

Celebrating Australian Playwriting



Australian Script Centre



Rack 'Em Up!

by Darrelyn Gunzburg

EXTRACT

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1. INT. HARRY'S HOUSE - SATURDAY AFTERNOON - "FOOTY"

HARRY, AILIN, KIRSTIN, DAVO, KERRI, IRENE and JOANNE cluster round a television set.

TV COMMENTATOR: ... takes the mark. And the big man looks to half-forward...

AILIN: Ru-un!

DAVO : There's nobody there!

KIRSTIN: Hey Davo, shove off. You're squashing me.

DAVO: Sorry.

HARRY: Sssh!

TV COMMENTATOR: ...And Wilson, very good with his hands, kicks the ball out by Brewer, forces the ball further up the half-forward line....

(DAVO picks up the whistle hanging around his neck, blows it and stands up like the umpire.)

DAVO: Round the neck!

KERRI: Keep it for the boxing ring, Davo!

TV COMMENTATOR: ... Brown takes a big arc, comes back, back to Brewer, came all the way back from the half-back line, will it bounce? Rockets it across to Francis. Wanganeen digs it out -

KIRSTIN: Go Wanganeen!

KERRI: Good defence.

TV COMMENTATOR: ... gives it across to Scott Cummings -

JOANNE: YES SCOTTY!!!!

DAVO : Hey, Joanne, quit with the arms.

(JOANNE turns and rubs DAVO's head affectionately.)

TV COMMENTATOR: ... Cummings chased all the way down...

KIRSTIN: Yeah, he's shocked to get it. You've kept two players on him all afternoon, that's why.

HARRY: Looking good now.

TV COMMENTATOR: ... kicked sixty-two goals for the season... can he make it sixty-three? The distance is there.... Port have played hard all year and their consistency has been well-documented. Can they get this crucial goal now?...

KERRI: What an angle to come in on!

(They crane towards the set. There is an anticipatory silence as they wait, eyes glued to the screen. The footballer begins his run up to kick the ball - and the TV snows.)

ALL: No-o-o-o-o!

HARRY: Aaaaagh!

(JOANNE kicks the TV, then drops in front of the loudspeaker trying to make out the score.)

HARRY: Don't bother. It won't work.

TV COMMENTATOR: ...crackle... saying to Brisbane "Catch Us If You Can".... crackle...

(KIRSTIN runs to the window. She puts her head out, then pulls it back in again as FLY slithers into the room through the window. He wears headphones and a walkman and a smile on his face.)

FLY: Captain's goal, eh? Wanganeen!!!

(JOANNE continues to fiddle with the knobs of the TV. HARRY grabs FLY's headphones.)

HARRY: Fly, you -... frigging idiot!

FLY: Why? We just evened at the half ... One point the difference. OUR way.

KIRSTIN: Bloody hell, Fly! Get back on the roof.

FLY: (heads towards door) I need a piss. And anyway, it's half time. Someone else's turn to hold the aerial.

DAVO: Well, bring some cans back with you!

(FLY exits.)

HARRY: So who's going up on the roof? Kerri?

KERRI: No way! I hate heights.

HARRY: Kirstin?

KIRSTIN: Not if I'm getting this 8-ball team together.

AILIN: I still don't understand why they fall in a heap on top of each other.

HARRY: It's called tackling for the ball.

AILIN: You'd never see that in cricket.

KERRI: Well, don't watch it with us then. What are ya?

KIRSTIN: Kerri, are you in?

KERRI: For what?

KIRSTIN: The 8-ball team?

KERRI: Oh... yeah... I guess.

JOANNE: She means you can't cheat as easily at footy.

AILIN: And what's that supposed to mean?

KIRSTIN: Ailin, you playing?

HARRY: Yeah, she's in.

AILIN: Not if I get the lead.

KIRSTIN: When are your auditions?

HARRY: You can still practise with us.

AILIN: Next Monday.

HARRY: Really? That close?

JOANNE: You never hear of football players *throwing* the ball when they're meant to *bowl* it.

AILIN: Look, I don't agree with what the Sri Lankan team did any more than -

KERRI: And you never hear of Australian swimmers taking drugs at the Olympics.

JOANNE: No. The women's medley team don't have a chance against those over-sized Chinese weight-lifters!

KERRI: Or that Irish girl -

HARRY: She doesn't take drugs!

KERRI: How do you know? My Mum reckons the Irish will pull any dirty trick in the bag to -

DAVO: Hey, cut that out. I'm half Irish!

HARRY: It's okay. She's half joking.

KIRSTIN: Hey loosen up you guys! No-one in their right mind would cheat at the Olympics. Now Joanne, you in?

JOANNE: No-one wants to be *caught* cheating -

AILIN: Look, all I said was cricket has more strategy in it than -

KERRI: And all I said was don't come here and tell us how to play *our* game -

KIRSTIN: Kerri, Joanne, enough! If we show up at the peace rally next week and start hitting people, we're just as bad as they are. Now are you all going to be part of this 8-ball team or not? Hey Fly, get in here.

DAVO: Not Fly.

HARRY: Why not?

(DAVO shuffles uncomfortably.)

(FLY returns with an armful of cans of soft drink. He takes one and shakes it hard.)

FLY: Hey, Davo ...
(He tosses the can to DAVO)
... where's Roberto?

JOANNE: Yeah. And where's Fariba?

(They all look at each other. A knowing sound goes up around the room.)