

Sing When You're Winning

**A musical play in one act
for youth groups**

**Text & lyrics by Mark Rees
Music composed by Gordon Mundie**

Spotlight Publications

Sing When You're Winning

CAST (in order of appearance)

Billy, the manager

Anita, the coach

THE TEAM

Mel

Sarah

Sharon

Rachel

Tracy

Lizzie

Maggie

Alice

Haley

Cath

Bernie, a 13 year-old girl

Beryl, Bernie's pal

Michael, a would-be photographer

Spike, Michael's assistant

George, a 13 year-old boy

Assistant Referee (non-speaking)

SET - a football dressing-room, and a dugout

TIME - present

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MUSICAL NUMBERS

Music composed by Gordon Mundie

Lyrics by Mark Rees

1. "We're Here At Last" (Ensemble)
2. "The Manager's Lament" (Billy)
3. "Why Am I Misunderstood?" (Michael)
4. "The Manager's Lament" (Reprise)
5. "We're Here At Last" (Reprise)

For information on the score, please apply to Spotlight for terms.

Scene 1

The play is set in a dressing room at a municipal football ground

There are benches and a centre rail with coat hooks on. Later the very front of the stage is used as the edge of the pitch. An assistant referee should be present on the touch line during the "match" bits

It is the final between two all-female football teams, Eckleston United and Midway Rovers (who are never seen)

As the lights come up we see the Eckleston United girls (all aged 15/16) sitting around, already changed into their football strips, they are getting a "team talk" from their manager, Billy, and the coach, Anita

Billy is a fifteen-year-old boy who takes the role of manager very seriously; he equates it with managing Manchester United. Anita is not a very good coach but nobody else would do it. She idolises Billy

There are two much younger girls (eleven-year-olds) hanging about the dressing room; they are keen supporters "dying" for a game

Song 1

Billy Listen, everybody, I know I don't really need to tell you how important it is to be in the cup final this afternoon. This is an historic moment for you and for Eckleston United Football Club. We may only be a small school team but the Norman Blinkthorpe Trophy is our World Cup. I know you'll do your best to try and win. So let's make it a game of two halves and if you give a hundred and ten percent, I'll be able to say at the end of the game, "The girls done good". I know we can beat Midway Rovers. We've done it before and we can do it again. Now listen up, while I read the team sheet. As your manager, I've tried to be fair to everyone and pick the strongest side possible.

Anita *(blowing her whistle)* He's tried to be fair to everyone and pick the strongest side possible.

Billy Thank you, coach.

Anita That's okay, Billy.

Billy Right, in goal will be. . . .

Mel I expect it's just the usual team?

Billy It might not be!

Mel It will be. We've only got eleven players.

Sharon Yeah, get on with it!

Tracy You'd think he was picking the national team the way he's going on, not an all-girls school team.

Billy It has still got to be done properly, so if you don't mind shutting up, I'll get on with it.

Sharon I thought he was only the temporary manager until Mr Saunders came back?

Tracy He was but Mr Saunders isn't coming back. He's getting married.

Sharon Never! Who to?

Tracy You know the woman who works in the florist's? Does all the flower arranging and things?

Sharon Yeah.

Tracy Well, you know she's got a sister who works for that building society in Castle Street?

Sharon Yeah.

Tracy Well he's marrying her cousin. And she's ten years older than he is!

Sharon Yuck, that's obscene. He must be at least thirty five.

Tracy I know, you can't imagine "oldies" "doing it" can you?

Sharon Oh shut up, Trace! That makes me feel sick.

Billy You both make me sick! Now can I please get on with the team.

Sharon No need to get stroppy. I was only saying.

Billy Well don't.

Tracy Ooh, he's lovely when he's angry, isn't he, Sharon?

Anita Stop it, you two, or it'll be twenty press-ups each.

Both (*sarcastically*) Sorry, coach.

Anita I should think so. This is a big day for us, so don't spoil it.

Maggie (*clutching a cigarette*) Anyone got a light? I left my lighter in Jingles night-club last night.

Billy You can't smoke in here! In fact you shouldn't be smoking at all. Not before a final anyway.

He takes the cigarette off her and throws it on the floor

Beryl sneaks a look at Bernie, quickly picks it up and puts it behind her ear for later

You were all supposed to go to bed early last night, not go out clubbing. This is an important fixture; the honour of Eckleston United is at stake.

Maggie I wasn't that late.

Billy How late?

Maggie I got in at two o'clock.

Billy Two o'clock! No wonder you look terrible.

Maggie Oh thanks. If a girl can't have a few drinks to relax then there's something wrong with the world.

Billy How many drinks?

Maggie For God's sake it's like being at home. I only had eight vodkas.

Billy Eight vodkas!

Maggie And five lagers.

Billy Five lagers!

Maggie I was thirsty.

Billy You shouldn't have had anything to drink at all, and you should definitely have been in bed earlier.

Sharon Normally if she's not in bed by twelve she goes home. Isn't that right, Maggie?

Maggie Shut it you.

Sharon and Tracy laugh

Maggie And can you all keep the noise down. I've got a splitting headache.

Billy Headache! That's great. What if you have to head the ball during the game?

Maggie I can't do that today.

Billy But you're our centre forward!

Maggie All right, look I'll take something for it. Give me some time to myself and I'll be raring to go, I promise.

Billy You'd better be! Right, back to the team list.

Anita (*blowing her whistle*) Back to the team list.

Billy gives her a look

Billy In goals, Mandy. . . .

Haley Sorry, Billy, it's not going to happen.

Billy What do you mean?

Haley She's not coming.

Billy Why not?

Haley She got arrested last night.

Billy She wasn't soliciting again, was she?

Haley No, shoplifting. She was caught in the all-night shop with a hundred Benson and Hedges down her bra.

Billy Well this is great. Here we are poised to kick off the most important match we've ever played in and we haven't got a goal keeper. *(Pause)* How did she get a hundred fags down her bra? I wouldn't have thought there was room! Anyway it's really inconvenient; she's so selfish.

Sarah What about giving Kylie a ring? She played in goal for us last season.

Anita She's five months pregnant!

Sarah I'd forgotten that. At least she'd fill the goalmouth!

Anita Don't be so nasty.

Rachel What about Joanne? She's out on bail.

Anita No, she broke her leg falling off the roof of that shop she was burgling.

Sarah Mary?

Anita Had the baby last week.

Rachel Samantha?

Anita She's a possibility.

Billy Nah, she ran off with the art teacher, don't you remember? Her mother had a postcard from Ibiza explaining how "she loves him and that she was starting a new life with the man she adores". *(Pause)* This is a disaster, the only answer is for one of you lot to go in goal and we'll try and find an outfield player from somewhere.

Bernie and Beryl, the two eleven-year-olds push forward, seeing their chance

Bernie One of us could play. We're really good. We wouldn't let you down, would we, Beryl?

Beryl shakes her head

Perhaps one of us could play in the first half and one in the second? We've played before. We have been to all your games; we know how you play. It would be a great chance for us, wouldn't it Beryl? *(Beryl nods her head)* We wouldn't be any bother. Oh please, Billy, it would mean so much to us.

Billy No, sorry.

Haley I'm not playing in goal.

Sarah Nor me.

Rachel Certainly not.

Mel I've never played in goal.

Lizzie Nor me.

Alice Me neither.

Cath I can't do it.

Sharon Might break a nail wearing those gloves.

Tracy No way. That ball's heavy if it hits you.

Maggie I won't do it either.

Billy Well somebody's got to do it.

They all look at Anita

Anita Oh no, not me. I'm happy being the coach but I'm no goalkeeper. I'm forever dropping things at home, you ask my mum. Butterfingers is my middle name. I couldn't possibly do it.

Billy Well that's it then. We'll have to cancel the game. This is pathetic. After all the hard work I've put into this club. You were nothing until I took over. Nothing. You were bottom of the Eastern County Second Division, but with my hard work and persistence you are where you are today, at a cup final. I thought we had a chance to pick up the silverware but now.

Sharon There may be a way.

Billy What do you mean?

Sharon Do you trust me?

Billy Not as far as I could throw you.

Sharon Good, I've got a plan. I think we can pull it off. I need you to come to my house. It's not far, and we can be there and back in ten minutes.

Billy What are we going to your house for?

Sharon You'll see. You want a goalkeeper, don't you?

Billy Of course!

Sharon Well come on then, no more questions. I'll explain it all on the way. Oh come on, Billy. It's for the good of the club.

Billy It better be.

Sharon If we hurry up we'll be back ages before the kick-off.

Billy All right. But this better be good.

Sharon It is, trust me. You better come as well, Trace.

Tracy I'm right behind you.

The three of them exit

Haley Do you know what's going on, coach?

Anita No, but I really don't trust those two. I mean Billy's such an innocent when it comes to women.

Sarah He won't be so innocent when those two have finished with him!

Anita There's no need for that sort of talk. Billy's not like that, he's saving himself for the right girl.

Cath Who's that, you?

Anita blushes deeply

All (*chanting*) Anita fancies Billy, Anita fancies Billy etc.

Anita blows her whistle, and they stop

Mel What do we do if they don't get back in time?

Lizzie We'd definitely have to call the game off then.

Alice Well let's hope they can sort out a goalie for us.

All Yeah.

Anita gives a sharp blast on her whistle

Anita Right you lot, outside. It's about time we did a warm-up and I also want to look at our free kick options. We'll take some corners as well.

Maggie Do we have to?

Anita You want to win this final, don't you?

All Yeah, suppose so, *etc.*

Anita Well then come on. Light jog. One, two, three, four.

They exit unenthusiastically with Anita blowing her whistle

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Plot Summary

It's Cup Final Day, and the Blinkthorpe Trophy is up for grabs. The girls of Eckleston United are geared up ready for the titanic struggle. Unfortunately their goalie, Mandy, has been nicked for shoplifting. And that's only for starters. Join manager Billy, coach Anita, and the girls in their quest for glory. Will they triumph despite overwhelming odds? And who are Bernie and Beryl?

Mark Rees' lively and humorous text combine with Gordon Mundie's upbeat and melodic songs to make ideal material for a large teenage cast.

Duration: approx. 40 minutes