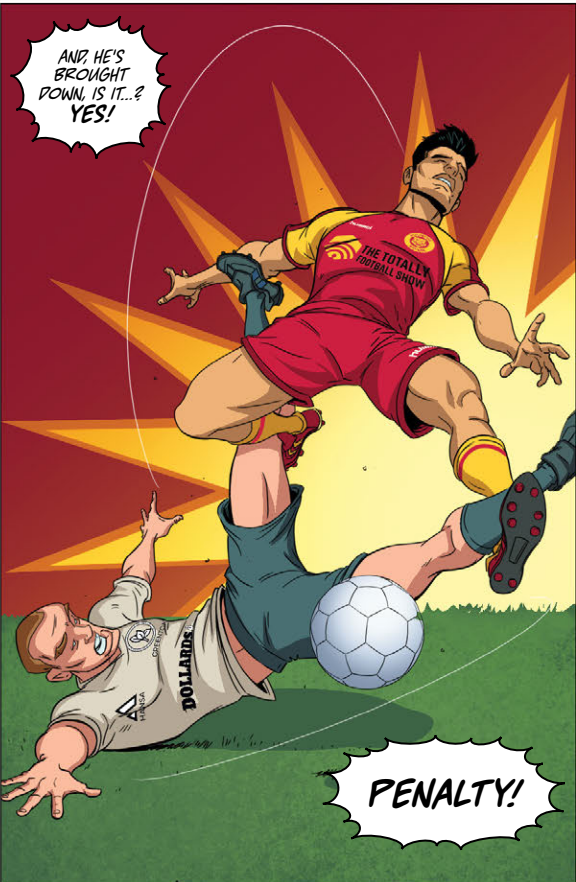
BLACKIE?



GRAY WAS WITH THE ENGLAND TEAM IN THE U17 EUROPEAN CHAMPIONSHIP RECENTLY AND... OH...

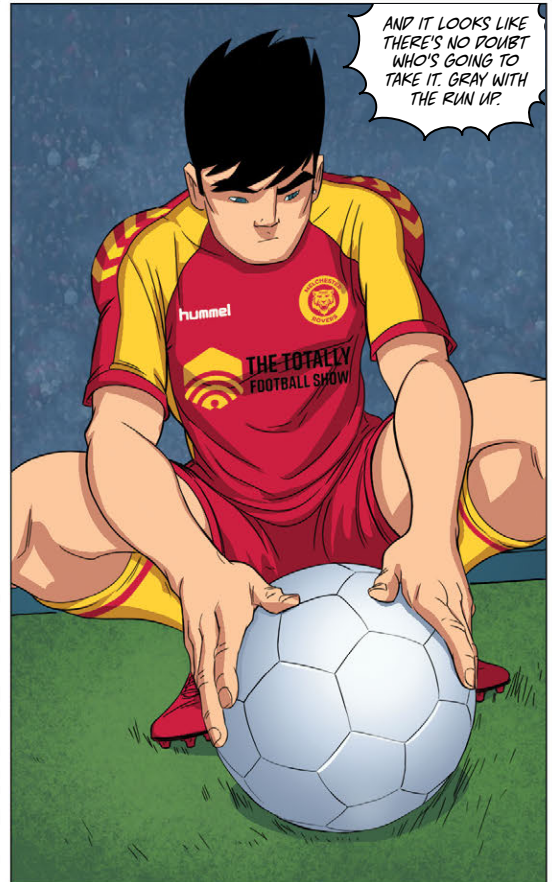


LOVELY LOB OVER THE DEFENCE INTO THE PATH OF DIAZ!



AND HE'S BROUGHT DOWN, IS IT...? YES!

PENALTY!

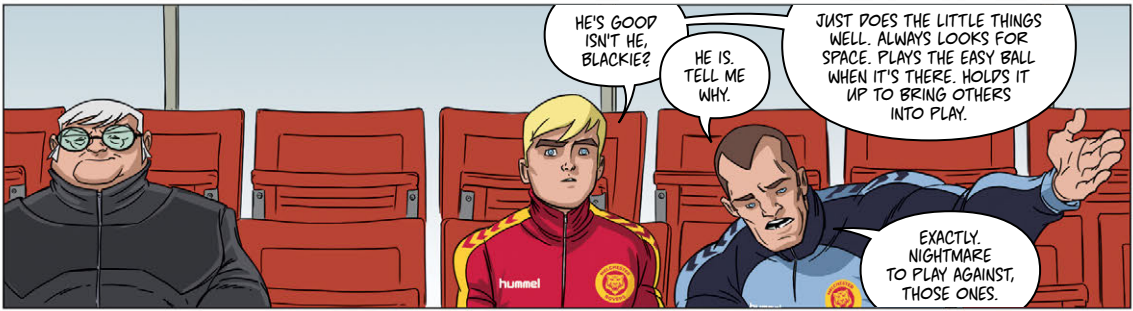


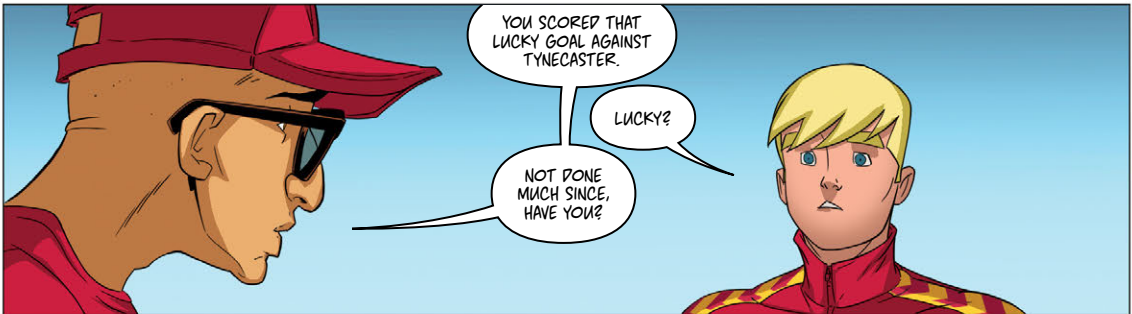
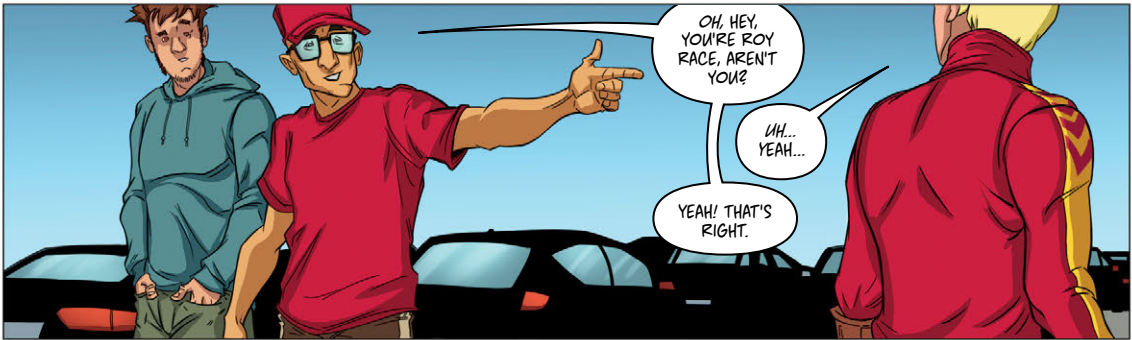
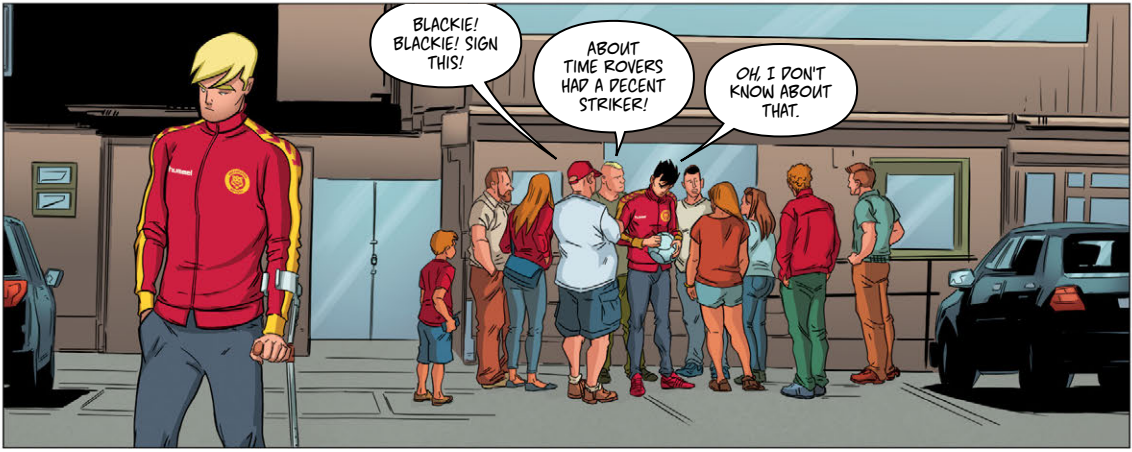
AND IT LOOKS LIKE THERE'S NO DOUBT WHO'S GOING TO TAKE IT. GRAY WITH THE RUN UP.

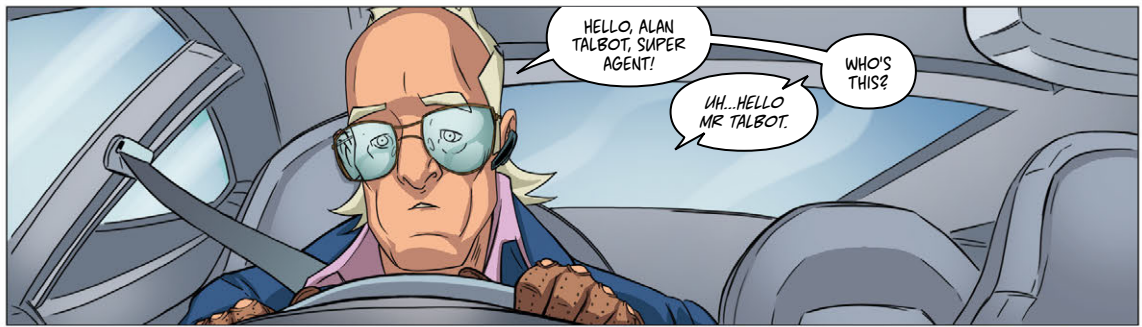


OOF! WHAT A PENALTY THAT IS. NO STOPPING THAT!

AND ROVERS ARE BACK LEVEL WITH TWENTY-FIVE MINUTES TO GO HERE AGAINST PROMOTION-CHASING GREYTON RANGERS.







HELLO, ALAN TALBOT, SUPER AGENT!

UH...HELLO MR TALBOT.

WHO'S THIS?



IT'S ROY. ROY RACE... OF MELCHESTER ROVERS.

...

YOU CAME TO MY MUM'S HOUSE A MONTH BACK. PICKED ME UP. I SCORED THAT GOAL AGAINST TYNECASTER IN THE FA CUP.

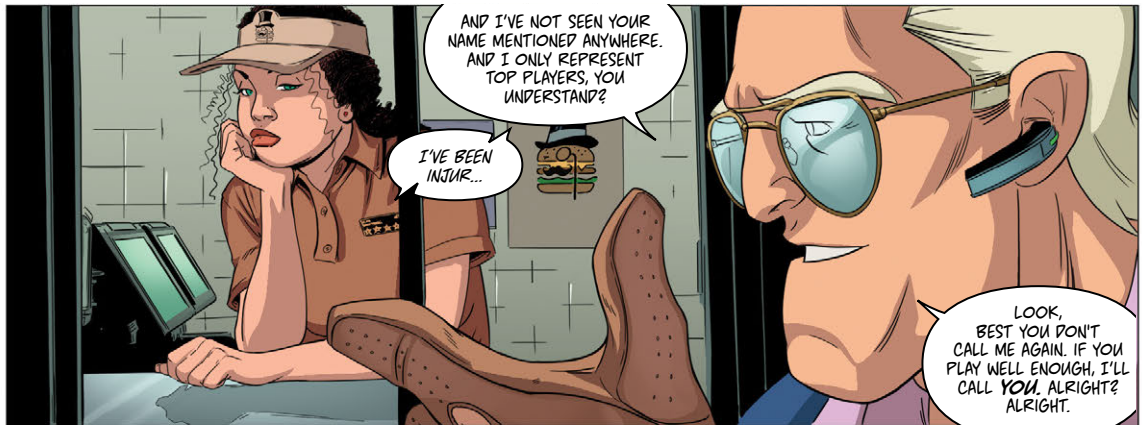
I REMEMBER, ROY. WHAT CAN I DO FOR YOU? BIT BUSY HERE. IN A BIG MEETING WITH A LA LIGA CLUB.



WELL...I'VE GIVEN IT SOME THOUGHT AND I'M READY. I'M HAPPY TO SIGN WITH YOU. I THINK YOU CAN DO FOR ME WHAT YOU DID FOR CAMPBELL AND THE OTHERS.

IS THERE A CONTRACT OR...

UH...THING IS, ROY. I KEEP AN EYE ON THINGS. THAT'S MY JOB, RIGHT? FINGER ON THE FOOTBALL PULSE.



AND I'VE NOT SEEN YOUR NAME MENTIONED ANYWHERE. AND I ONLY REPRESENT TOP PLAYERS, YOU UNDERSTAND?

I'VE BEEN INJUR...



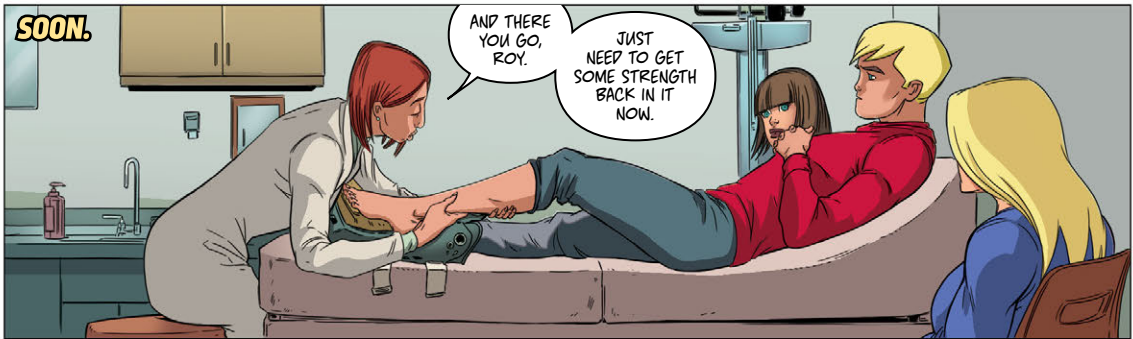
LOOK, BEST YOU DON'T CALL ME AGAIN. IF YOU PLAY WELL ENOUGH, I'LL CALL YOU. ALRIGHT? ALRIGHT.



...

YEAH... OK.

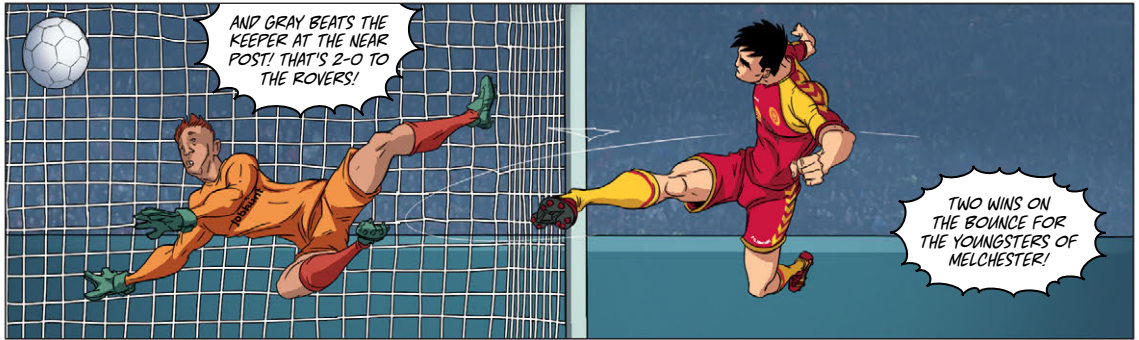
BURGER, LARGE FRIES AND FULL-FAT COLA. LUV. CHOP CHOP!





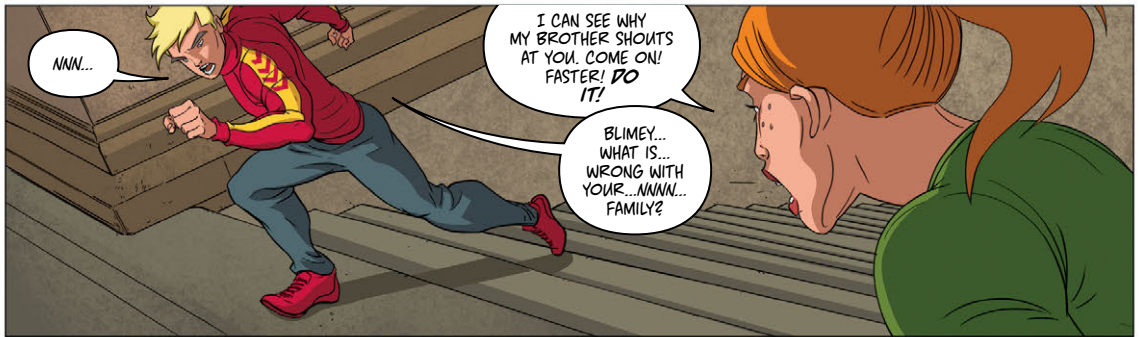
STILL HURTS A BIT TO CHANGE DIRECTION.

DO IT OFTEN ENOUGH AND IT WON'T.



AND GRAY BEATS THE KEEPER AT THE NEAR POST! THAT'S 2-0 TO THE ROVERS!

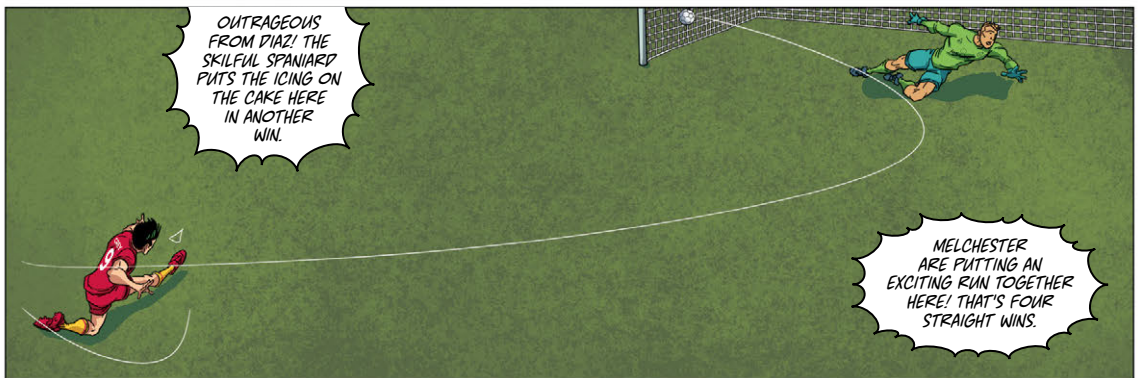
TWO WINS ON THE BOUNCE FOR THE YOUNGSTERS OF MELCHESTER!



NNN...

I CAN SEE WHY MY BROTHER SHOUTS AT YOU. COME ON! FASTER! DO IT!

BLIMEY... WHAT IS... WRONG WITH YOUR...NNNN... FAMILY?



OUTRAGEOUS FROM DIAZ! THE SKILFUL SPANIARD PUTS THE ICING ON THE CAKE HERE IN ANOTHER WIN.

MELCHESTER ARE PUTTING AN EXCITING RUN TOGETHER HERE! THAT'S FOUR STRAIGHT WINS.



MID-TABLE NOW, BARRY. TEAMS ABOVE US KEEP DROPPING POINTS. GET THIRTEEN POINTS FROM OUR REMAINING FIVE GAMES AND WE MIGHT JUST SNEAK INTO THE PLAYOFFS.

BUT IT'S NOT AS THOUGH YOU WANTED TO SELL MEL PARK IS IT?

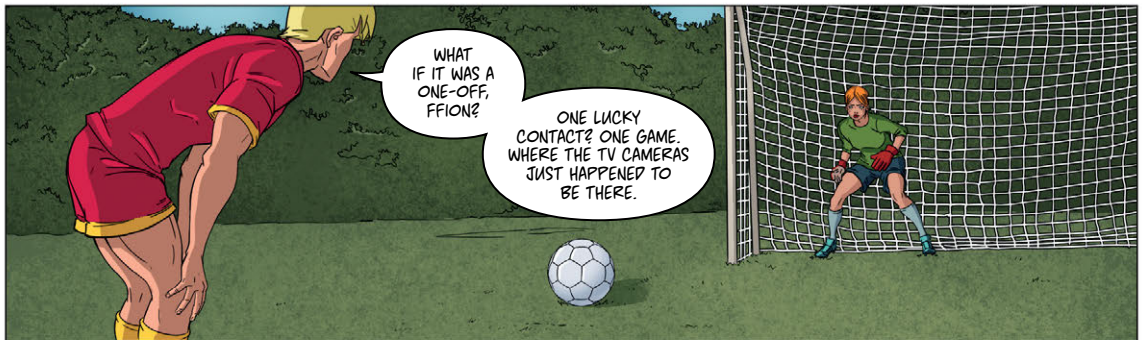
...COURSE NOT.



WELL?

WHAT ARE YOU WAITING FOR?

HIT IT, ROY RACE! GIVE ME THE ROCKET!



WHAT IF IT WAS A ONE-OFF, FFION?

ONE LUCKY CONTACT? ONE GAME, WHERE THE TV CAMERAS JUST HAPPENED TO BE THERE.



MY DAD'S ILLNESS. MY MUM HAVING TO WORK TWO JOBS. WHAT IF...

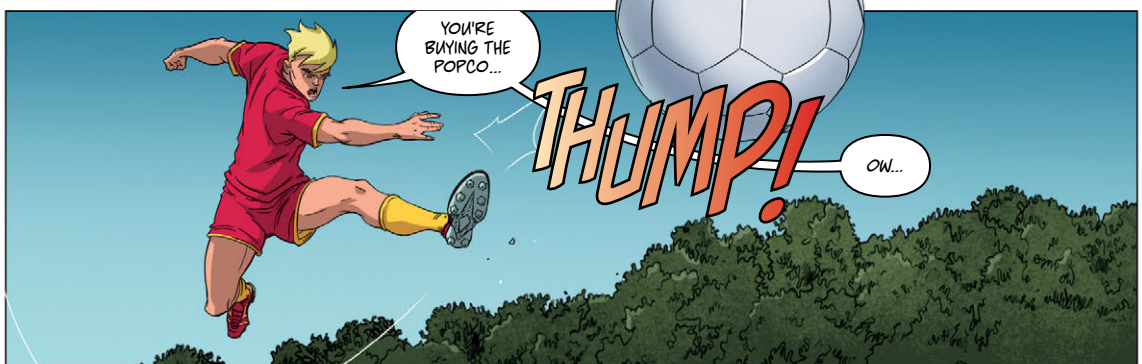
WE'RE JUST NOT THE SORT OF PEOPLE GOOD THINGS HAPPEN TO?



IT'S AN INJURY. IT HAPPENS IN FOOTBALL. ANYTHING ELSE IS YOU...INVENTING A STORY.

SO, INVENT A GOOD STORY FOR YOURSELF.

SCORE AND YOU CAN TAKE ME TO THE CINEMA NEXT WEEK. I SAVE IT AND YOU HELP US TRAIN FOR THE REST OF THE SEASON.



YOU'RE BUYING THE POPCO...

THUMP!

OW...

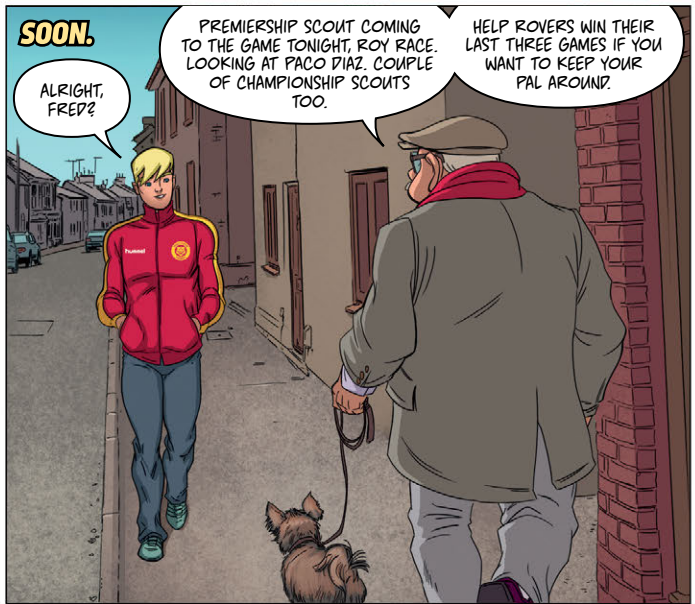


HA!
NICE TRY, RACE. ME AND THE GIRLS WILL SEE YOU EVERY MONDAY NIGHT FOR...



YOU OK?

I'M...
I'M STILL NOT SURE IT'S RIGHT...



SOON.

ALRIGHT, FRED?

PREMIERSHIP SCOUT COMING TO THE GAME TONIGHT, ROY RACE. LOOKING AT PACO DIAZ. COUPLE OF CHAMPIONSHIP SCOUTS TOO.

HELP ROVERS WIN THEIR LAST THREE GAMES IF YOU WANT TO KEEP YOUR PAL AROUND.



HI, MUM, DAD.

JOHNNY DEXTER PHONED, LOVE. TWICE.

YEAH, MY PHONE'S OUT OF JUICE. WHAT'S THIS?



DUNNO. DELIVERY FROM EARLIER. CAME FOR YOU.

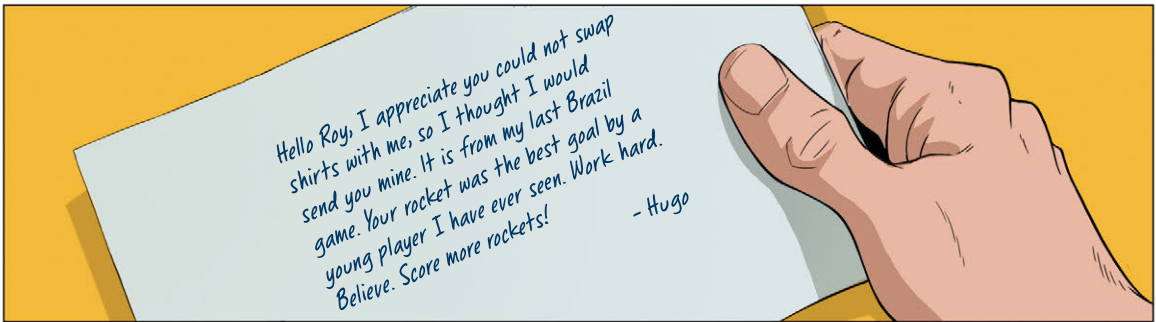
RUMPPPP!



IT'S A SHIRT...

IT'S A BRAZIL SHIRT...

HANG ON. THERE'S A NOTE...

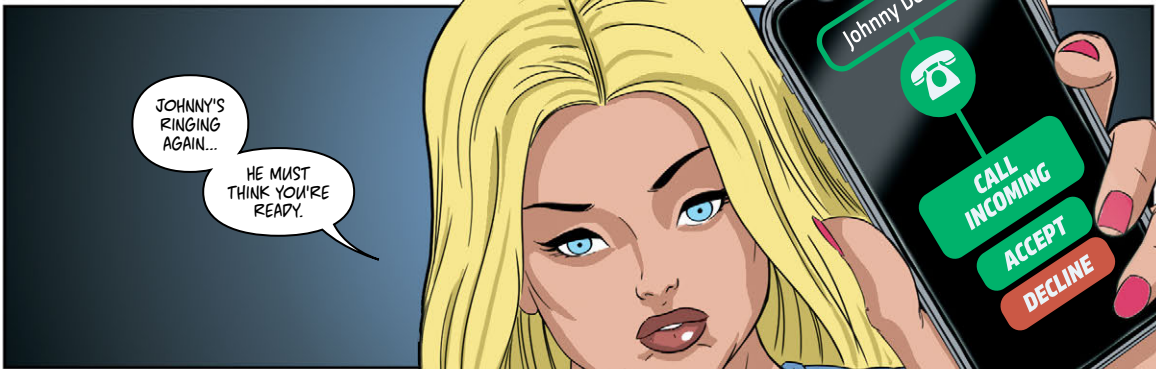


Hello Roy, I appreciate you could not swap shirts with me, so I thought I would send you mine. It is from my best goal by a young player I have ever seen. Work hard. Believe. Score more rockets!
- Hugo



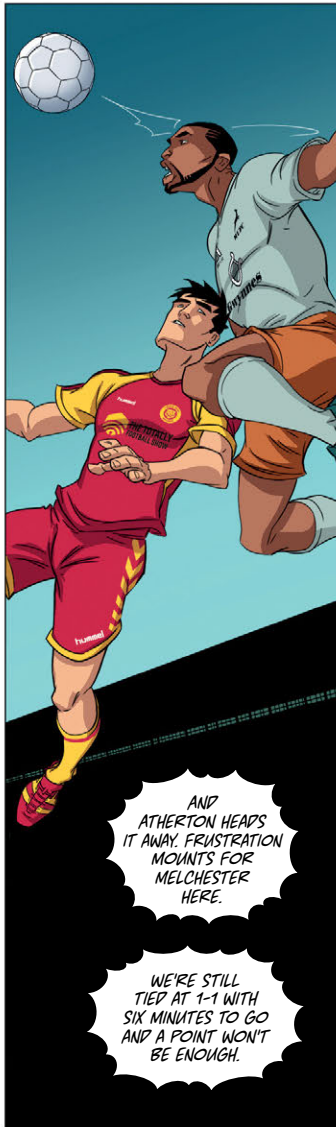
IT'S OFF HUGO.

BEST STRIKER IN THE WORLD AND HE JUST SENT ME HIS SHIRT... HIS **BRAZIL** SHIRT.



JOHNNY'S RINGING AGAIN...

HE MUST THINK YOU'RE READY.



AND ATHERTON HEADS IT AWAY. FRUSTRATION MOUNTS FOR MELCHESTER HERE.

WE'RE STILL TIED AT 1-1 WITH SIX MINUTES TO GO AND A POINT WON'T BE ENOUGH.



AGONY FOR ROVERS FANS. THEY'VE BEEN ON AN UNBELIEVABLE RUN BUT A POINT HERE WILL ELIMINATE THEM FROM THE PLAYOFF PLACES.

MUNCH



ROY! ROY RACE!

OH NO...



BLACKIE'S PLAYING REALLY WELL. YOU CAN'T TAKE HIM OFF.

WHAT? WHY? SHUT UP!

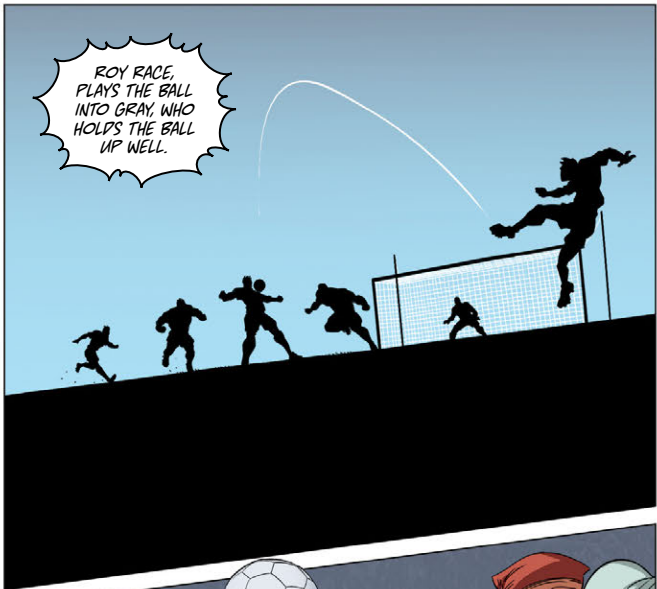
WE'RE NOT ROY. WE'RE GOING TO BRING OFF AMBURO. PLAY TWO UP FRONT. YOU AND BLACKIE.

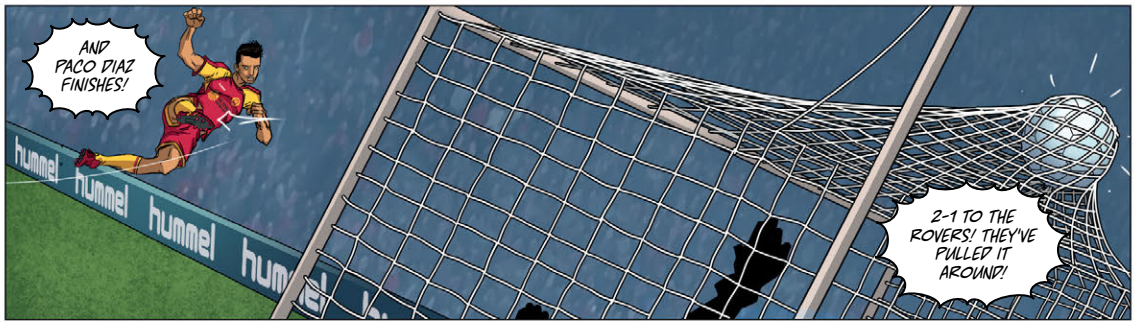


BUT... MY ANKLE. WHAT IF IT'S NOT...

PHYSIO SAYS YOU'RE GOOD, ROY. AND FRANKLY, SON, IF WE DON'T SCORE HERE WE'RE BANJAXED!

NO PLAYOFFS. FAT BARRY WILL SELL THE GROUND AND MOVE US. WE WILL BECOME SCUMMORE ROVERS! AND THEN I WOULD DIE! IMMEDIATELY.





AND PACO DIAZ FINISHES!

2-1 TO THE ROVERS! THEY'VE PULLED IT AROUND!



AND IT'S EARLY DAYS BUT YOU HAVE TO LIKE THE LOOK OF THAT ROY RACE-BLACKIE GRAY PARTNERSHIP UP FRONT!

TERRIFIC MOVEMENT AND A GREAT UNDERSTANDING. THE TWO COMPLEMENT EACH OTHER SO WELL.



AND THERE'S THE FINAL WHISTLE! THREE POINTS!

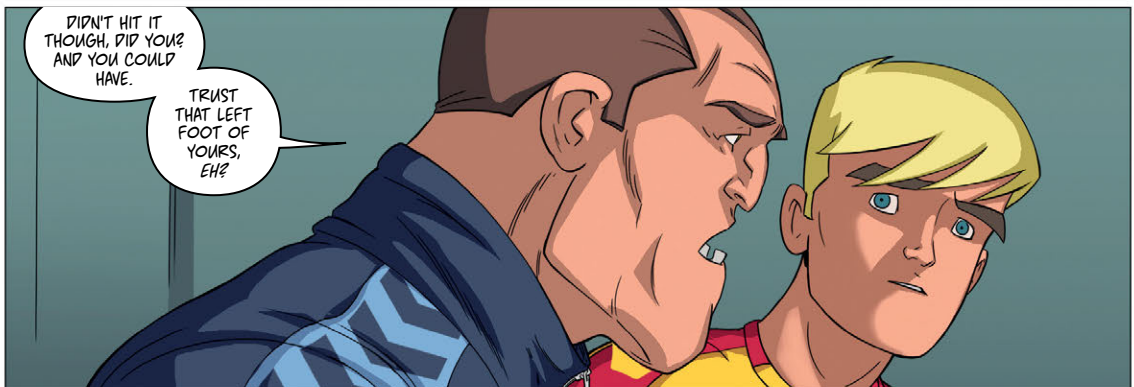
AFTER THE START THEY HAD TO THE SEASON, AND THE YOUTH OF THIS MELCHESTER TEAM, THIS RUN IS AN AMAZING FEAT!

...BRILLIANT...



YOU SEE THAT, GAFFER! ROY'S MOVEMENT. THEY COULDN'T DEAL WITH IT.

YEAH, I SAW, BOYS. I SAW.



DIDN'T HIT IT THOUGH, DID YOU? AND YOU COULD HAVE.

TRUST THAT LEFT FOOT OF YOURS, EH?



PACO!
PACO DIAZ!

GOT A COUPLE OF
VERY BIG CLUBS VERY
INTERESTED IN YOU, MY
ITALIAN FRIEND..

ALAN TALBOT,
SUPER-AGENT! YEAH,
YOU GOT IT. **THAT**
ALAN TALBOT!



HE'S SPANISH,
TALBOT! AND HE'S
OUR STAR WINGER.
MELCHESTER'S!

MY
PHONE...
OI!

YOUR
PHONE, ALAN TALBOT,
SHALL BE RETURNED TO YOU
FORTHWITH THE MOMENT YOU
EXTRICATE YOUR SELF FROM MY
TUNNEL! WHICH YOU DO NOT
HAVE PERMISSION TO BE IN!

YEAH, THAT'S
RIGHT, RUN! WE'RE
THE ROVERS AND
WE'RE NOT SELLING
ANYONE
YET!

BECAUSE WE'RE
GONNA GET TO THE
PLAYOFFS AND GET
PROMOTED!

TRESPASS
ON MY TUNNELLING
AREA AGAIN AND
I WILL HAVE YOU
EATEN BY
PANDAS!!



SORRY,
PACO. BUT
THAT GUY...

HE'S AN
IDIOT.

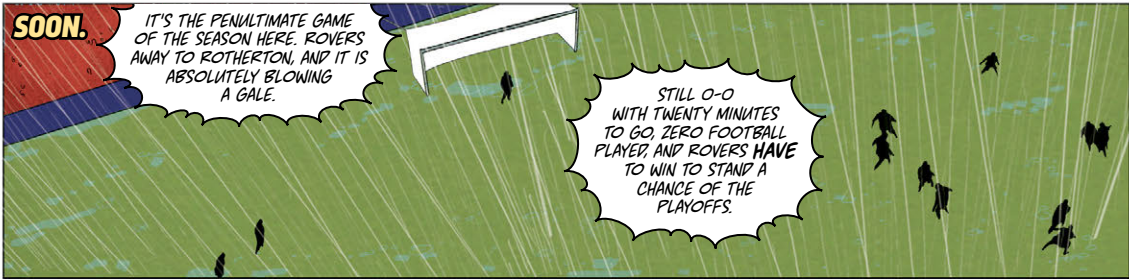


HA! YOU
HAVE BEEN TRAINED
BY JOHNNY DEXTER TOO
LONG! YOU ARE TURNING
INTO A CRAZY CENTRE
HALF, ROY!

YES, MY
FRIEND! MELCHESTER
FOR EVER! TWO MORE
WINS AND PLAYOFFS!

WE ARE
BROTHERS! WE
ARE BLOOD!

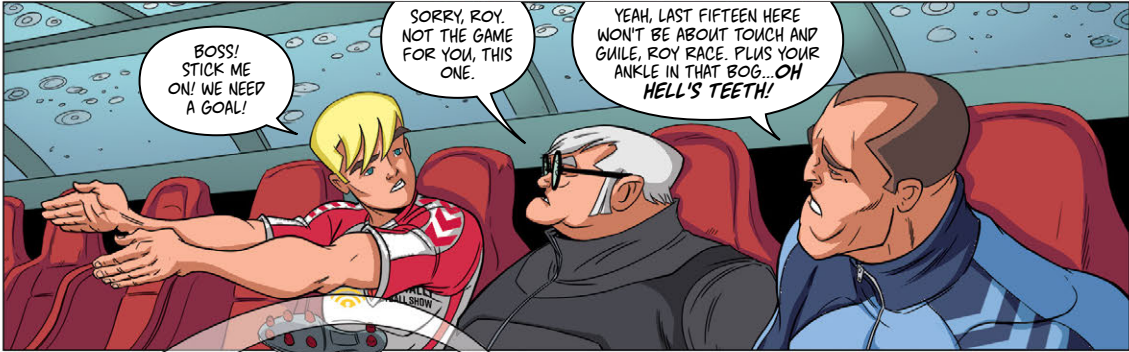
hummel



SOON.

IT'S THE PENULTIMATE GAME OF THE SEASON HERE. ROVERS AWAY TO ROTHERTON, AND IT IS ABSOLUTELY BLOWING A GALE.

STILL 0-0 WITH TWENTY MINUTES TO GO, ZERO FOOTBALL PLAYED, AND ROVERS HAVE TO WIN TO STAND A CHANCE OF THE PLAYOFFS.



BOSS! STICK ME ON! WE NEED A GOAL!

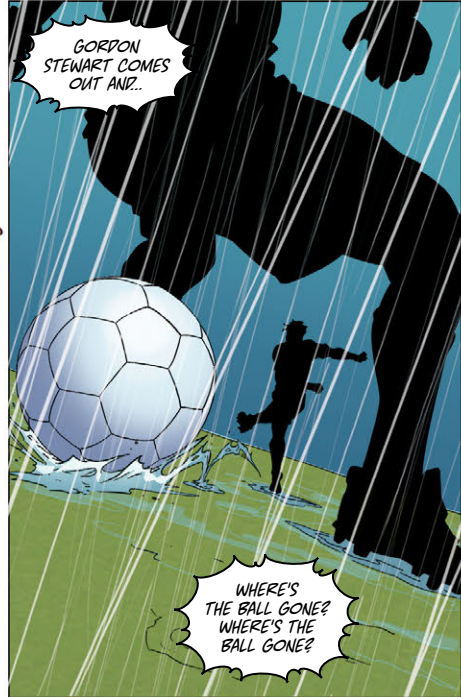
SORRY, ROY. NOT THE GAME FOR YOU, THIS ONE.

YEAH. LAST FIFTEEN HERE WON'T BE ABOUT TOUCH AND GUILT, ROY RACE. PLUS YOUR ANKLE IN THAT BOG... OH HELL'S TEETH!



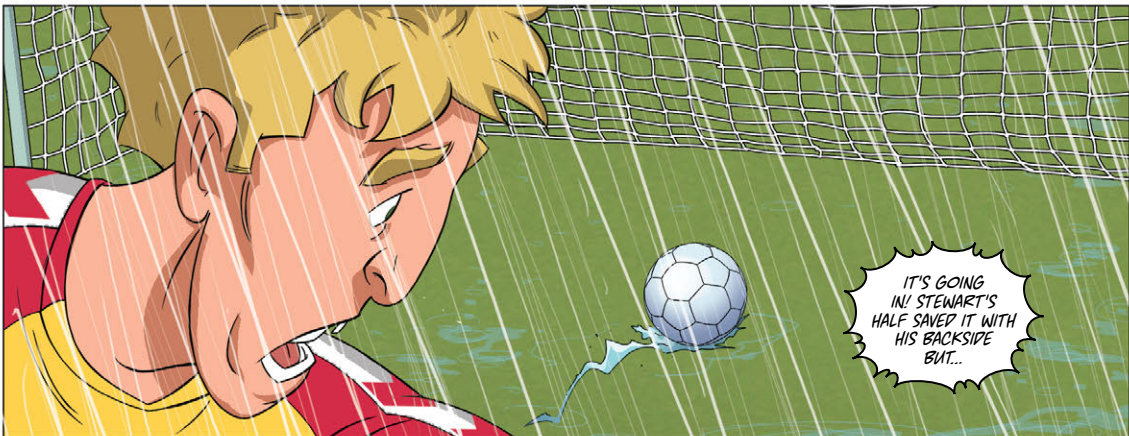
OH! LOFTY PEAK HAS SLIPPED!

THE ROTHERTON STRIKER IS THROUGH ON THE MELCHESTER GOAL!

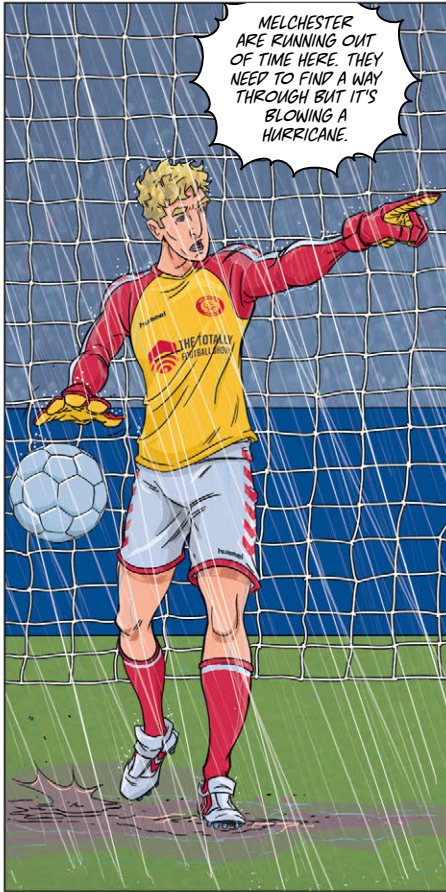


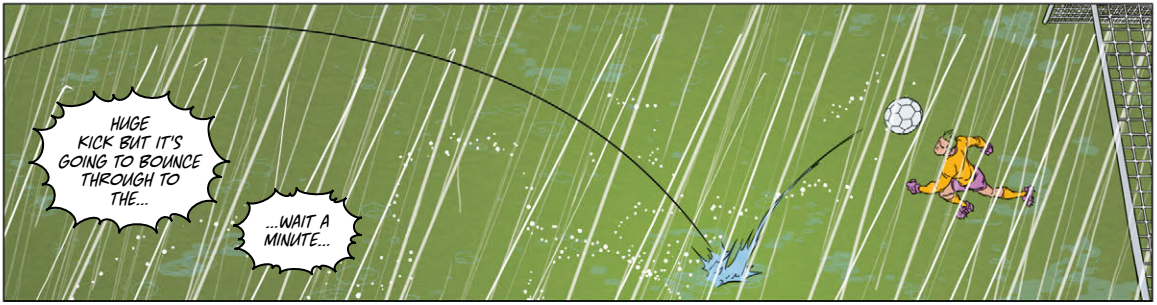
GORDON STEWART COMES OUT AND...

WHERE'S THE BALL GONE? WHERE'S THE BALL GONE?



IT'S GOING IN! STEWART'S HALF SAVED IT WITH HIS BACKSIDE BUT...





HUGE KICK BUT IT'S GOING TO BOUNCE THROUGH TO THE...
...WAIT A MINUTE...



WAIT A MINUTE!
UNBELIEVABLE!

GORDON STEWART HAS SCORED!



SAFEST HANDS IN SOCCERRRRRR!!

HAWAY, LADS, NO CAN'T CELEBRATE THAT.
GOALKEEPER'S UNION, YE KNOW? POOR BLOKE UP THERE FEELS TERRIBLE RIGHT NOW.
SPIRIT OF THE GAME, EH?



"SPIRIT OF THE GAME..."

WE'RE GOING UP, BOYS! I CAN FEELS IT IN MY WATERS, ISN'T IT! THREE MORE POINTS AND WE'RE PLAYOFFS, BAYBEE!

GERROF ME YE MAD GINGER WELSHMAN.



THREE MORE POINTS...

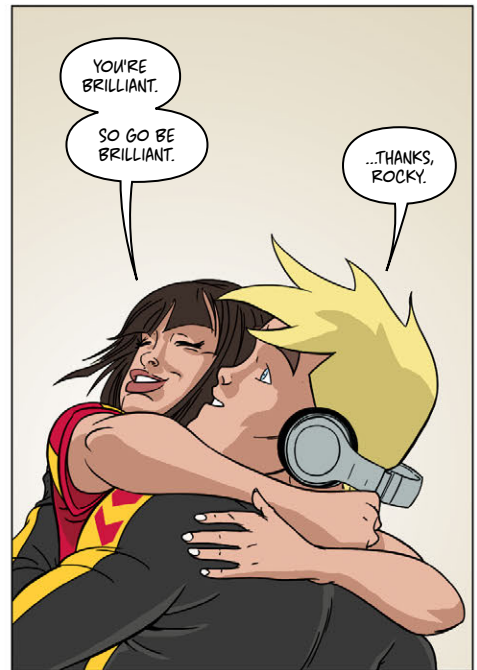
WIN ON SATURDAY AND WE'RE IN THE PLAYOFFS. MOOREFIELD CAN'T CATCH US ON GOAL DIFFERENCE.

JUST WIN ON SATURDAY.



JUST WIN, ROY.

YEAH, GOOD LUCK, BIG BRUV.



YOU'RE BRILLIANT.

SO GO BE BRILLIANT.

...THANKS, ROCKY.



I KNOW YOU'LL BE WATCHING, DAD.

...

ROY... ..OF...



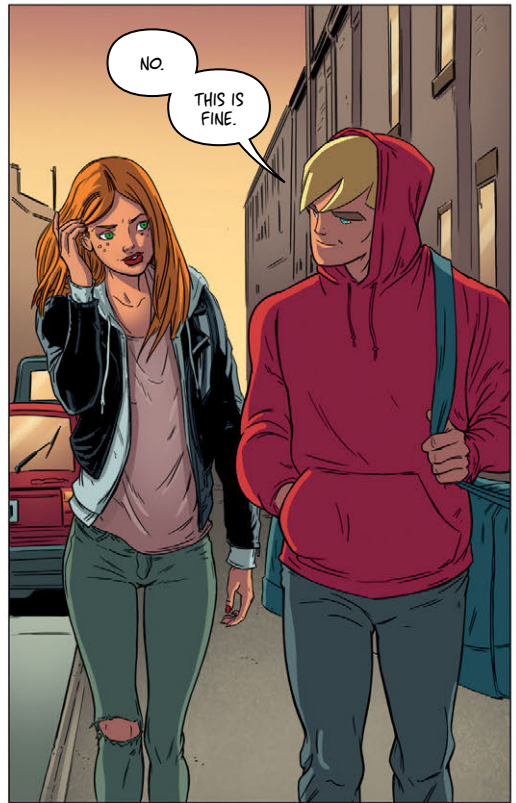
ROVERS... ..YOU.



FFION...

I'LL WALK IN WITH YOU.

UNLESS YOU'VE GOT ANY FLASH CARS TO DRIVE YOU IN?



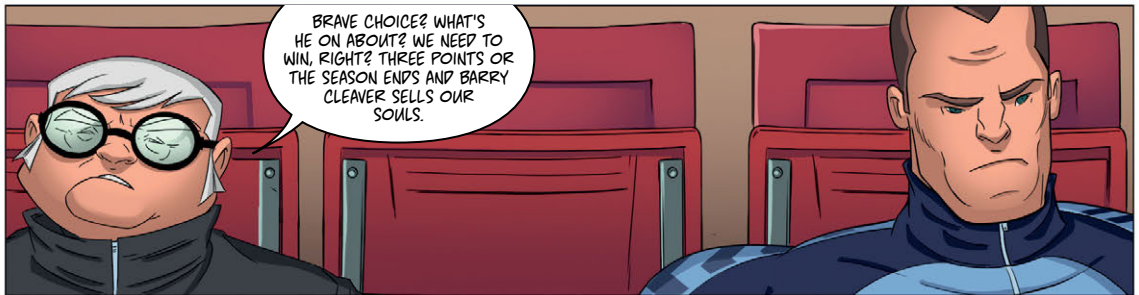
NO.

THIS IS FINE.

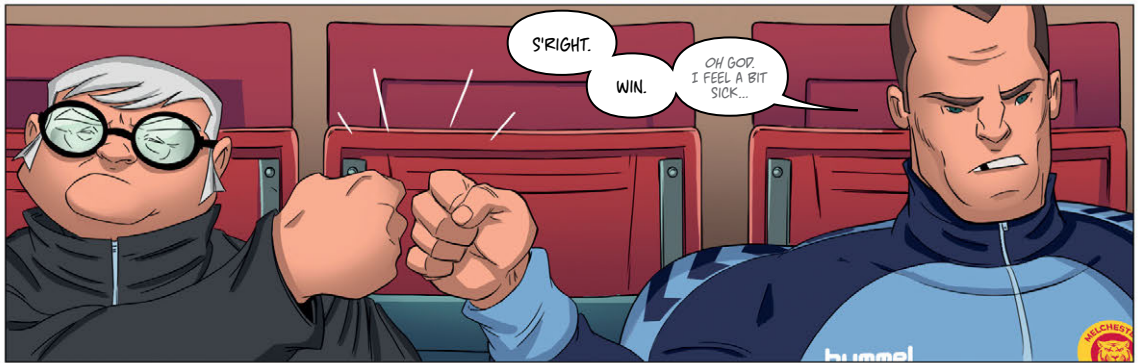


ROY RACE RETURNS TO THE STARTING LINEUP TODAY FOR THE FIRST TIME SINCE HIS UNFORTUNATE ANKLE INJURY.

IT'S A BRAVE CHOICE BY MANAGER MIGHTY MOUSE TO GO WITH TWO STRIKERS UP FRONT FROM THE START FOR THE FIRST TIME THIS SEASON.



BRAVE CHOICE? WHAT'S HE ON ABOUT? WE NEED TO WIN, RIGHT? THREE POINTS OR THE SEASON ENDS AND BARRY CLEAVER SELLS OUR SOULS.



S'RIGHT.

WIN.

OH GOD, I FEEL A BIT SICK...



AND IT'S LIKE A RETURN TO THE GLORY DAYS HERE. THE BIGGEST CROWD OF THE SEASON HAVE PILED INTO MEL PARK FOR THIS SEASON FINALE.

MELCHESTER WIN AND THEY GET THE FINAL LEAGUE TWO PLAYOFF PLACE.

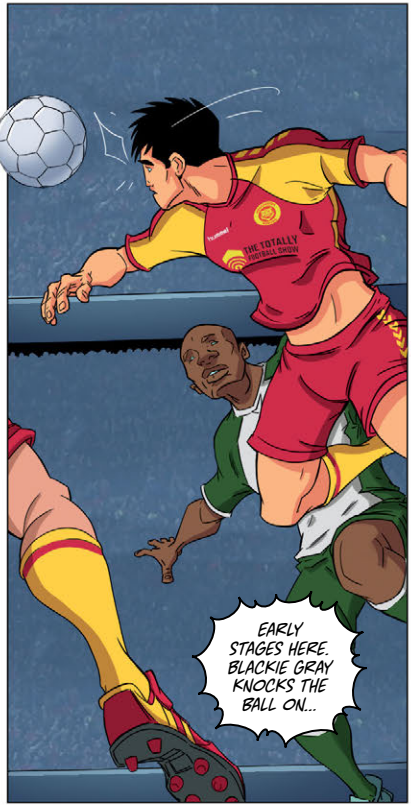
DRAW OR LOSE AND THE SEASON IS OVER!

AND WE'RE UNDERWAY.



HOLVERTON WARRIORS HAVE ALREADY GOT ONE OF THE TWO AUTOMATIC PROMOTION PLACES, SO WE KNOW THEY'RE A QUALITY OUTFIT.

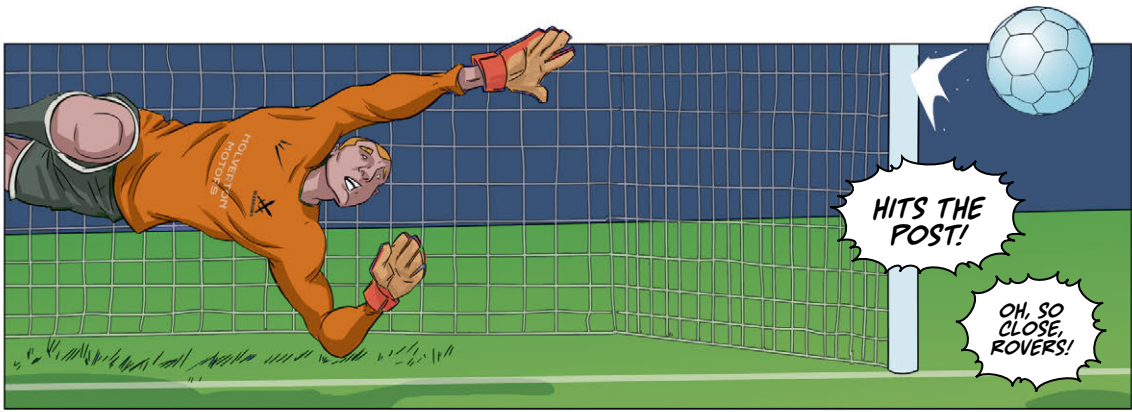
THIS IS A TOUGH CHALLENGE FOR MELCHESTER.



EARLY STAGES HERE. BLACKIE GRAY KNOCKS THE BALL ON...



RACE HITS IT FIRST TIME!



HITS THE POST!

OH, SO CLOSE, ROVERS!



UGH, IDIOT!

NO, IT'S ALRIGHT, IT'S GOOD.

HE HIT IT.

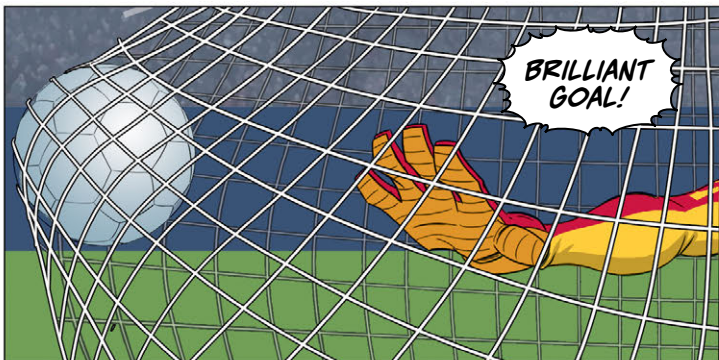


THEY'RE A VERY TIDY PASSING TEAM ARE HOLVERTON.

BRILLIANT CLOSE CONTROL.



OH, MILLAR'S IN HERE...



BRILLIANT GOAL!



AW, NO...



RIGHT THEN...

OK.

WE SCORE TWO.

YEAH...



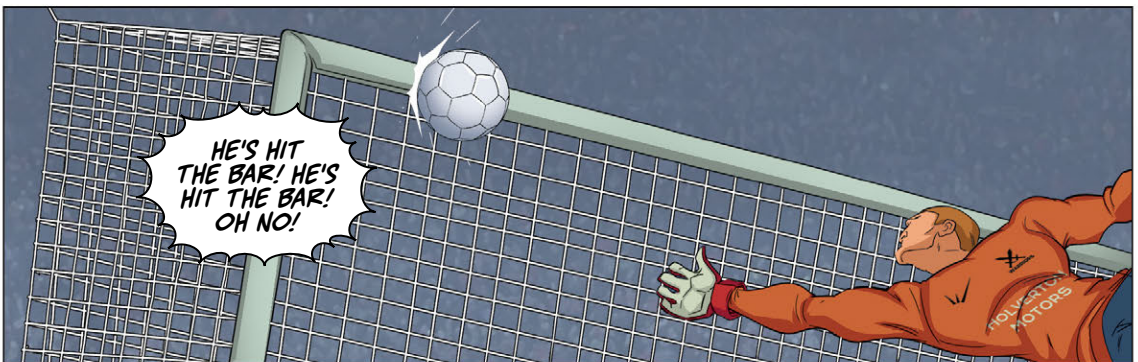
EXCELLENT CHALLENGE BY ROVERS' CAPTAIN, VIC GUTHRIE.



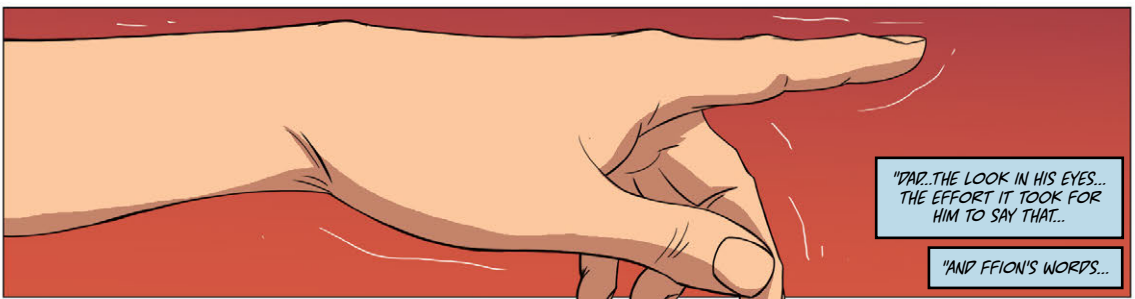
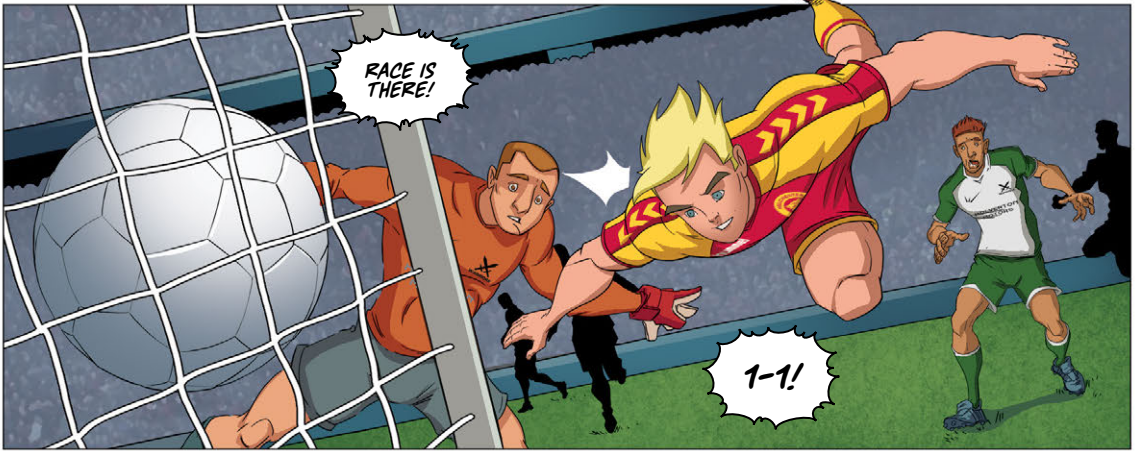
PACO DIAZ PICKS IT UP. LOOKS FOR RUNNERS AHEAD OF HIM...



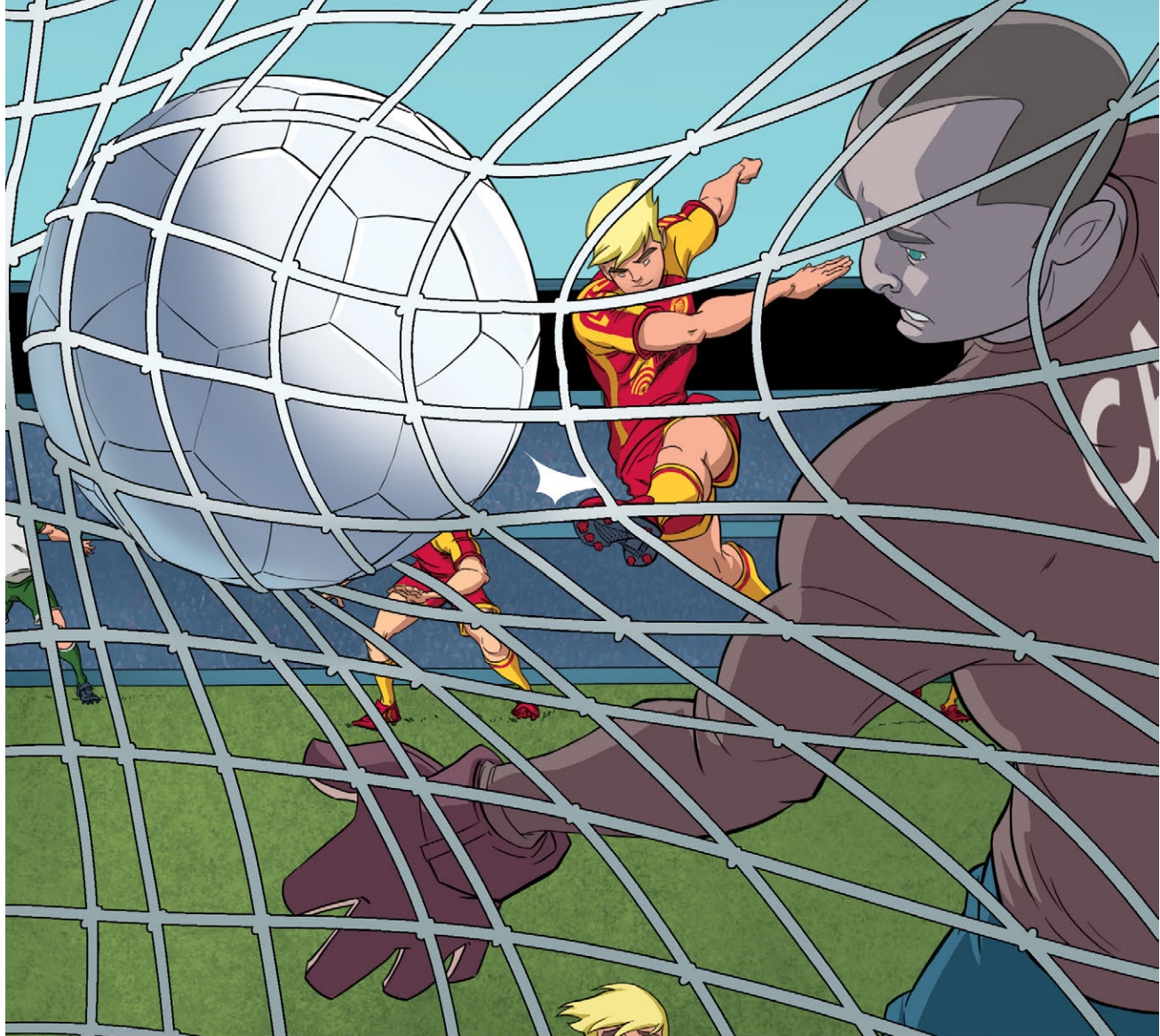
HE'S SPOTTED THE GOALIE OFF HIS LINE...HE CHIPS IT...FROM THIRTY-FIVE YARDS!



HE'S HIT THE BAR! HE'S HIT THE BAR! OH NO!



SO, INVENT A GOOD STORY FOR YOURSELF.



**END OF
BOOK
TWO**

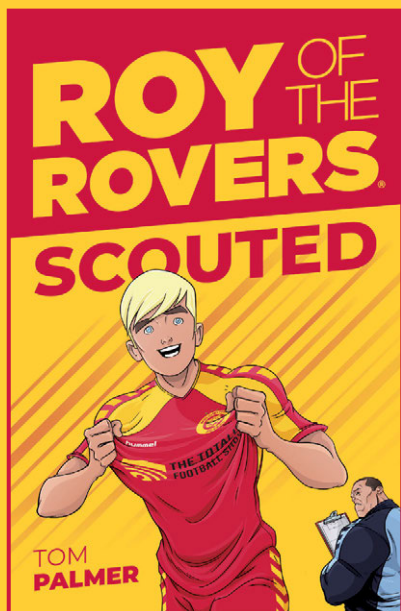


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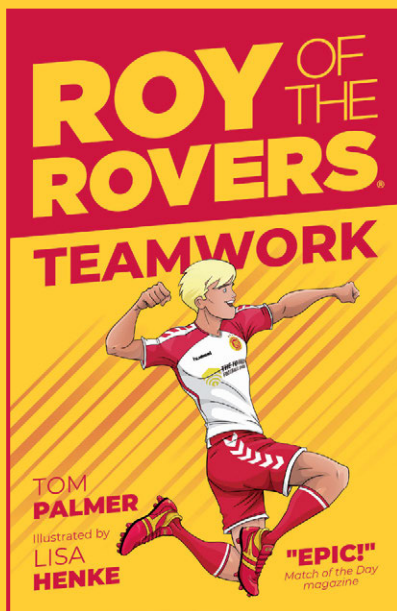


BOOK 1 **SCOUTED**

Author: Tom Palmer
Out: October 2018
ISBN: 978-1-78108-698-8

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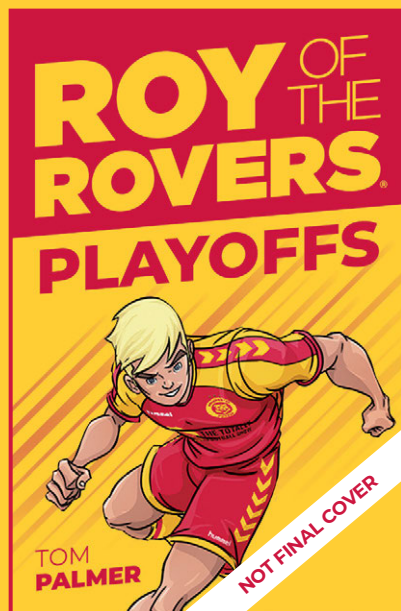


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Life gets tricky for Roy as he adjusts to life in the spotlight. Fortune and glory await, but can Roy juggle football, fame and family?

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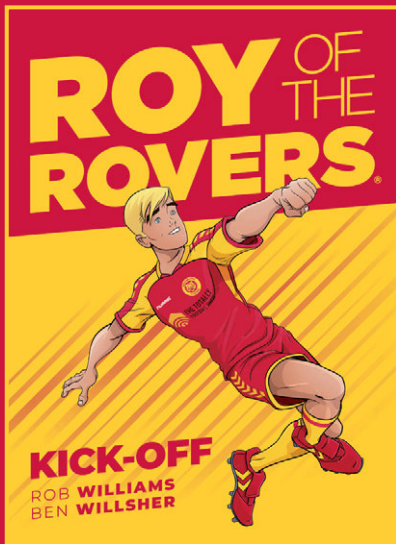
BOOK 3 **PLAYOFFS**

Author: Tom Palmer
Out: May 2019
ISBN: 978-1-78108-722-0

Crunch time for Rovers: the end of the season is here, the club is in deep trouble, and it's down to Roy to bring a bit of hope back to the Melchester faithful.

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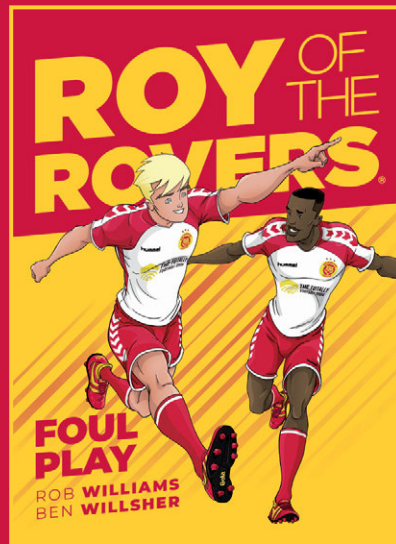


BOOK 1 KICK-OFF

Writer: Rob Williams
Artist: Ben Willsher
Out: November 2018
ISBN: 978-1-78108-652-0

Roy Race is 16, talented, and desperate to make it as a footballer. But is he good enough for Melchester Rovers? Now's the time to prove if he's got what it takes to become Roy of the Rovers.

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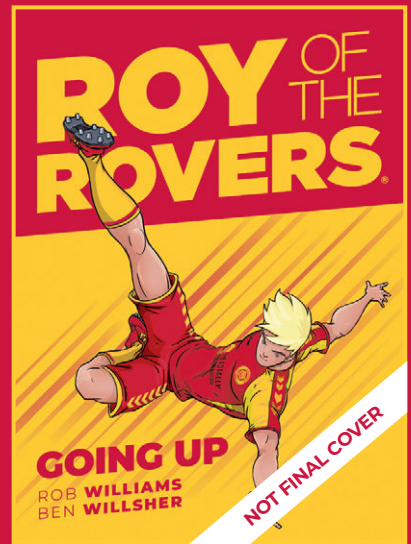


BOOK 2 FOUL PLAY

Writer: Rob Williams
Artist: Ben Willsher
Out: March 2019
ISBN: 978-1-78108-669-8

Roy picks up an injury that puts him on the sidelines, and suddenly there's competition for his place as a brand new - and brilliant - striker is brought in by the management...

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BOOK 3 GOING UP

Writer: Rob Williams
Artist: Ben Willsher
Out: June 2019
ISBN: 978-1-78108-673-5

Roy and the team have battled through a tough season, but have they got enough left to get promoted? Or will they fall at the final hurdle and see the club sold by its greedy owner?

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PLAYER INTERVIEW

Introduce Yourself

Hello. I'm Asif Mirza - right back for Melchester Rovers.

Do you have a nickname?

The lads just call me As.

Who was your favourite club growing up?

I'm a Melchester player so I really shouldn't say anything right? Okay, alright...I supported Deans Park. You're going to get me into trouble with the Gaffer!

Who is the best player that you have played with?

Wow, you're a trouble-maker! Only joking. I like playing with all the lads, but I feel that on the pitch I've really started to connect with Lofty. He makes us strong and stable.

Who is the best player that you have played against?

I give any forward or winger coming at me the same respect. If they get past me then the fault lies with me. So all of them and at the same time none of them. You look confused! Ha!

Do you have a pre-match routine?

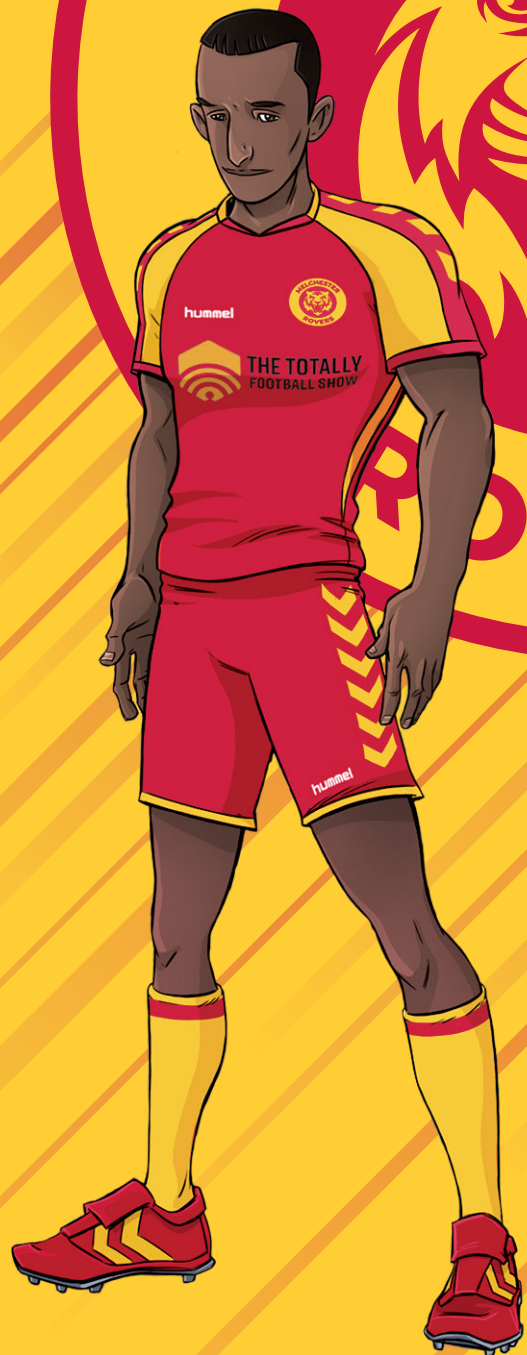
I say a quiet prayer. Listen to some music. It all helps get me into the zone.

What's your advice to young players?

Never underestimate the opposition. And also, make sure you do your research on them before a game. Most strikers are creatures of habit - to know how they play allows you to stop them from playing.

What's your favourite social media network and why?

Snapchat. My brother puts pictures up of me doing my thing on the pitch. Luckily they disappear before it all becomes too embarrassing!





PLAYER INTERVIEW

Introduce Yourself

Ah'm Gordon Stewart - otherwise known as the safest hands in Scotland!

Do you have a nickname?

Back home when I was playing for fun, it was Nessie, as in the big Scottish monster. The Melchester boys were calling me Big Man for a while, but then Lofty turned up!

Who was your favourite club growing up?

Princes Park- the pride of Scotland! Our bossman played there once and is an absolute legend at the club.

Who is the best player that you have played with?

At Melchester? I don't know. I can easily tell you who is the busiest player at the club though...me!

Who is the best player that you have played against?

Hands down, its that Hugo. I was dreading coming up against him in our cup tie with Tynecaster. I've seen him destroy some of the best keepers in the world. Thankfully, I came out of that game relatively unscathed. No, we didn't win, but we didn't get humiliated either.

Do you have a pre-match routine?

No liquids or food an hour before the game. I flick through an old Scotland international game on my phone just before we leave the dressing room - that usually gets me fired up!

What's your advice to young players?

To aspiring goalkeepers I'd say find your voice, use it to organise your defence. Defenders are like sheep that need herding and part of your job is to play farmer!

What's your favourite social media network and why?

I can't stop watching videos of goalkeeping blunders on YouTube.







THE END OF THE DREAM?

With a stunning super-strike against premier English club Tynecaster, Roy Race announced himself to the footballing world.

Melchester Rovers fans thought a saviour had arrived to lift them out of lowly League Two, and the agents came calling, sensing a new cash cow on the scene.

But a lot of things can go wrong on a football pitch. Injuries can happen to anyone - even Roy of the Rovers. Is Roy's career over before it's even begun? Will he ever play in front of the Mel Park faithful again? And can Rovers make it to the playoff finals without him?

The dramatic footballing adventure of Roy Race continues!

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