

Yeomen schmomen

The Excalibur Sports Editor's lament

Gary Cohen

Alright, it's time to take the gloves off, get down to bare knuckles and strike a blow for *Excalibur* sports editors past, present and future. So one primal scream coming up.

Have you ever wondered why all of the York athletic teams are called Yeomen or Yeowomen? Well I have. The pondering goes on almost every week in fact!

I usually get around to wondering after reading and/or writing ten or twelve stories which each contain the dreaded words Yeomen or Yeowomen at least ten times each. And if that doesn't spark my curiosity then trying to compose six headlines at four in the morning without using those well-known words in five of them practically always gets my goat.

Why do they all have the same name? I ask myself over and over again and finally my imagination takes me on a fantasy cruise back to that historic moment when the Yeomen ship was launched.

The scene is a spacious hall with marble floors and a high vaulted ceiling. Diffused light barely trickles through the stained glass windows to sift down into the rarefied, mustily aristocratic atmosphere. A long, spit-polished table glistens dimly in the dull light, as do the distinguished, bald heads that surround it.

At one end of the table sits El Presidente Hernando Ian Macdonald, garbed augustly in a shocking pink, velvet, Pierre Cardin jerkin, a large medal of honor adorning his breast. To his left and right, along the length of the table, sits a group of stately septuagenarians. Each seem semi-consciously preoccupied,



seemingly unaware of the screams and shrieks of terror that echo outside the hall.

Suddenly, the sound of cruel laughter and footsteps that ring harsh and crystal clear. All eyes focus on two massive oak doors, emblazoned with a bas-relief of the goddess Diana in pursuit of a noble stag. Attention is concentrated.

The wooden portals yawn open. Framed in the doorway stands the Marquis de Sade, flanked by two ravishing, leather-clad females, each carrying a cat-o-nine tails. The Marquis, looking arrogant, cynical, deca-

dent and somewhat bored, struts into the chamber as everyone rises. He takes his place at the head of the table and after he is seated everyone sits down again. The ladies take their places behind the Marquis' chair and everyone is attentively silent waiting for de Sade to speak.

"Well! Are you all mute? What's on the agenda today swine!"

One of the old men stands. "Your excellency. We were to take up the question of naming the athletic teams at York University. Council has come up with a suggestion that you might

find to your liking, if I may?"

"Well, don't dawdle," rages the Marquis, "do you think I have all day? There are affairs of state!" The Marquis looks at his henchwomen, licks his lips and smiles adoringly.

"Your highness. After days of consultation and pain..."

"Get on with it you lout or I'll have you quartered and fed to my dogs!"

"Pardon, your excellency, pardon," the chairman sputters shakily. "Our suggestion was to name all of the teams the same. The name we found suitable was Yeomen and, of course, Yeowomen. A proper name for those who will serve the Marquis. And quaint illiteration too — York Yeomen, nice ring, don't you think?"

The Marquis ponders for a moment and then a twinkle appears in his eye. "Scuttlebug you old scum, I think you've hit on a dandy idea." The Marquis starts to chuckle, then laughs heartily. "Scuttlebug, I never thought you had it in you. For that only twenty lashes tonight."

"Your grace, I'm most hon..."

"Shut up, I wasn't finished," de Sade reprimands. He returns to his revelry. "I can just see it now. Those poor shmucks of sports editors having to hear the same crap over and over again. It will drive those jerks nuts," he chortles. He laughs furiously for several minutes, the tears trickling down his cheeks. Finally his hysteria subsides.

"Well, that's settled! What next Scuttlecrud?"

"The use of jockstraps your honor. We feel they should be compulsory for obvious rea..."

"I'll have no such thing," storms the Marquis.

The scene fades.



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