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Varsity report #ultraslife

By: Gursimran Hans

Everything written below is completely true and definitely 100% matches reality.

This was the big day, the moment that we'd been waiting for a whole year.

Varsity – a must see event for any proper ultra, a day full of sports, going hammer and tong with another university – in this case, Kingston.

My first opponent, if you will, of the day was CitySport's barriers. Neither of the small silver gates would let me in. I wondered if I was under some sort of banning order.

Turns out, I had to sign on and the gates only worked if you were a gym member. You see when I go to the gym, the gym sweats.

After getting through that encounter unscathed, I went down a flight of stairs, manoeuvred across past the changing rooms and emerged at the bleachers.

I sat down in the first spare seat I could find. Amazingly, it took about five minutes for me to work out I was sitting amongst Kingston's travelling support. None of them dared say a word to me, an obvious outsider, probably out of fear, but, I mean they did travel away, so fair play.

I walked over the stand to take my seat in Curva Journalismo with the rest of ultras.

Ok, none of them had turned up yet, but they were coming. I'm sure.

It then turned out; I had bought the wrong bag. Hoping to whip out a flair, smoke grenade and bullhorn, I was to find a Ploughman's Baguette, Kettle Crisps and Diet Pepsi.

I would have to get a bit creative with my ultra-chanting it seemed. I did find solace in the Ploughman's Baguette or as I like to call it The Brexit Sandwich.

I considered taking my top off, but it was warm indoors so that wouldn't have looked intimidating (what do you mean they'd have found my tummy flab funny?!)

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The first event I would see was girls' volleyball or as I like to call it, group tennis with hands. Being someone who did not understand the rules, this was a tad problematic. City won though, of course they did.

There were some mascot on mascot scuffles, featuring City's Wolf and Kingston's Cougar. Please, the only cougar I've found intimidating was that blonde one with an Essex accent, smoking a cigarette outside Cargo.

Turns out shouting, "kick her in the face!" is frowned upon nowadays. Snowflakes, the lot of them.

At this point, I was beginning to realise Varsity was very MLS. Free popcorn and chants of "It's all gone quiet over there", what ever happened to tins of Bovril and a good old "You're going to get you f*cking heads kicked in"?

Upon reflecting, I guess this is why I was alone in the Curva, definitely not something irrelevant like my body odour or personality.

The next two events were basketball; you know that sport for tall and fast people. Girls were up first and won 80-40, I must say, the speed and the movement on display was something I did expect to see, every now and then I'd glance at the scoreboard and was reminded that Kingston actually has fans.

The boys basketball started early. Loads of people were late as a result. You see you always get in early to soak in the atmosphere and get frenzied before the start. You don't drink or smoke either as that makes you weak. It definitely has nothing to do with the fact I probably couldn't handle liquor and am I bit of a wet lettuce, and if anyone says otherwise, I'll be sending them a strongly worded direct message.

The boys absolutely smashed it too and this led to the moment we all wanted to see. The lifting of the cup, something you spend years dreaming about. As the sea of noise in the crowd was building throughout the basketball events, reaching a tense climax, it exploded in an outpour of joy, when the cup was lifted.

All the hard work, effort and determination was all worth it. You don't realise how hard it was for me to get the time of work to come down and watch.

(If you've got to this point, we sure hope you've worked out this was an attempt at satire)

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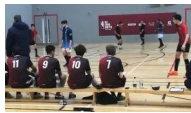
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April 2018 (4) March 2018 (20) February 2018 (15) December 2017 (15) November 2017 (16) October 2017 (17)	April 2017 (3) March 2017 (13) February 2017 (25) January 2017 (23) December 2016 (9) October 2016 (1)
--	---

April 2018

M	T	W	T	F	S	S
						1
2	3	4	5	6	7	8
9	10	11	12	13	14	15
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
23	24	25	26	27	28	29
30						
« Mar						