Football IRL: The Miracle of Swindon Town #17

Miracle of Swindon Town
https://youtube.com/watch?v=FaUE2gpYjS4
https://nerdfighteria.info/v/FaUE2gpYjS4

Hello and welcome to HankGames without Hank. We are of course the Swindon Town Swoodilypoopers today and we are facing mighty Scunthorpe United. We are in the Championship which is one league below the Premier League. We are on our way to the Premier League. This is the very beginning of the season, you can see all the players are excited.

We had an eventful transfer period here in Swoodilypooper land. We've gotten a number of players including, well, people I'll introduce you to as we play. John Green and John Green are up front. As you can see Leroy Williamson is still in midfield and we still have Fat Lucas in goal even though technically I should have replaced him but I have a sentimental attachment to Fat Lucas. So hopefully we will do OK here in the Championship on our inexorable march to the Premier League but Scunthorpe United is a serious foe.

I don't know what I just did. Oh, that was for people who are better at this game than I am.

Today I'm going to tell you a story about my own life as a soccer player.

Oh. Other John Green, you're better than that.

And about taking my son to his first soccer practice. So Henry is now 20 months old, my son, and my wife thought it would be a good idea for him to start attending soccer practice. I was, of course, all in favor of this as, you know, soccer is good for young minds. But you have to realize that, like, 20 month-old children, like they aren't capable of really playing organized soccer on the pitch or even playing the sort of bumblebee game that you usually see from the youngsters.

How about we send that to Bald John Green and then Bald John Green fails to finish.

They aren't even able, like Henry isn't even able to kick the ball on a regular basis so today I'm going to tell you what soccer practices look like if you're 20 months old. And what will be good news to many people who play soccer and wish that it were a little less stressful is that Henry's soccer practices involve bubbles. So we got there, he puts on his little soccer kid uniform.

Who's gonna score? Could it be Leroy Williamson! Jumping into the goal celebrating. What a great pass from Other John Green. Accidental pass but still. Then he goes far post against the goalkeeper. There's no way that he can defend it. Leroy Williamson! The best player in the entire world. No-one's written a song about him yet and I don't know why 'cause he's awesome. Oh, and here comes Other John Green. They're just unstoppable. Oh, just kidding, they were stopped.

So we got to soccer practice, he puts on his little kid uniform and, like, I mean Henry can walk but he's not that interested in necessa... like, he doesn't need to walk, he doesn't always feel compelled to walk. So the first thing that he did was start crawling all over the pitch which wasn't particularly encouraging.

Fat Lucas! Thank you.

And he kept pointing at the midfield line because it was painted white, he was very excited about and he kept saying "Color, color." And I was like "Yes, that's one of the colors. Specifically that one's white." And then the coach came up and he was like "Hey. What's your kid's name there?" And I was like "Oh, his name's Henry." And then he said "Hey Henry" and then Henry started crying because, you know, stranger danger. And then coach was like "Henry, do you want to play with the ball?" and Henry said "Ball!" Henry likes balls. Context! Context is everything. So the coach gave him a soccer ball.

When I was a kid we used to play with little tiny soccer balls but I guess nowadays they play with full size soccer balls so they can learn all about how to be great soccer players or whatever. And Henry, of course, immediately picked up the ball and I was like "No Henry. Remember all the times that we practised this. You kick the ball." And then Henry said "Kick, kick, kick" and then preceded to kick the white midfield line because, you know, it was a color. And I was like "No, you kick the ball" and he was like "Ball!" and then he picked up the ball and I was like "No, no, no. You kick the ball." And then he was like "Kick, kick, kick." And I was like "Yeah, no. It's the... You gotta combine those ideas of 'kick' and 'ball' and then you'll be surprised where that can take you. That can take you, theoretically, all the way to starting for Ajax" which is my goal for Henry. I mean obviously I'd like him to do other things but I would like him... It's definitely important to me that he become a professional footballer and then perhaps a surgeon, you know. He's gonna retire at, like, 33 so he'll have time for a second career.

I would really like him to start for the Dutch national team though even though, admittedly, he is not Dutch but we can work around that so...

By the way, Swindon Town up one-nil here in the 36th minute so good on you Swoodilypoopers. But we need to see goals from John Green and/or John Green because I would like to sing you songs about these guys but, you know, I can't sing unless they score. How about to Bald John Green. Oh, not your best pass Other John Green. I've seen you do better. Oh, come on!

So eventually the other kids came and it was a little encouraging when the other kids came because I realized that it's not just my kid who's bad at soccer it's like, you know, every parent of a two year old or one year old child. And Henry quickly distinguished himself as, like, easily in the top half of the class in terms of raw talent in that he could run on command which was one of the major things. So when actual practice started the first thing that the coach had all the kids do was run in a line toward the goal and I mean I would say the success rate was very near zero. However, Henry is pretty good at running in a line although he likes to sort of narrate his life so when he is running he says "Run, run, run, run, run, run, run" and I'm like "Yeah Henry, that's exactly what we're doing."

We've reached the end of the first half here and I'll tell you a little bit more about Henry's soccer practice shortly. So we're still up one-nil. It's not a comfortable lead though for the Swoodilypoopers. Although it must be said that Scunthorpe hasn't had a number of chances although Fat Lucas has come into play a couple of times. I mean, you know, I need him back there definitely. I'm not asking him to go away or anything, I'm just saying that I think we've been fairly dominant. We could have scored more and we should score here. I mean this is where Bald John Green usually distinguishes himself. Bald John Green you're better than that!

So in order to, like, get the kids to run and pay attention to the coach, the coach eventually gets out bubbles and that worked like a charm. And he was like, the coach was like "Hey, you should head the bubbles, you should pay attention to the bubbles". And of course the kids don't do th...

Oh! Bald John Green! Bald John Green, John Green. Wow! What a great goal from John Green. Actually it's a very average goal. So we had a song ready for Bald John Green that someone wrote to the tune of *Que Sera*. It goes:

"Bald John Green, John Green,
He gives it all for the team.

Upon his moustache we are keen,
Bald John Green, John Green.

Bald John Green, John Green,
He's tough but surprisingly lean,"

When you sing about him he loves to score!

"He treats Man U like a latrine,
Bald John Green, John Green."

But we didn't get to sing that 'cause, of course, we lost to Manchester United in the F.A. Cup final, a devastating loss for the whole team but particularly for Bald John Green who considers himself the captain of the club and its spiritual heart. So it was a tough loss but now he's scored twice against Scunthorpe United, that's gotta be some comfort. I mean, not really but you know. Oh! We should have scored there.

So he brings out the bubbles, the coach does, and then the kids are just running around, running toward the bubbles which allows the coach to then, like, have them run toward the goal by making the bubbles follow toward the goal. And in some cases, because there were a number of soccer balls standing between the goal and the kids, the kids would even kick the soccer balls by accident just because they were running at the bubbles and the soccer balls were in their way and so they would just kick them kind of like coincidentally. So it was really, I mean, you know, it turns out that bubbles are pretty... I was almost on target for once. Bubbles are pretty important to any one and a half year old soccer league. Other than that I would say that aside from that it was a lot of failing to kick the ball and...

Is Bald John Green going to get his hat-trick here? He wants it. He got it! Bald John Green. Once you sing about him, you know. And this is great, he's not even really celebrating. He's like "Look, we're dominating. I shouldn't even really celebrate". I'm gonna have to go up a skill level I think, even here in the Championship so that I can keep it entertaining for you guys and, you know, so we don't, we don't want to win them all. That's a yellow card at most. Other John Green with a yellow card. I mean I think he should get a yellow card for that haircut. Lord have mercy, who do you think you are? Fernando Torres?

So anyway, that was Henry's experience in soccer. My experience in soccer was that I was generally the worst player on the team. Like the coach would have to play every player on the team.

Is it going to be Bald John Green again? No, he's going to give it to Other John Green and they score. Wow, this is just pure domination. And they hug it out. Hug it out. God, those guys really put their knees between each other when they hug. It's alarming the way that John Green and John Green hug. It's just enthusiastic I guess but you don't really look for that particular kind of love on the soccer pitch necessarily.

So I was always the worst player on the team and the coach would always have to play all the players and so I would always come in in the second half and there would always be quite a bit of, I don't know. I don't want to say that coach was unhappy to play me but generally I wasn't doing any favors to the club. And I continued to play through middle school, I played for my middle school team. And I mean I wasn't the worst guy on the team, I had a lot of hustle because I really loved soccer, but I really, I had no hand to foot coor... eye to foot coordination and I didn't really do anything other than run. I was an extremely good runner but I could never really touch the ball with my feet or my head or any of that stuff.

So I've always worried that, you know, maybe Henry wouldn't be such a good soccer player which is why it was important to me to marry a good soccer player which I did. Sarah, my wife, was on the varsity on our high school, we went to the same high school, on our high school's varsity soccer team for many years from freshman year to... Come on! To senior year pretty consistently, she was one of the best players. She's still a really good defender so when we play, and sometimes we play in little pick-up leagues, Sarah's still always one of the best players on the pitch even though she's pretty tiny.

So that was my strategy. I figured I'm not a good soccer player but I'm very enthusiastic. If I can just marry a good soccer player I've got a reasonably good chance at success and so far it's worked out for me. Although admittedly he's only 20 months old but I would say he's definitely top five out of the ten kids who are 20 months old playing soccer. So I've got a lot of hope for Henry. I don't want him to watch this video in like 10 years and be like "Oh God, daddy, he wanted me to play for Ajax!" I was kidding Henry. I don't really want you to play for Ajax, I want you to have a happy life - and play for Ajax. No I don't. Yes, yes I do. No I don't. I just want you to have a great life that's full of athletic accomplishment.

Oh no! We almost gave up a goal at the end but we didn't.

Anyway, I would say that Henry is already... Also, why does it really even matter if you have any athletic talent? It doesn't of course. There's no inherent glory in it so...

Oh, Other John Green ending the game. Look at them hug. Look at the way they hug, with the knees. It's very close. I mean you have to say that their midsections are right flush up against one another. And yes, I have seen the John Green/John Green slash fiction. I wish I could unsee it but I want to thank, I suppose, the nerdfighters and/or Swindon Town Swoodilypoopers fans who created that beautiful piece of work. Don't Google it young people! It's distressing.

Alright, we're gonna end the game here but are we going to end it with one more goal? This is a little bit... I'm almost embarrassed for Scunthorpe United. OK, there it is. Six-nil. Hat-trick from John Green, two goals from Other John Green and Leroy Williamson opening up the goal scoring in the 14th minute. Five second half goals from Other John Green and Bald John Green, truly a heroic accomplishment. A wonderful entrance into the npower Championship. Congratulations to the Swoodilypoopers. We will see you next time.

Hey, you gotta tell me what you want me to talk about otherwise I'm just gonna talk about baby soccer practice every time. So tell me what you want to hear stories about. And as always, best wishes.