

ROY OF THE ROVERS™



KICK-OFF

ROB WILLIAMS
BEN WILLISHER







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KICK-OFF

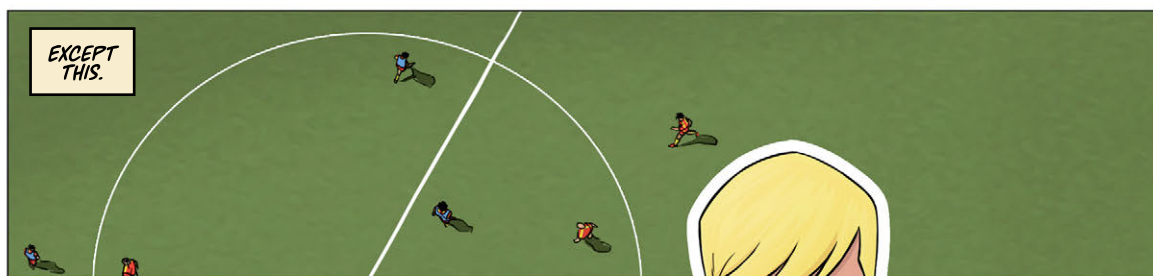
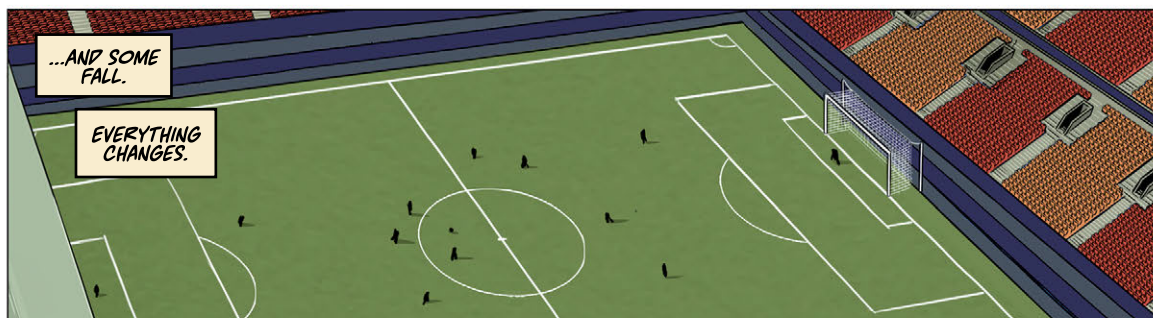
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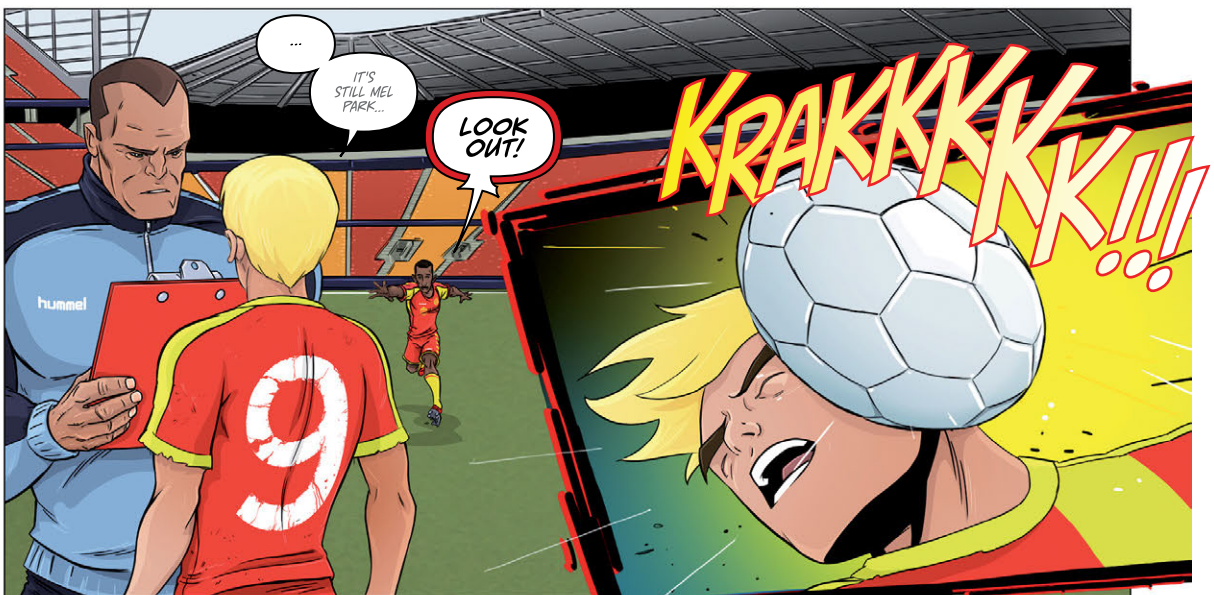
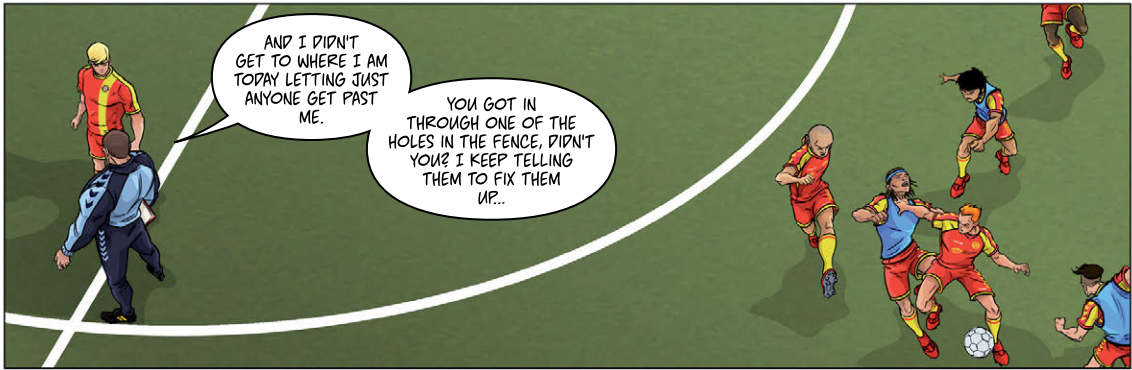
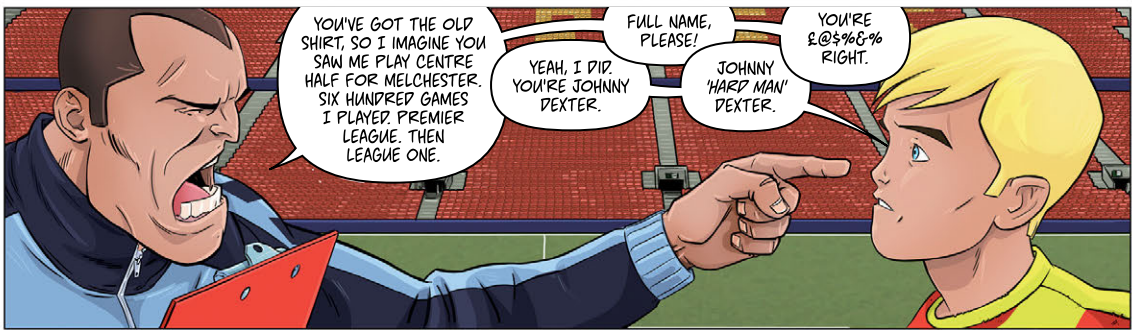
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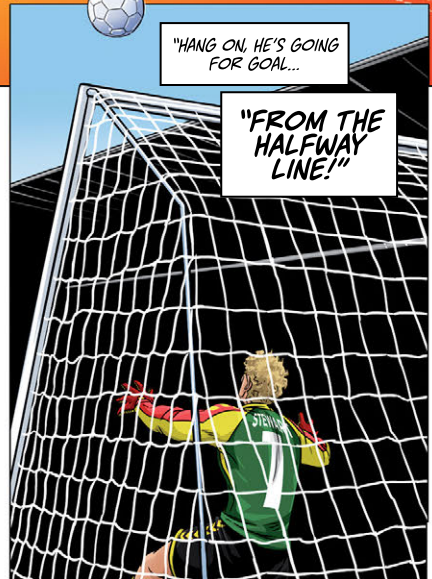
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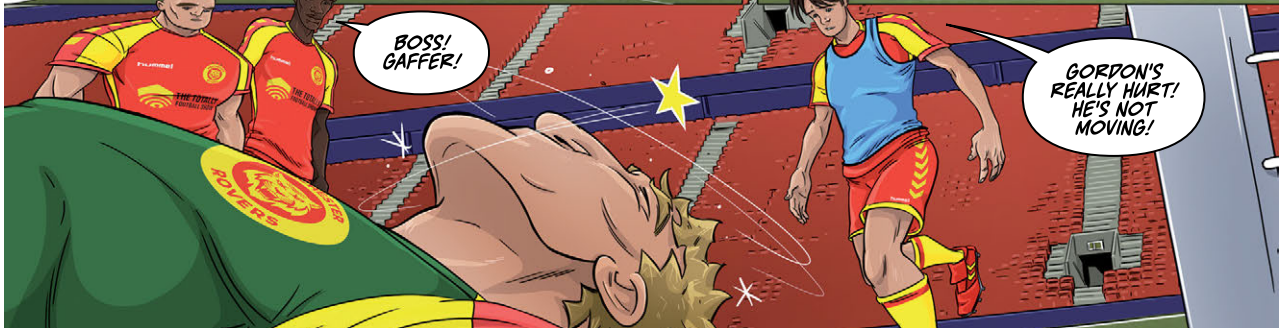
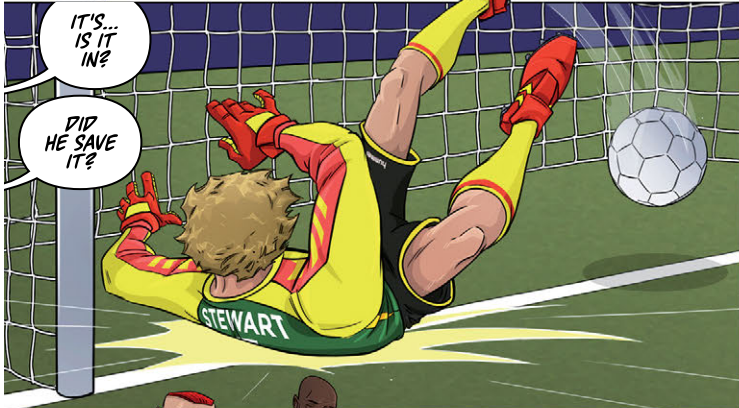
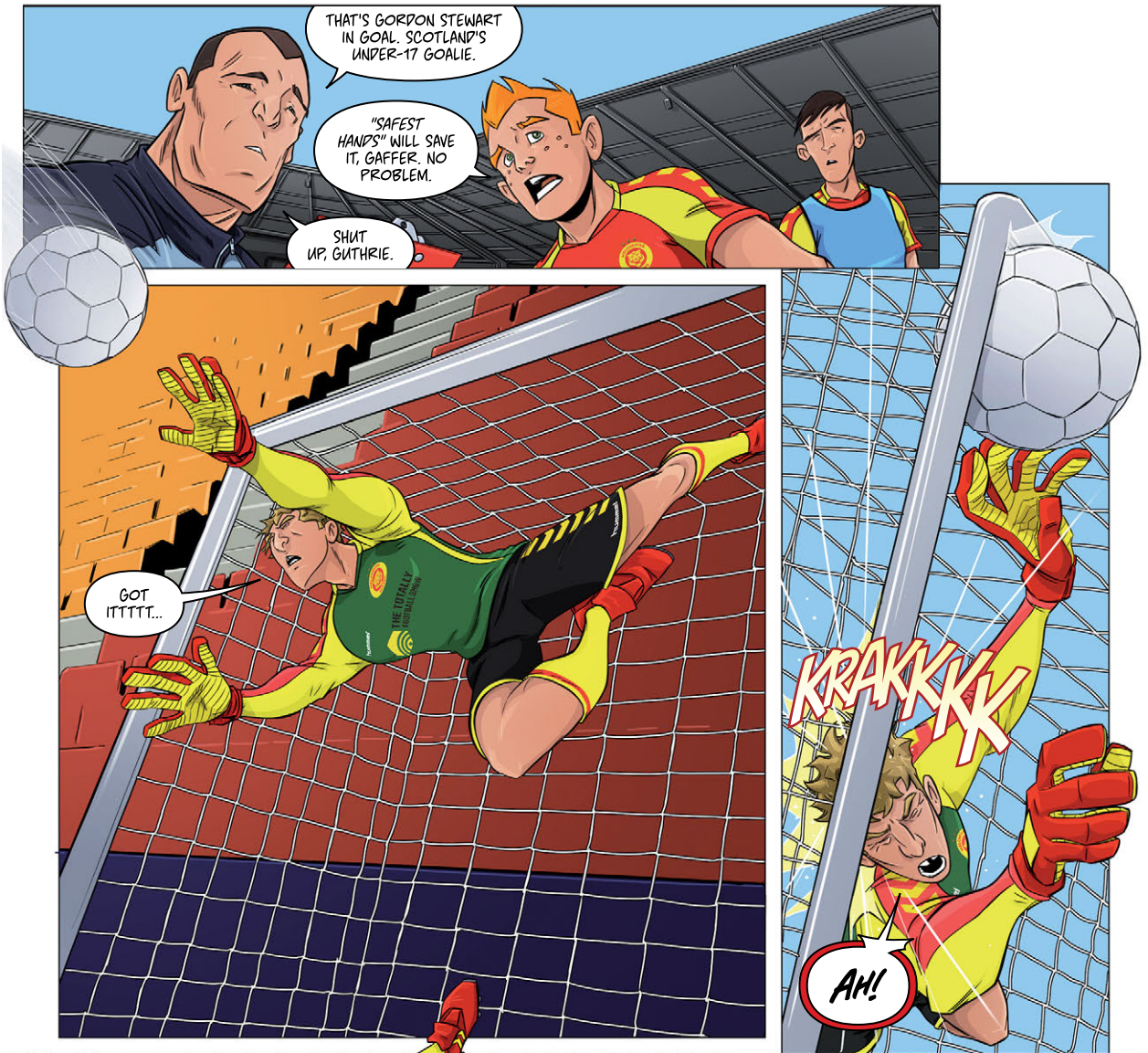
Art
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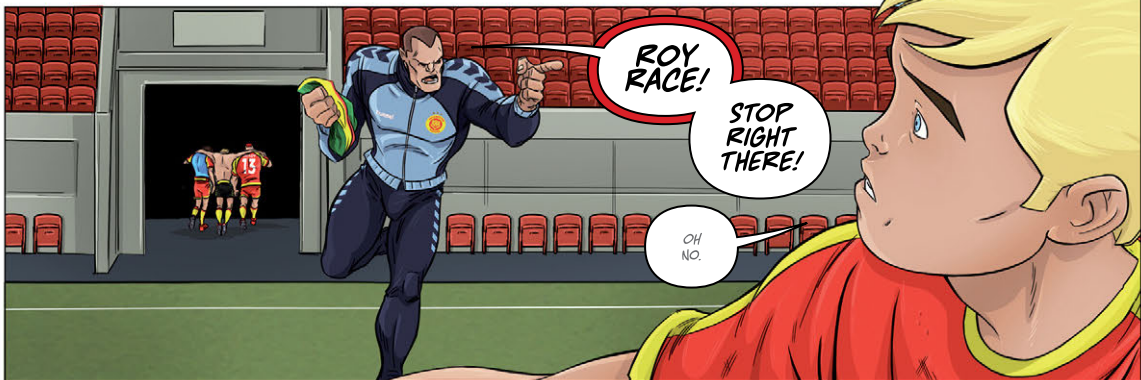
Letters
JIM CAMPBELL











YES!

I'M A STRIKER, GAFFER. I SCORED A HAT TRICK FOR GRIMROYD IN THE SECOND HALF OF THE MOOR CUP FINAL! I CAN PLAY IN THE HOLE TOO, I WON'T LET YOU DOWN, I SWEAR!

YES, YES. GOOD FOR YOU. YOU'RE PLAYING IN GOAL.

OOOOF.. WHAT?

IT'S A GOALIE I'M SHORT OF. THANKS TO YOU. POOR DEAD GORDON. WHO YOU KILLED. YOU'RE IN GOAL.

BUT...

I'M NOT A GOALIE! I'M RUBBISH IN GOAL!

THEN THIS TRIAL ISN'T GOING TO GO WELL FOR YOU, IS IT LAD?

NOW, THIS GRACEFUL, FAST, ENORMOUSLY SKILFUL BOY COMING TOWARDS YOU WITH THE BALL IS PACO DIAZ. HE'S FROM ZARAGOSA IN SPAIN.

I SUGGEST YOU STOP HIM SCORING IF YOU WANT TO STAY WITH MELCHESTER ROVERS!

OK...

GETHIM
GETHIMGETHIM
GETHIM..

GETTTTTT...



AH...



SORRY, SENOR!



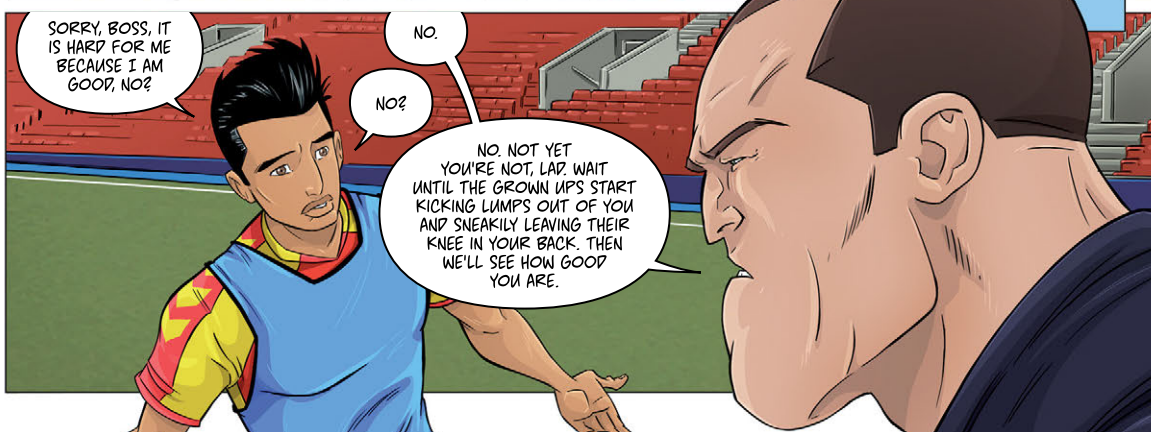
YOU MISSED ME, I THINK, NO?

PERHAPS NEXT TIME, MY FRIEND...



DO IT AGAIN!

AND STOP BEING SUCH A FLASH GIT, DIAZ!



SORRY, BOSS, IT IS HARD FOR ME BECAUSE I AM GOOD, NO?

NO.

NO?

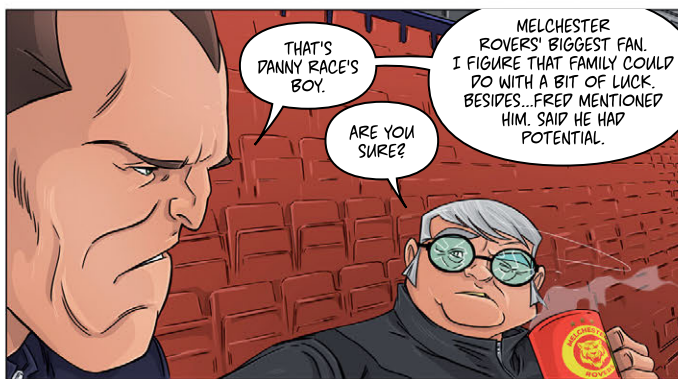
NO. NOT YET YOU'RE NOT, LAD. WAIT UNTIL THE GROWN UPS START KICKING LUMPS OUT OF YOU AND SNEAKILY LEAVING THEIR KNEE IN YOUR BACK. THEN WE'LL SEE HOW GOOD YOU ARE.





I'VE KNOWN YOU LONG ENOUGH TO KNOW THERE'S USUALLY A REASON FOR YOU EMOTIONALLY BULLYING A PROSPECT.

YOU DON'T BOTHER WITH THE ONES WHO DON'T INTEREST YOU.



THAT'S DANNY RACE'S BOY.

ARE YOU SURE?

MELCHESTER ROVERS' BIGGEST FAN. I FIGURE THAT FAMILY COULD DO WITH A BIT OF LUCK. BESIDES...FRED MENTIONED HIM. SAID HE HAD POTENTIAL.

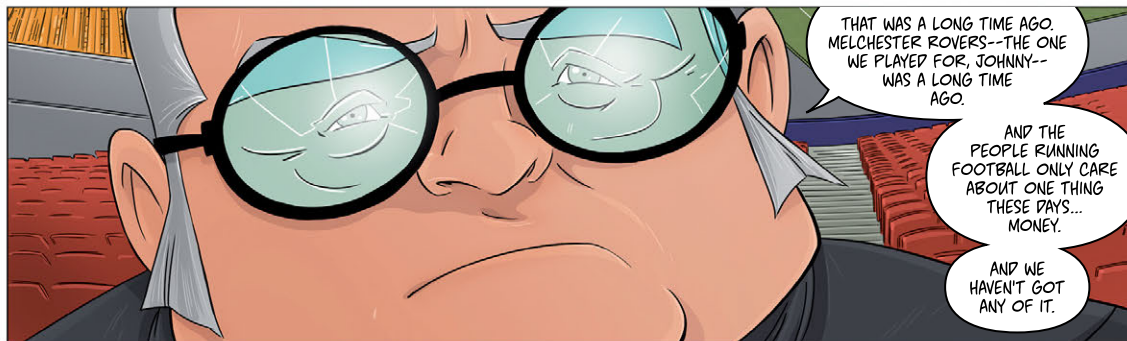


WELL, FRED KNOWS HIS STUFF. I HOPE HE'S GOOD. WE'RE GOING TO NEED THE YOUNGSTERS, JOHNNY. SOON.

NOW, IF YOU'LL EXCUSE ME, I'VE GOT ANOTHER DEPRESSING BOARD MEETING TO GO SIT IN ON.

YOU'RE STILL THE MANAGER, RIGHT? THEY CAN'T FIRE YOU AFTER FOUR GAMES OF THE SEASON!

YOU'RE A LEGEND AT THIS CLUB! YOU'RE THE MIGHTY MOUSE!



THAT WAS A LONG TIME AGO. MELCHESTER ROVERS--THE ONE WE PLAYED FOR, JOHNNY-- WAS A LONG TIME AGO.

AND THE PEOPLE RUNNING FOOTBALL ONLY CARE ABOUT ONE THING THESE DAYS... MONEY.

AND WE HAVEN'T GOT ANY OF IT.



WHAT IDIOT SUGGESTED YOU PLAY IN GOAL, RACE?

WHAT... YOU DID...

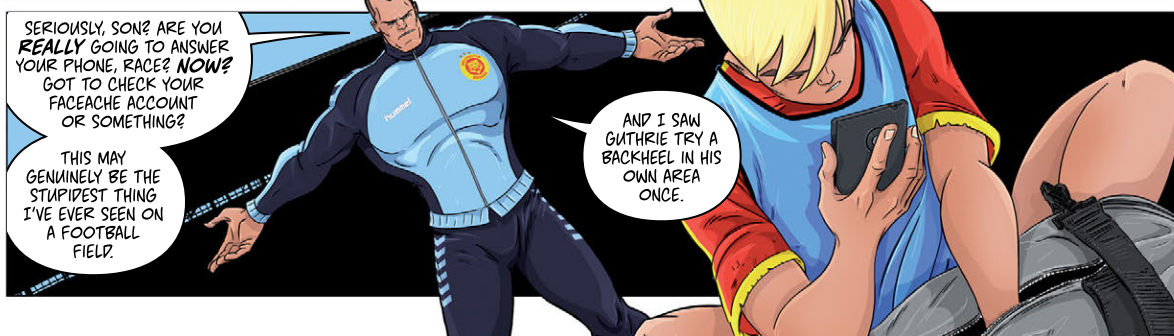
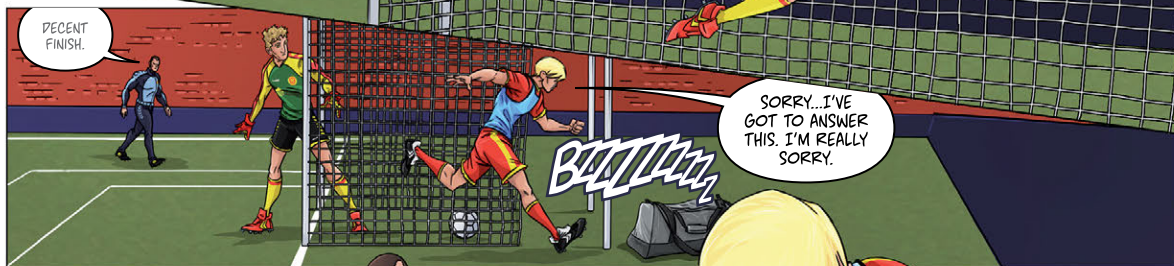
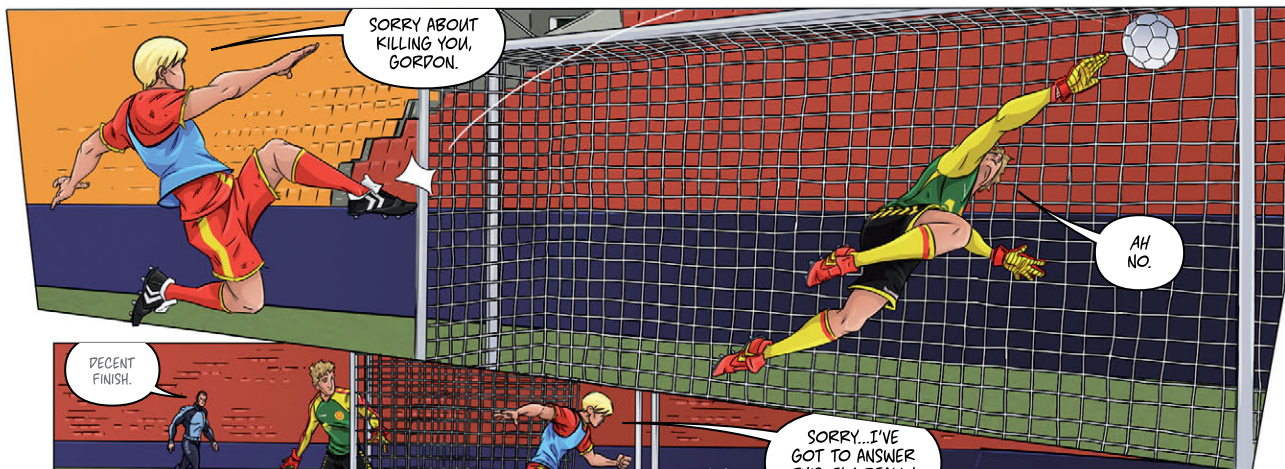
GORDON STEWART'S ALIVE, OUR PHYSIO TELLS ME. GIVE HIM BACK HIS GOALIE'S SHIRT.

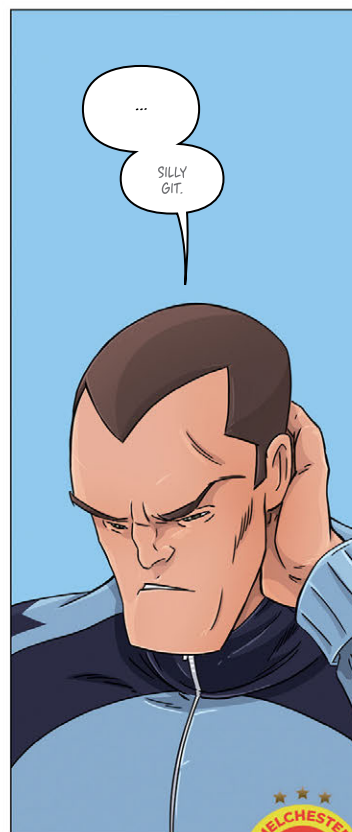


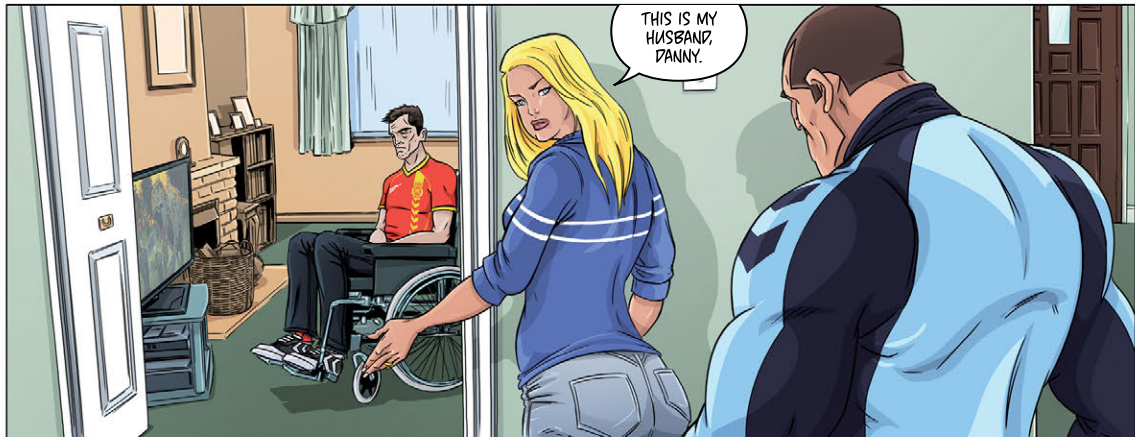
I'LL GIVE YOU THE LAST TEN MINUTES UP FRONT, RACE. SHOW US WHAT YOU CAN DO.

REALLY?

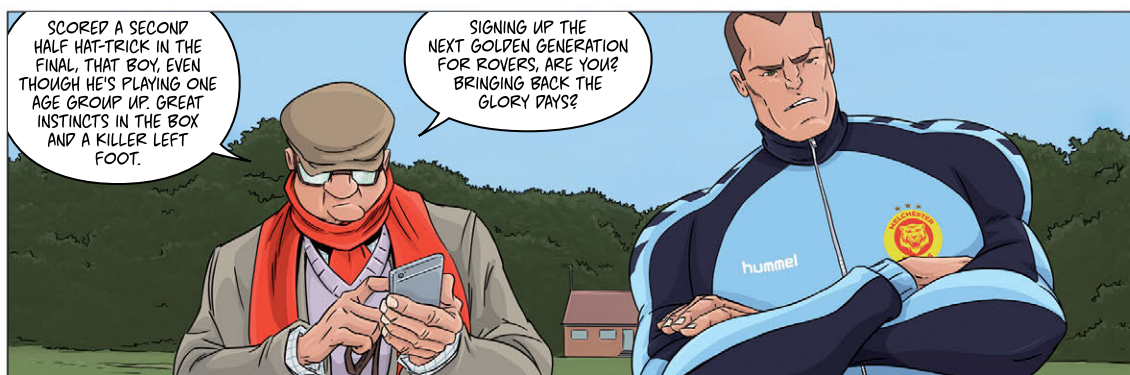
THANKS. I'LL NOT LET YOU DOWN, GAFFER!

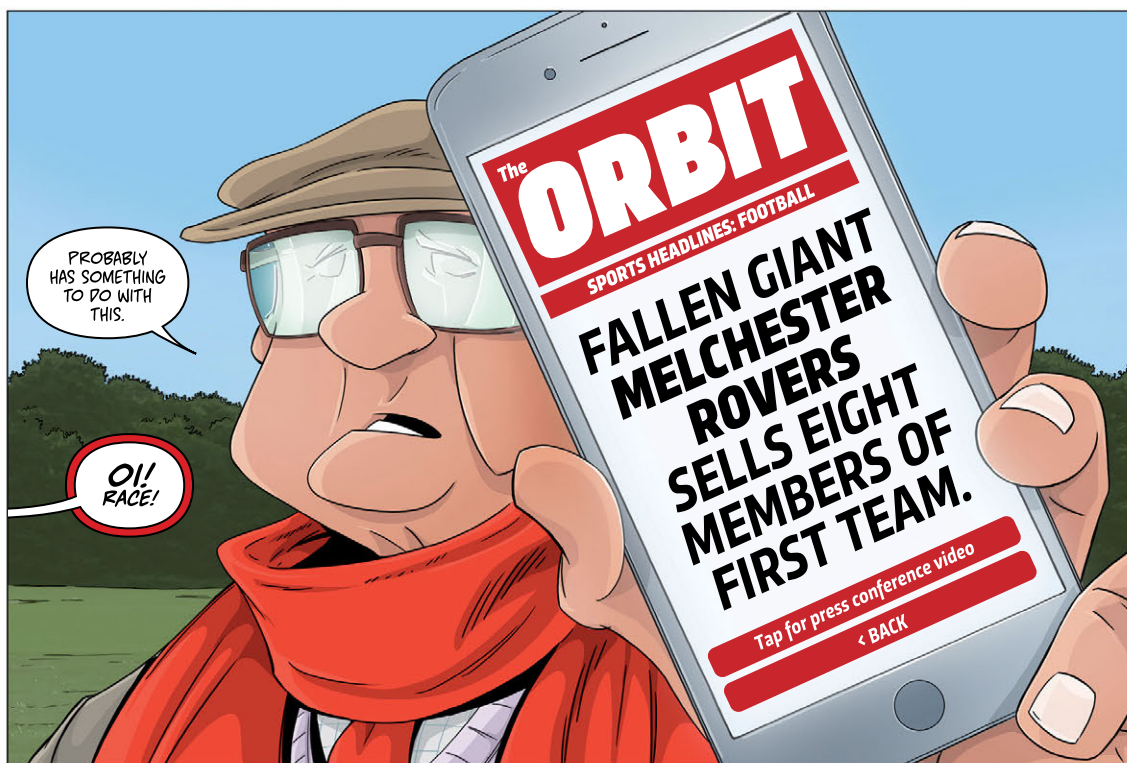
















LONG WAY
TO GO, ROY
RACE.

DON'T
GET CARRIED
AWAY.



THE FALL
FROM GRACE OF
THE ONCE-GREAT
**MELCHESTER
ROVERS**
CONTINUES.

ONCE ONE
OF THE PREMIER
CLUBS IN ENGLISH FOOTBALL,
REGULARLY CHALLENGING FOR
TROPHIES, RECENT YEARS HAVE
SEEN FINANCIAL TROUBLES
AND RELEGATION AFTER
RELEGATION.



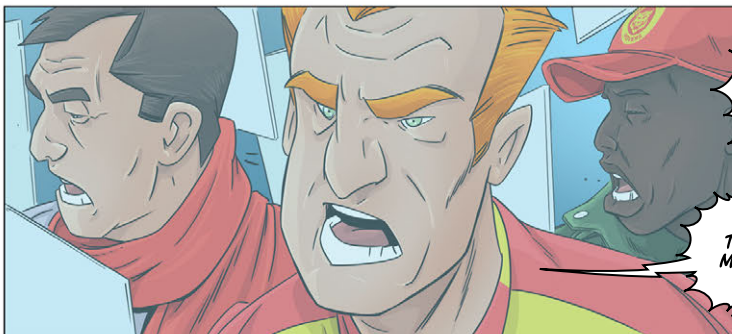
NOW, AFTER
LOSING THE FIRST FOUR
GAMES OF THE NEW SEASON, AND
WITH FANS DISTRAUGHT AT THE STATE
OF THE CLUB, IT APPEARS THINGS
ARE ABOUT TO GET EVEN WORSE
FOR THE ROVERS.

EIGHT MEMBERS
OF THE MELCHESTER FIRST
TEAM HAVE BEEN SOLD IN WHAT
CRITICS ARE DESCRIBING AS A
'CUT-PRICE FIRE SALE BY OWNER
BARRY 'THE MEAT' CLEAVER.



KEVIN MOUSE
WAS ONE OF THE BEST
STRIKERS THIS CLUB'S EVER SEEN
BUT THAT DOESN'T MEAN HE'S A
GOOD MANAGER, AND NOW
THIS?

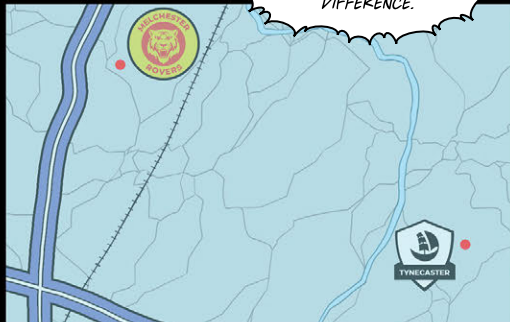
HOW CAN
WE STAY UP AFTER
THIS? THEY'VE SOLD OFF
MOST OF OUR FIRST TEAM!
WE'VE GOT NO MONEY,
MAN!



WE'RE GONNA
GET RELEGATED! WE'LL
FLY DOWN THE LEAGUES
LIKE THIS. BE OUT OF
BUSINESS IN NO
TIME!

THIS IS
THE END OF
MELCHESTER
ROVERS!

AND WHAT MAKES THINGS WORSE FOR ROVERS FANS IS THE RISE IN FORTUNES OF LOCAL RIVALS **TYNECASTER**, WHO CURRENTLY SIT ATOP THE PREMIER LEAGUE ON GOAL DIFFERENCE.



BOUGHT BY SAUDI PRINCE BASSAM SIRAJ ANTOHN JUST TWO YEARS AGO, TYNECASTER HAVE BROUGHT SOME OF THE WORLD'S BEST PLAYERS TO THE PREMIER LEAGUE.

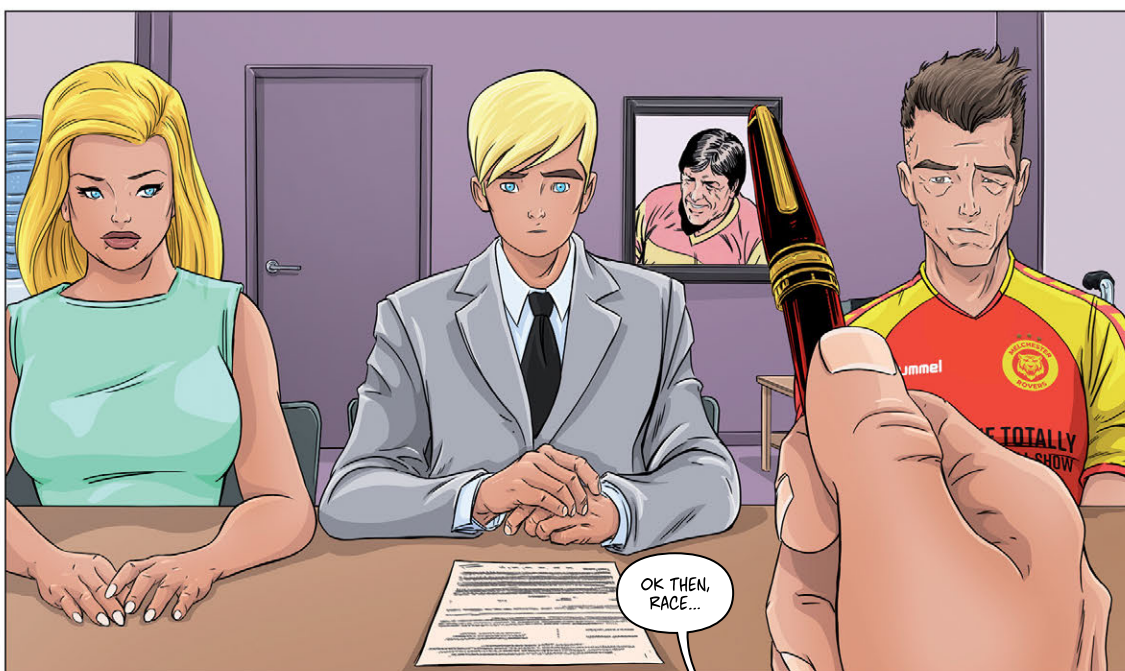


THE LATEST ADDITION? £175 MILLION BRAZILLIAN SUPERSTAR STRIKER **HUGO**, AS REVEALED JUST PRIOR TO THE TRANSFER WINDOW CLOSING.

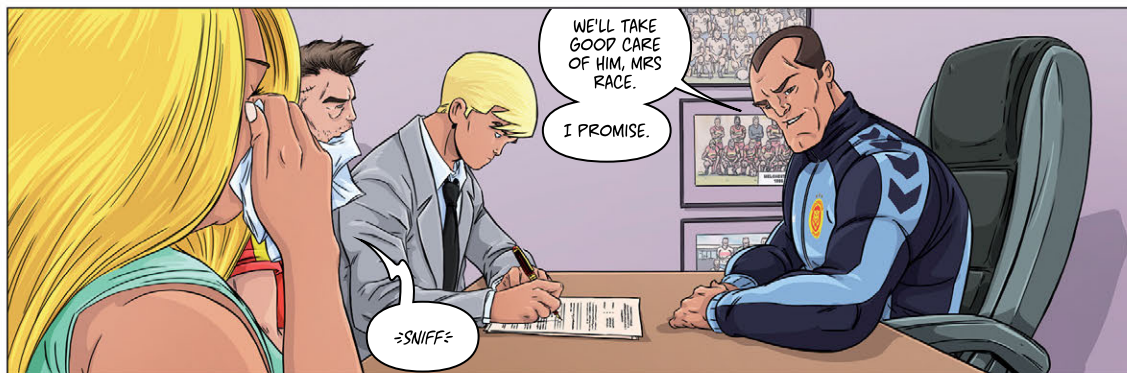
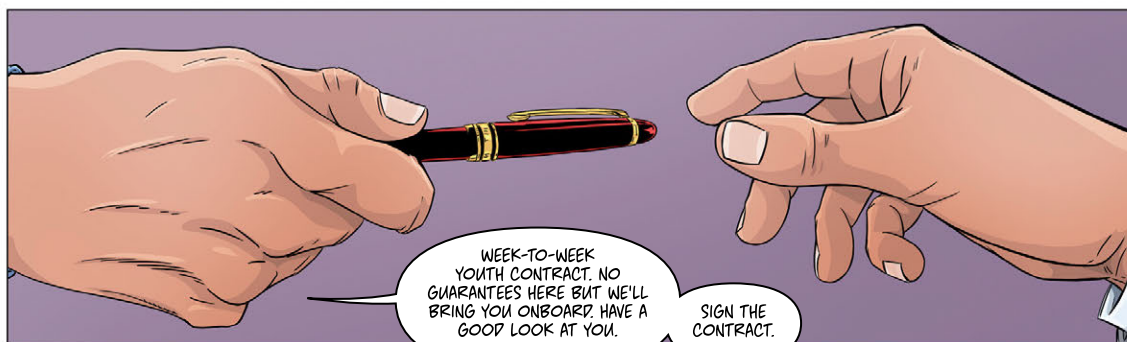


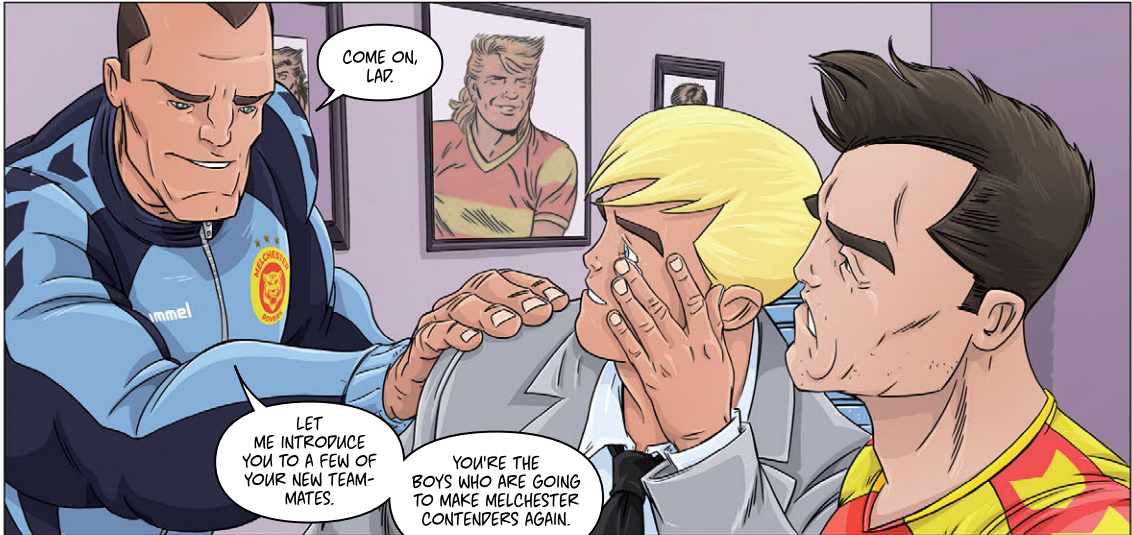
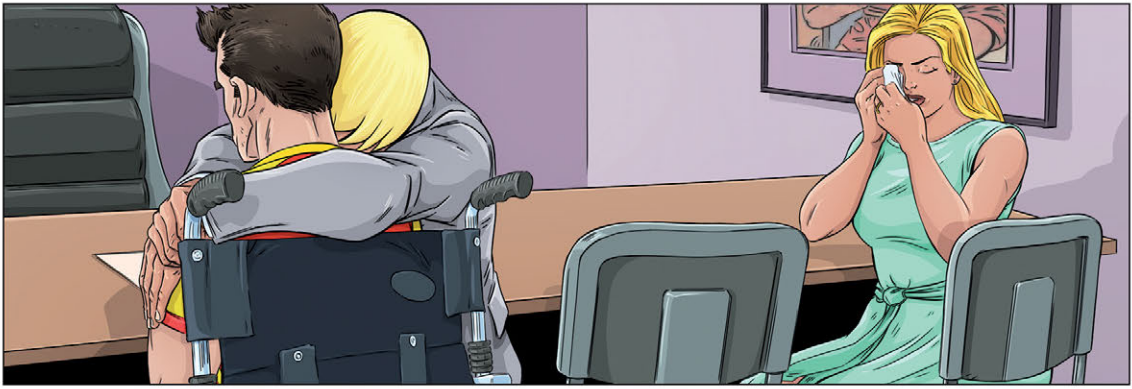
I VERY PLEASED TO JOIN THE TYNECASTER AND COME HERE BECAUSE WE WANT WIN **CHAMPIONS LEAGUE!**

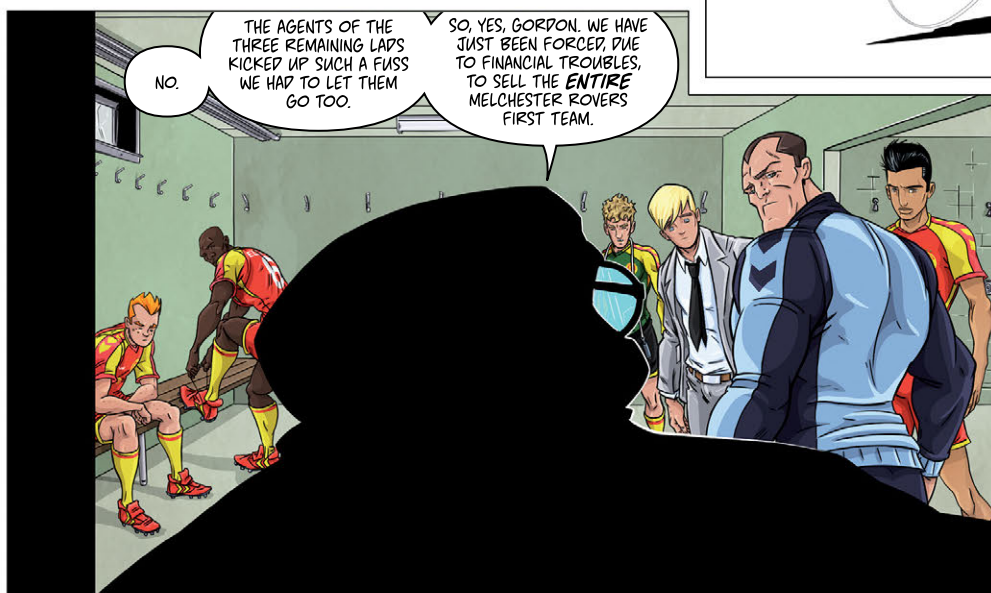
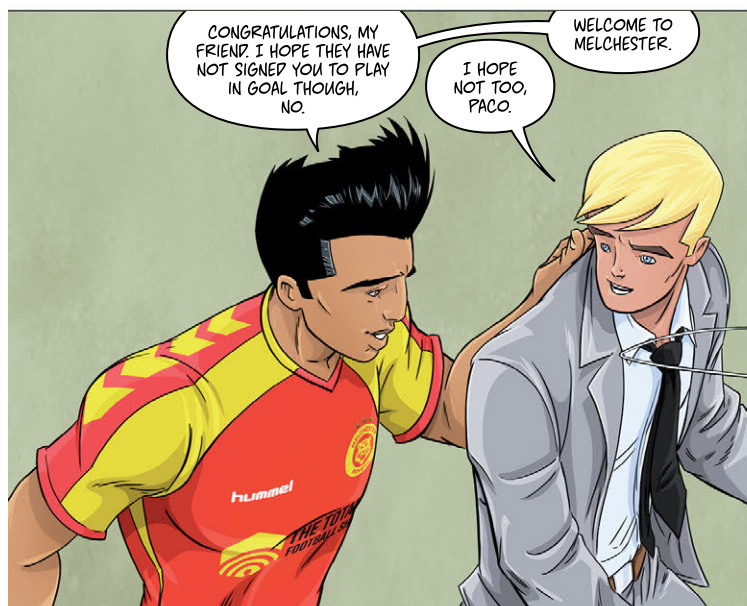
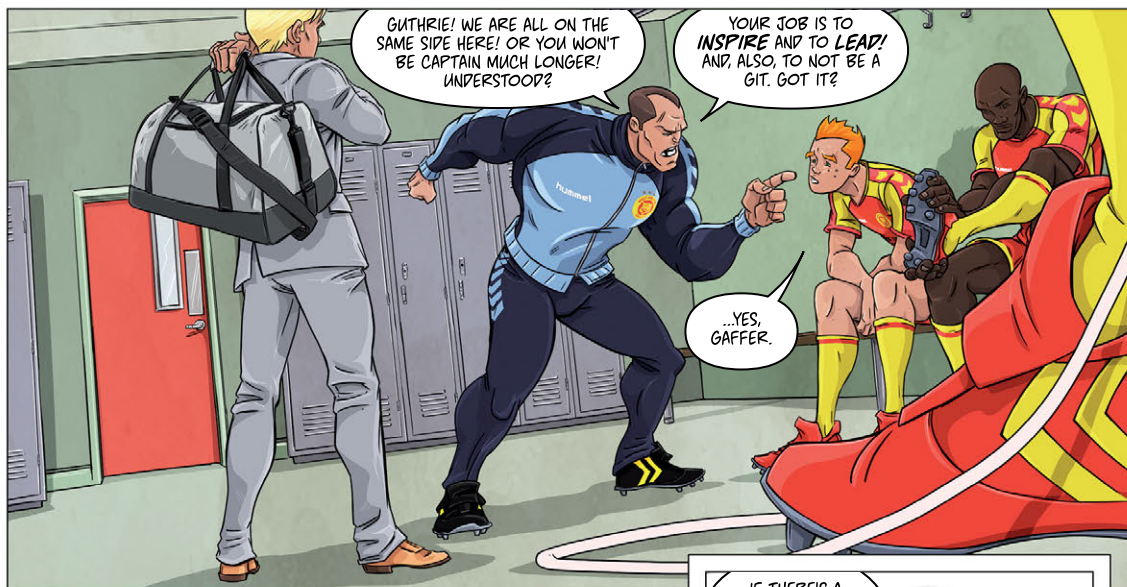
YAYYYYYY!

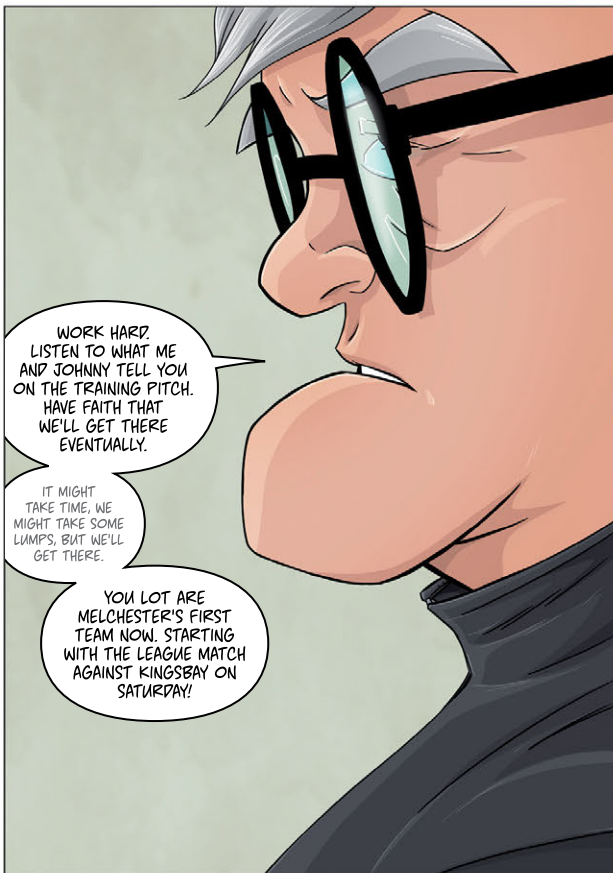


OK THEN, RACE...



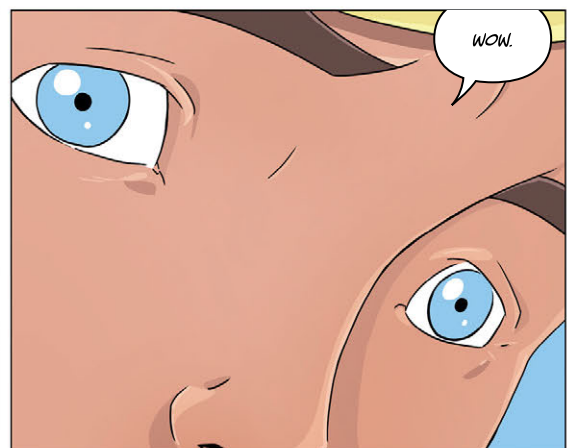
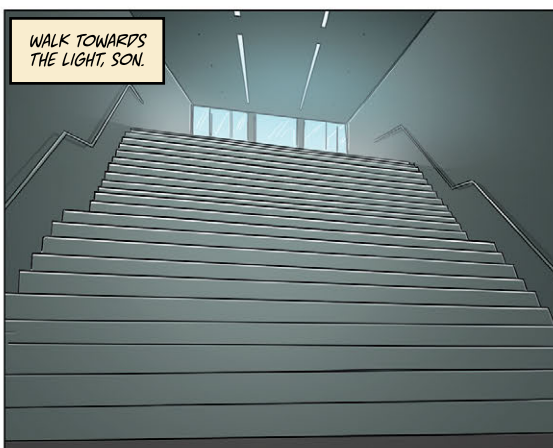
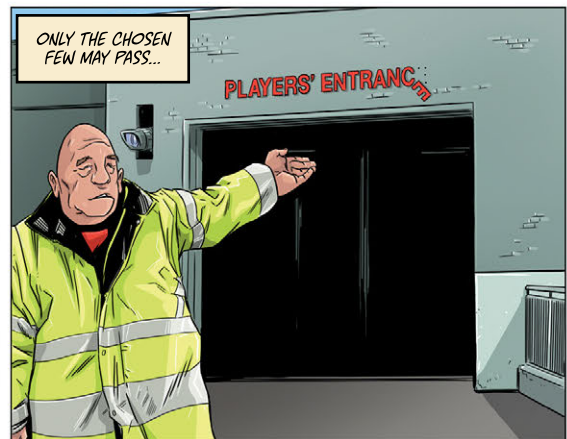
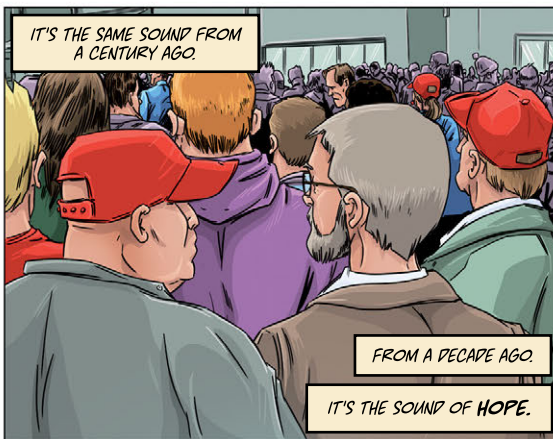
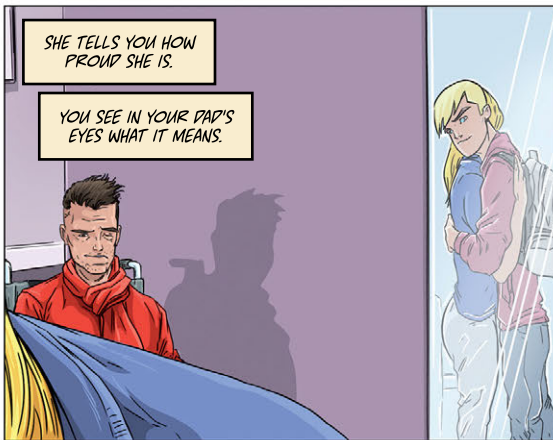
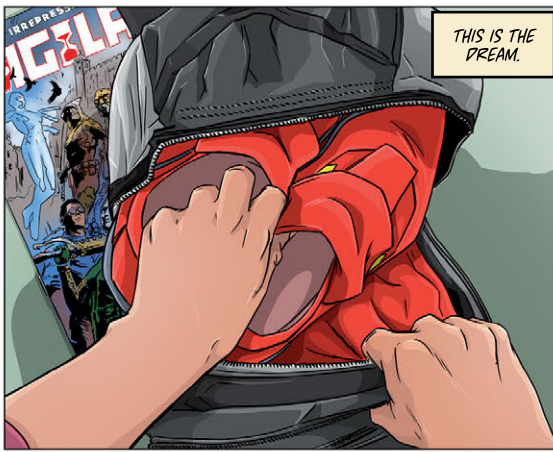






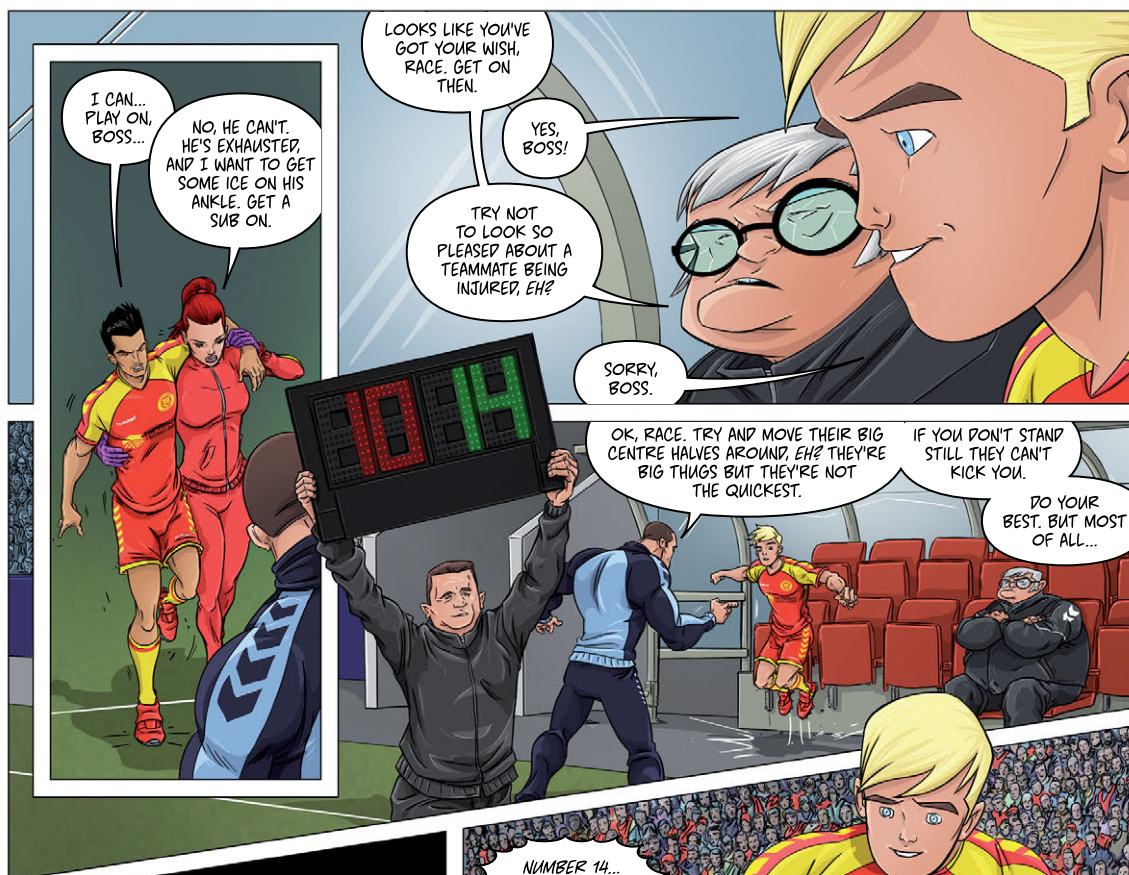


HALF TIME!
GO HAVE AN ORANGE SLICE AND A DRINK OF WATER!

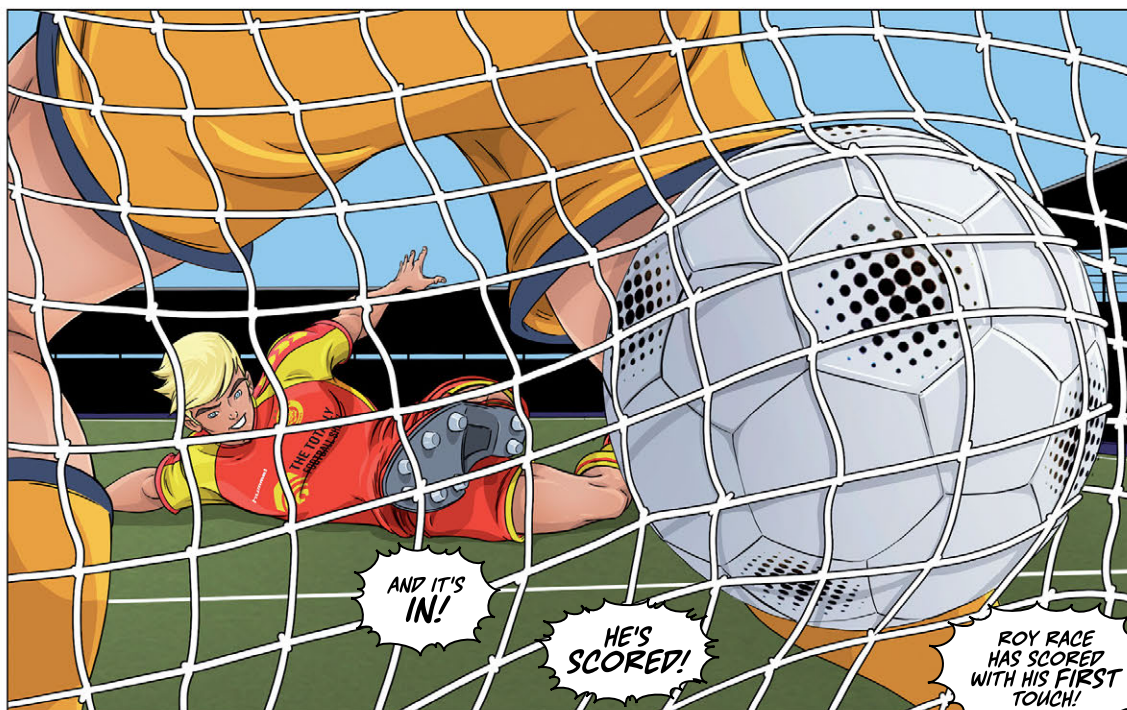
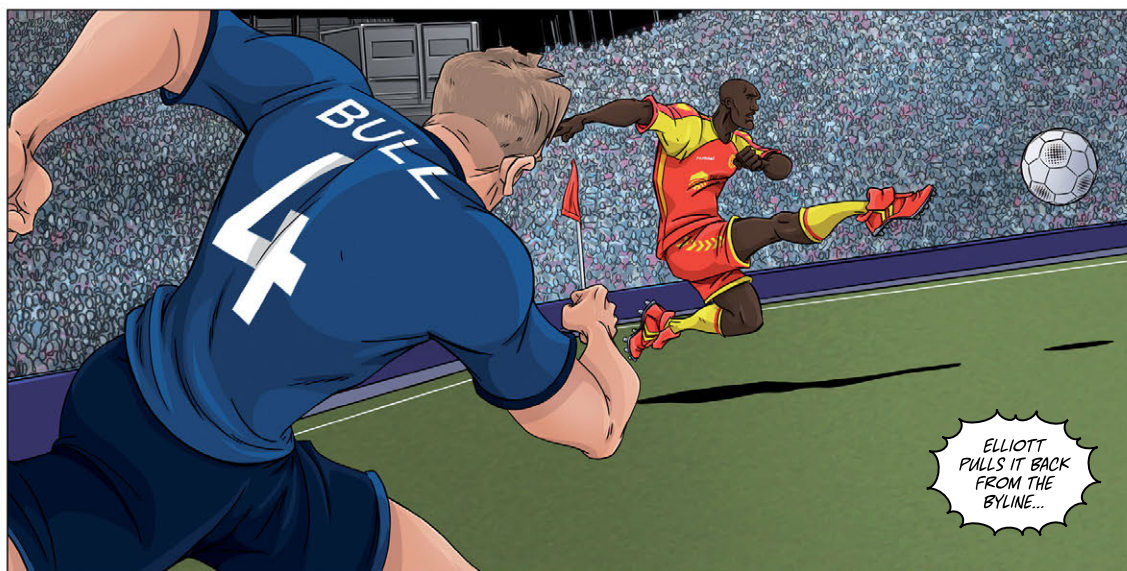


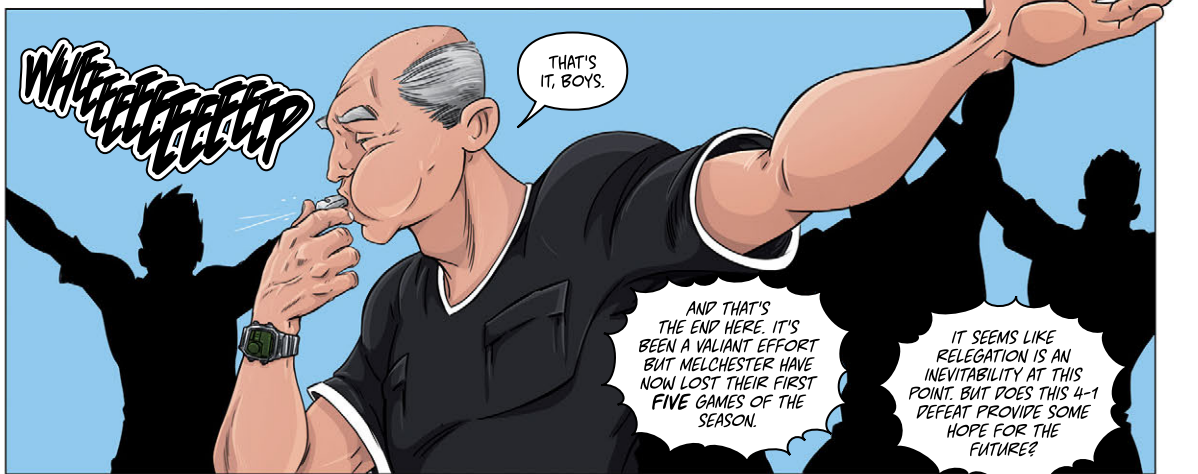
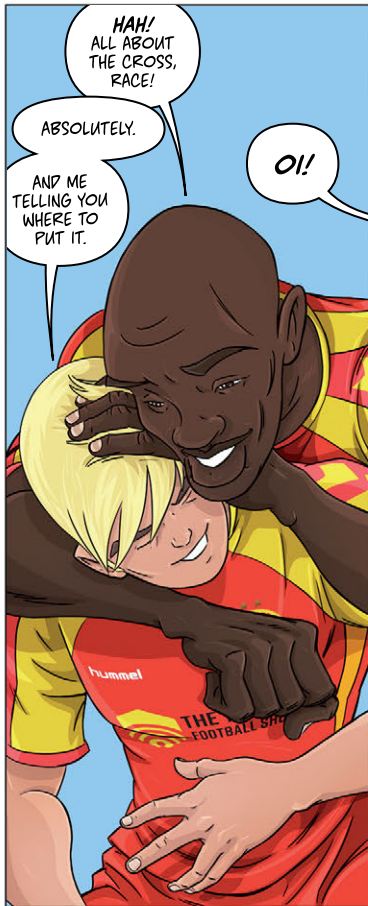














WELL DONE, LADS. IT MAY NOT FEEL LIKE IT NOW BUT YOU GAVE THEM A GAME AND A HALF.

YOUR PACE, BOYS. YOUR MOVEMENT. EXCELLENT. EXCELLENT. AND THAT'S HOW WE'RE GOING TO PLAY.

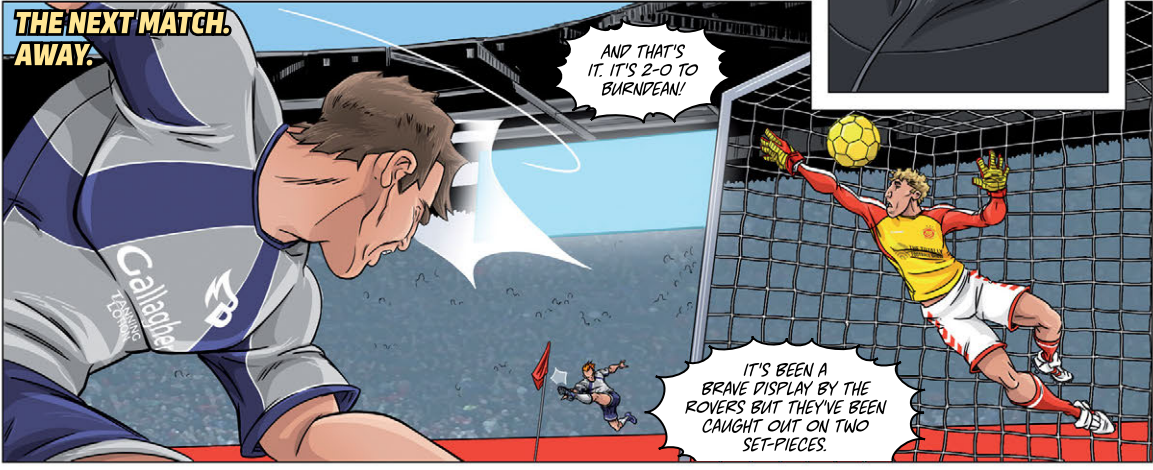
KEEP THE BALL ON THE FLOOR. PASS AND MOVE.



THE MELCHESTER WAY.

WE ARE ONLY GOING TO GET BETTER, BOYS. TRUST ME.

THE NEXT MATCH. AWAY.



AND THAT'S IT. IT'S 2-0 TO BURNDEAN!

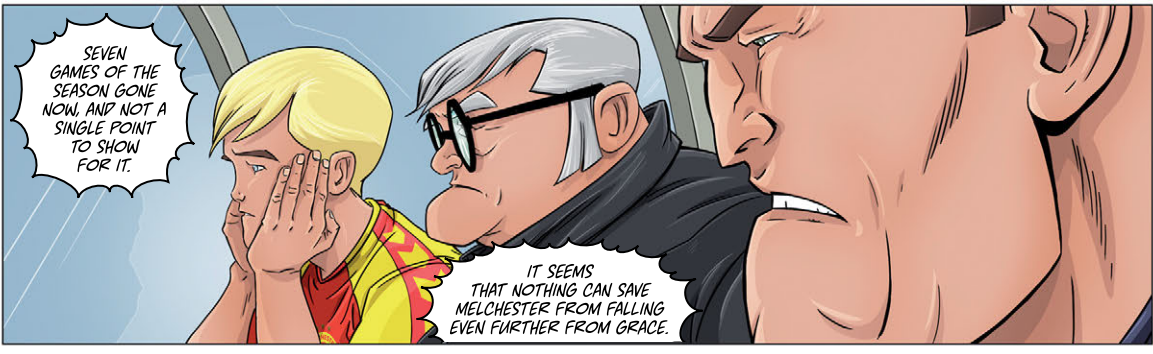
IT'S BEEN A BRAVE DISPLAY BY THE ROVERS BUT THEY'VE BEEN CAUGHT OUT ON TWO SET-PIECES.

NEXT MATCH. HOME.



1-0 TO CARTPEAN! THE DEADLOCK FINALLY BROKEN HERE!

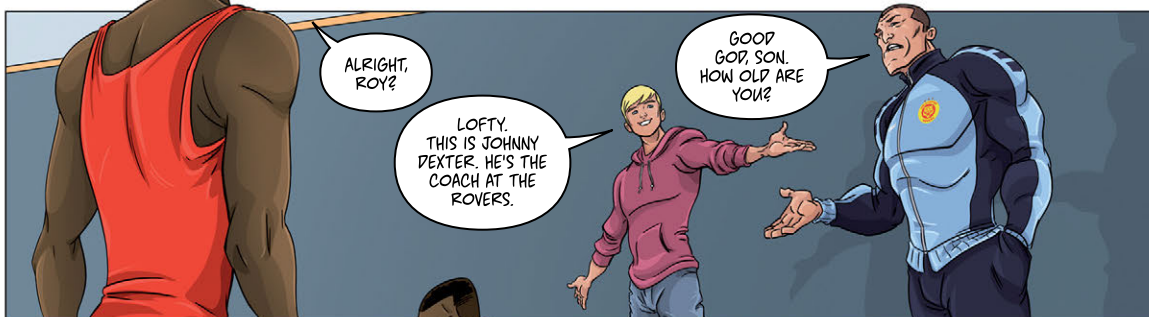
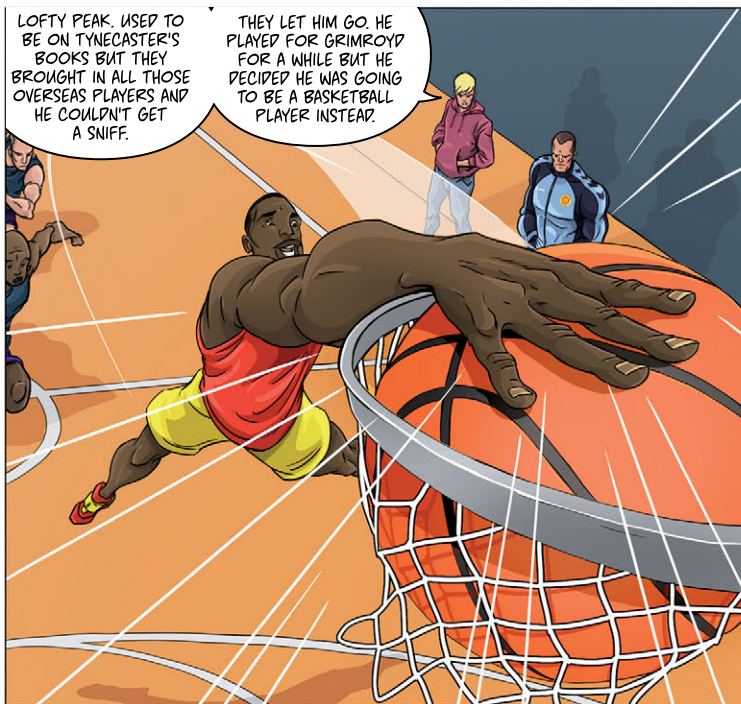
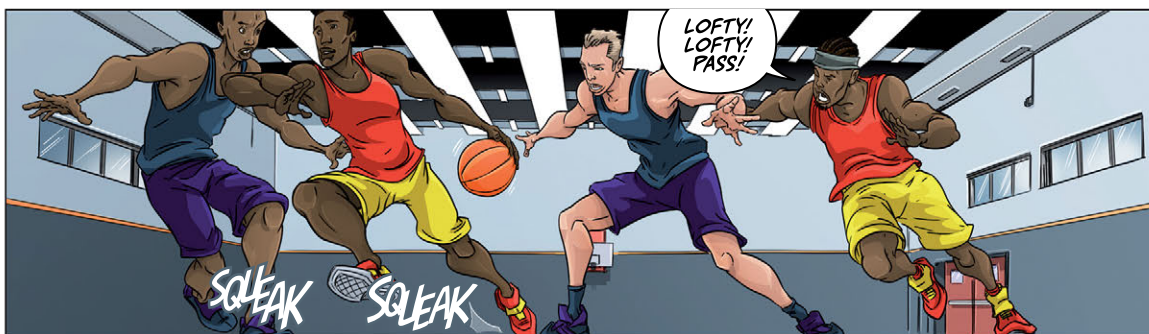
IT'S THE SAME STORY FOR THE YOUNGSTERS OF ROVERS. SOME BEAUTIFUL FOOTBALL PLAYERS, BUT NO CUTTING EDGE UP FRONT AND A LACK OF A PHYSICAL PRESENCE AT THE BACK.

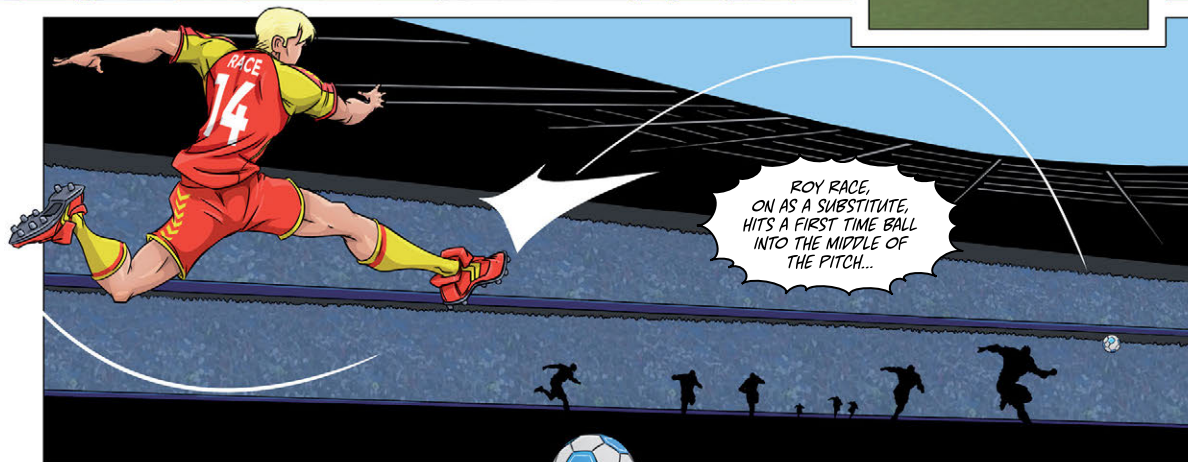


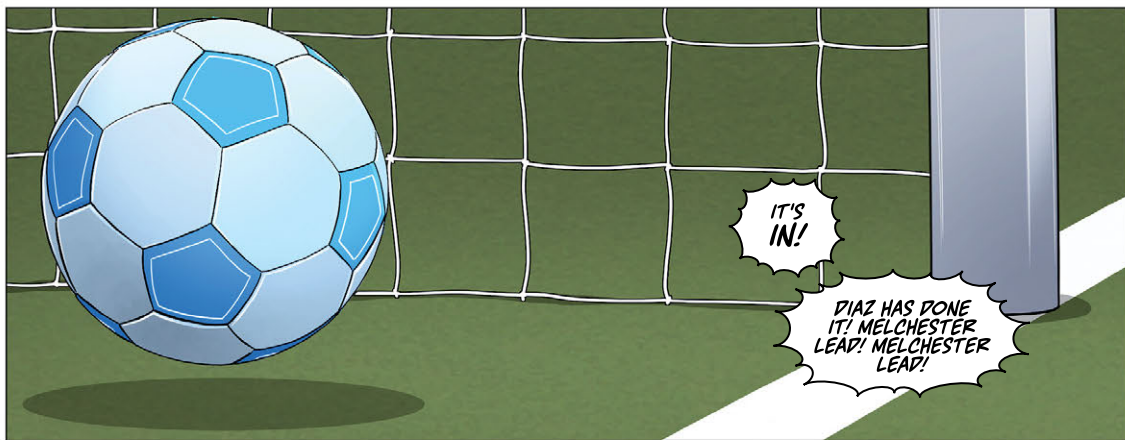
SEVEN GAMES OF THE SEASON GONE NOW, AND NOT A SINGLE POINT TO SHOW FOR IT.

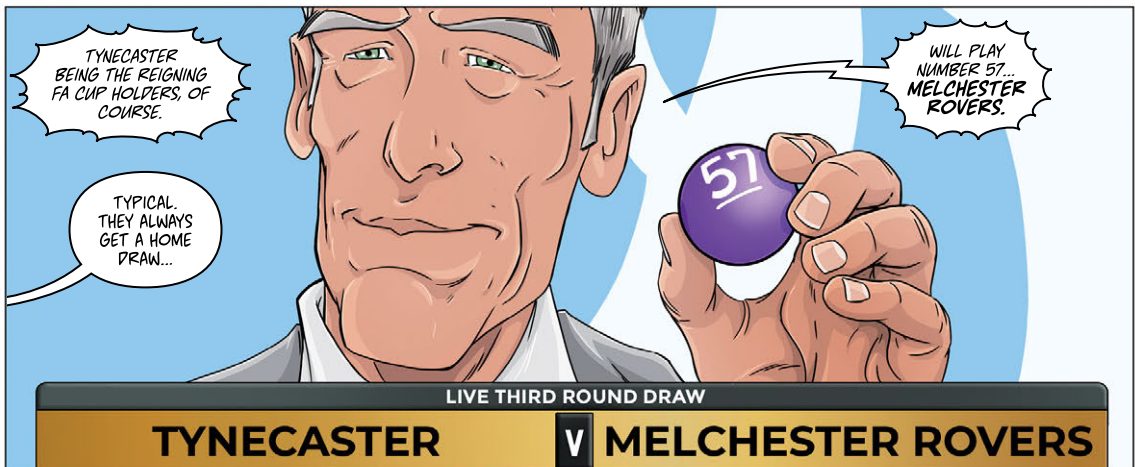
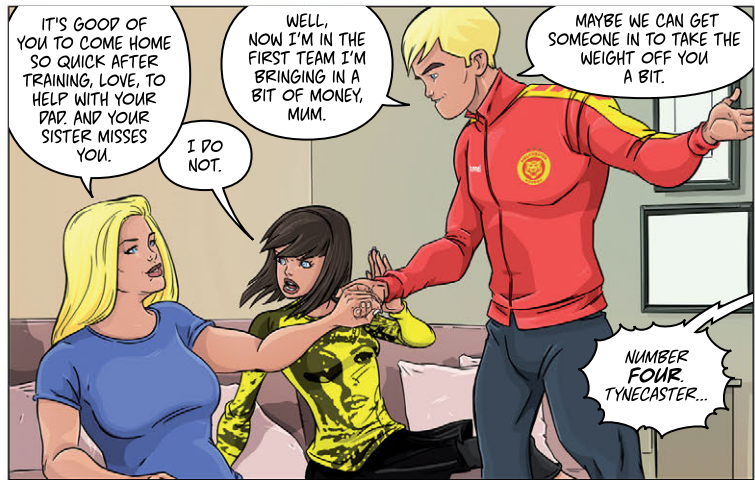
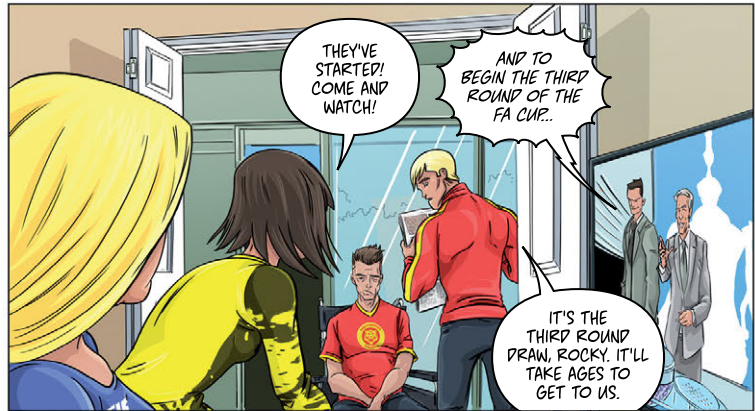
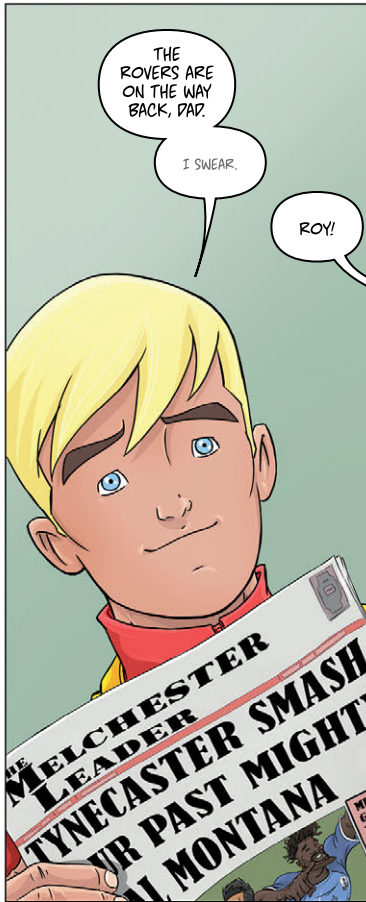
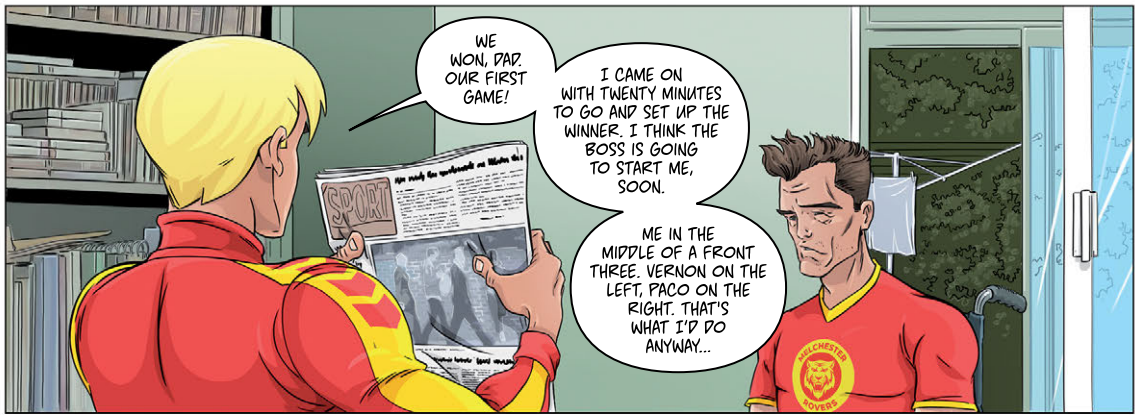
IT SEEMS THAT NOTHING CAN SAVE MELCHESTER FROM FALLING EVEN FURTHER FROM GRACE.













"DAYS..."

WELCOME TO THE TAYR STADIUM. HOME TO TYNECASTER AND THE GLAMOUR TIE OF THIS, THE 3RD ROUND OF THE FA CUP.

MELCHESTER, AS A CITY, HAS LONG BEEN ONE OF THE HOMES OF ENGLISH FOOTBALL AND HERE, TWO OF THE GAME'S **BIGGEST RIVALS** COME TOGETHER IN A SNAPSHOT OF THE STATE OF THE GAME IN 2018.



ON ONE SIDE YOU HAVE THE MILLIONAIRES OF TYNECASTER. GLOBAL SUPERSTARS ON RELEASE CLAUSES NEARING £200 MILLION AND WAGES OF £350,000 A WEEK.

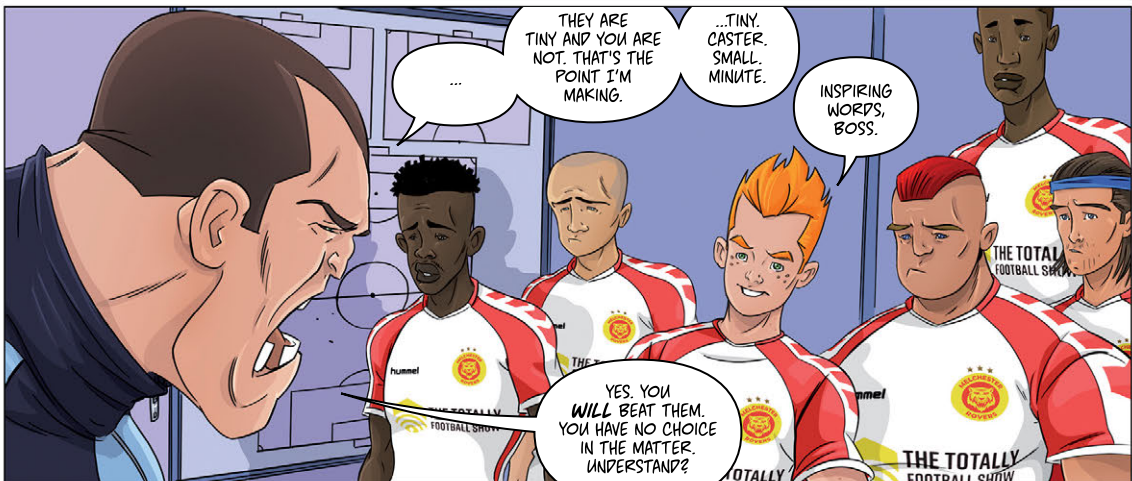
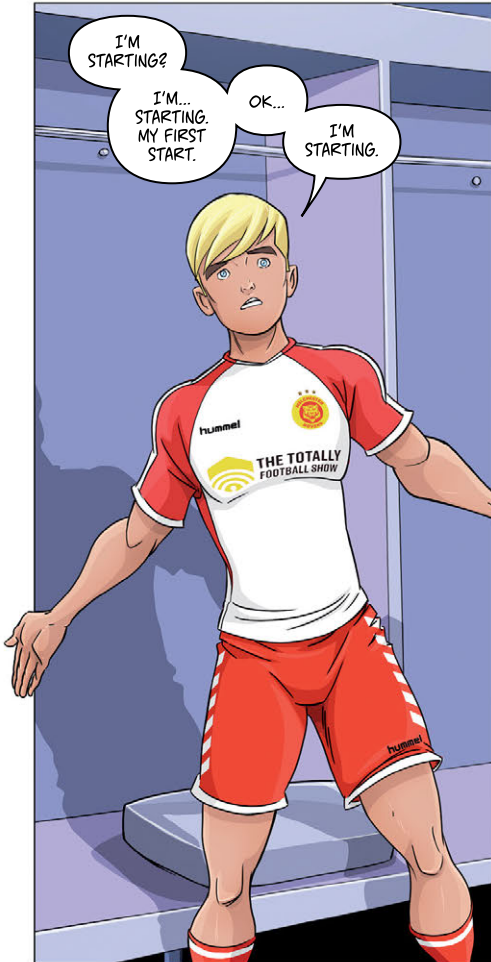
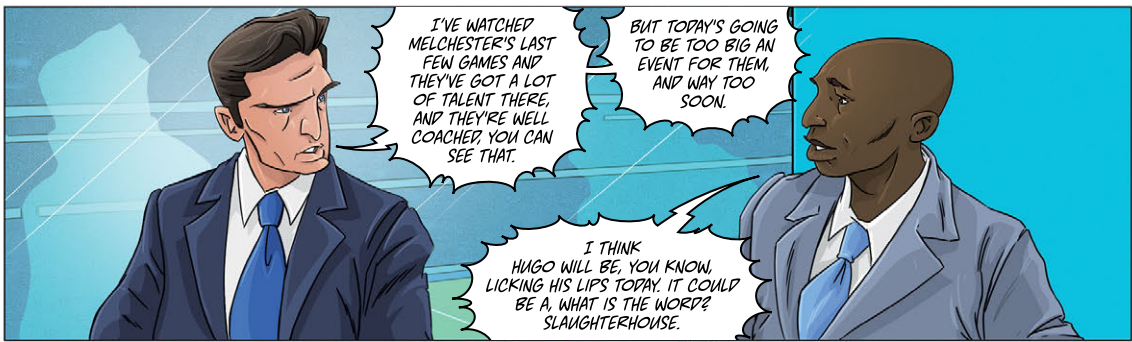
TYNECASTER AND MELCHESTER WERE ALWAYS THE FIERCEST RIVALS BUT IN PAST DECADES THEY WERE OPERATING ON A LEVEL PLAYING FIELD.

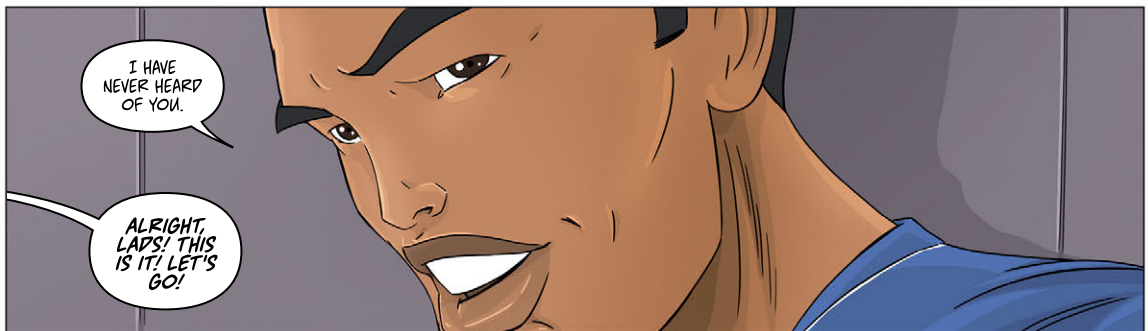


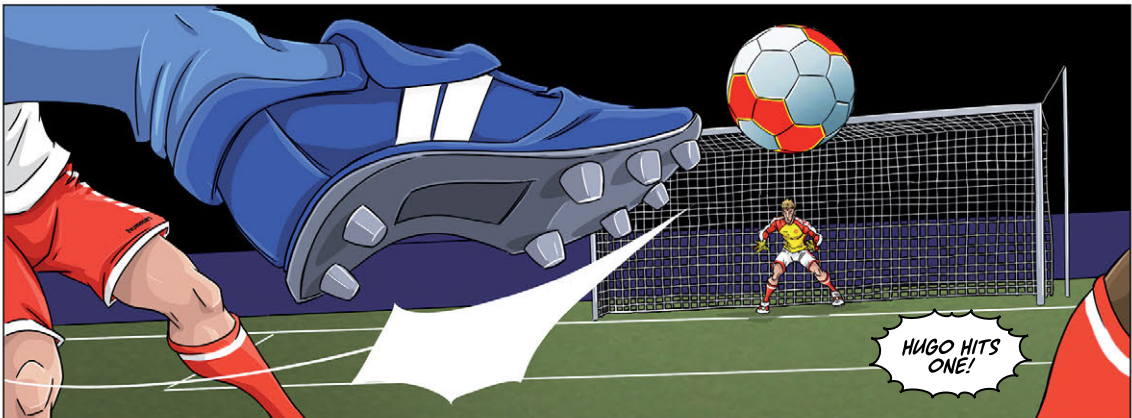
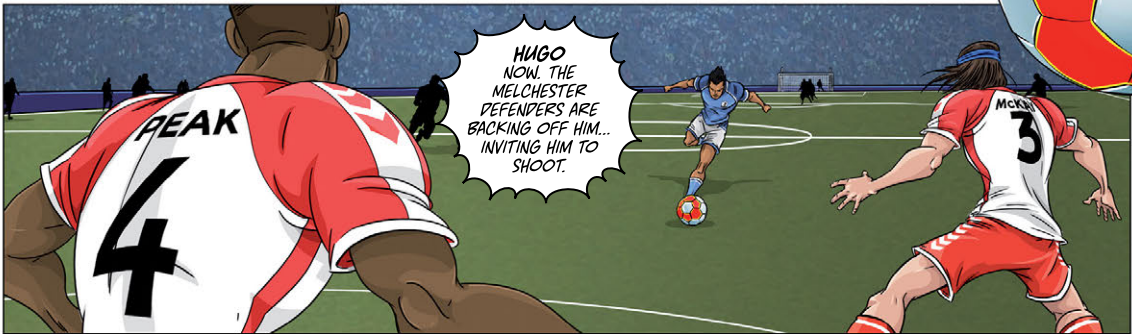
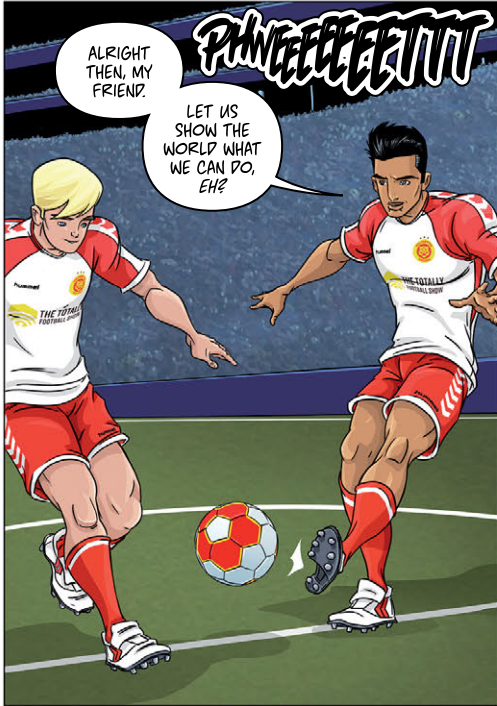
NOW MELCHESTER SIT AT THE BOTTOM OF THE TABLE TWO DIVISIONS BELOW TYNECASTER AND ARE ATTEMPTING TO BUILD THROUGH A YOUTH MOVEMENT THAT SURELY WILL TAKE TIME TO PAY DIVIDENDS.

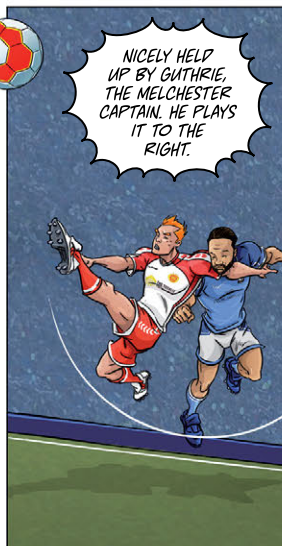
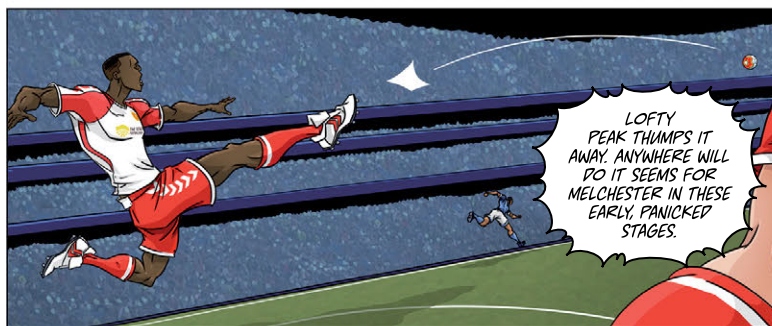
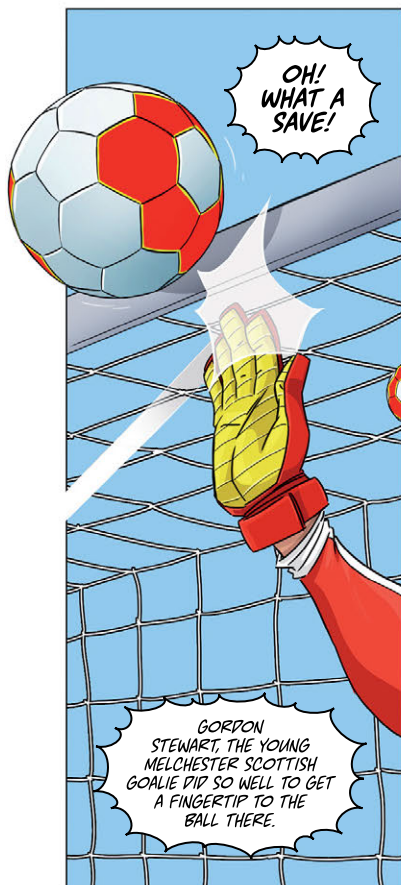
MONEY TALKS IN MODERN FOOTBALL, AND ONE SIDE HERE TODAY HAS IT AND THE OTHER DOES NOT.

THIS GAME IS THE EPIHOME OF DAVID VS GOLIATH.









AND RACE
HIIIIITS IT...

OH!
OH MY
WORD!

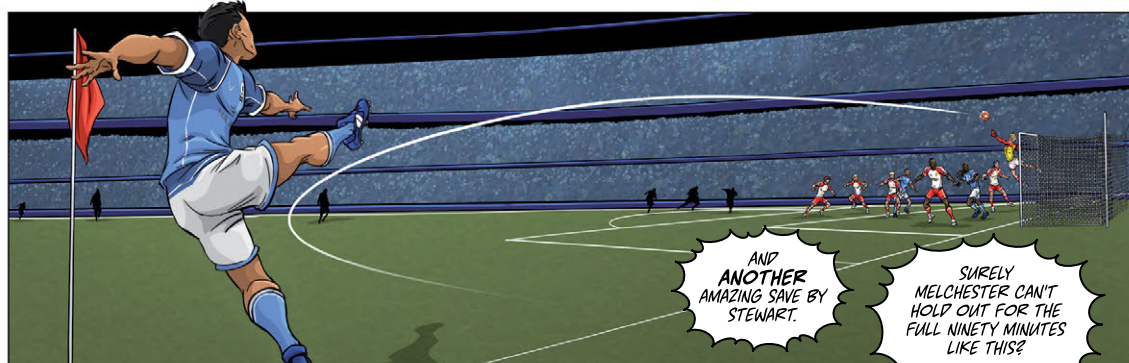
THAT...THAT IS
UNBELIEVABLE!

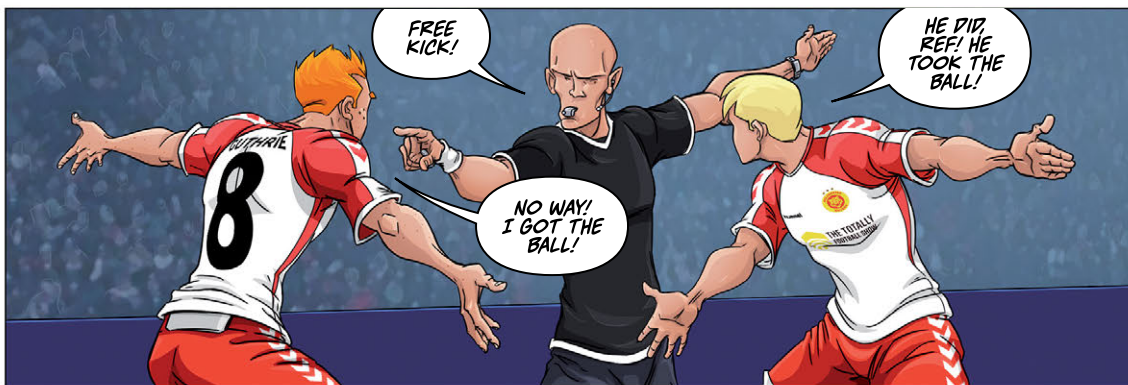


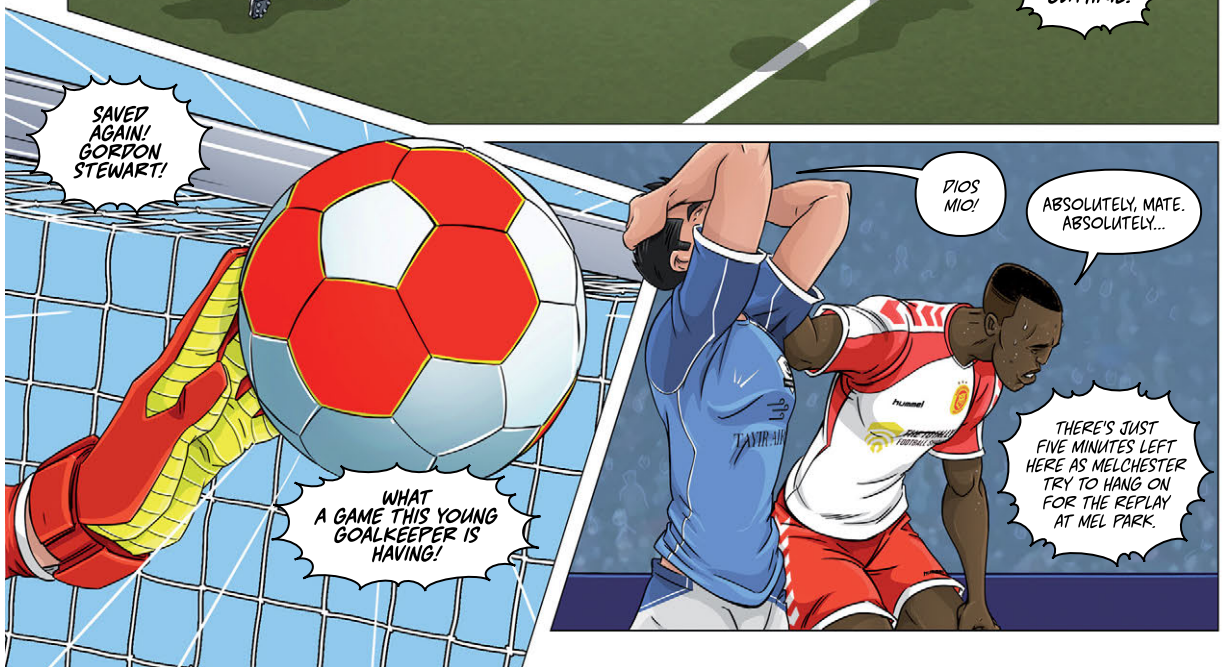


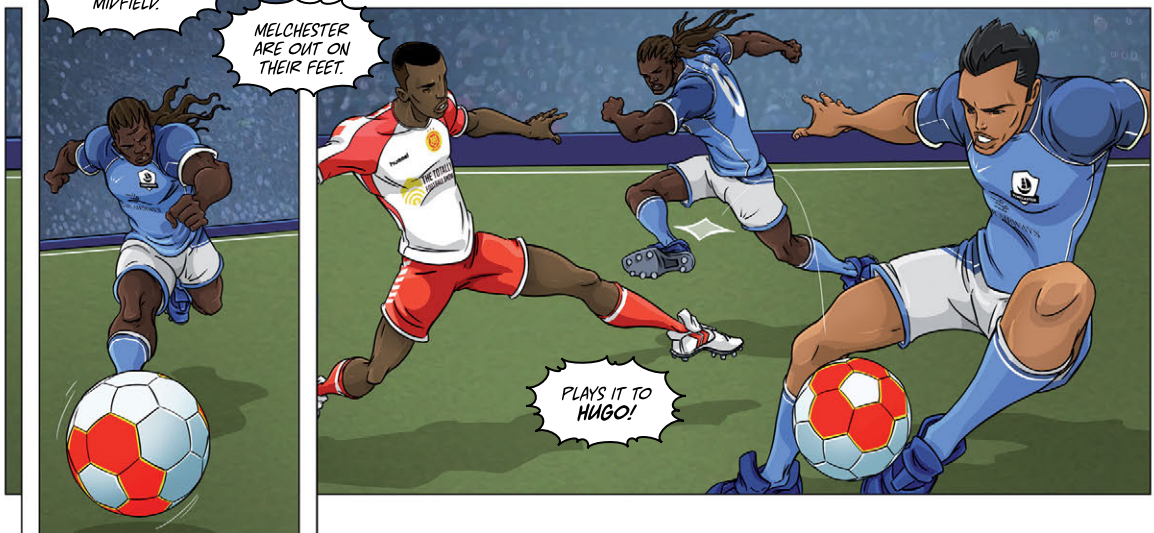
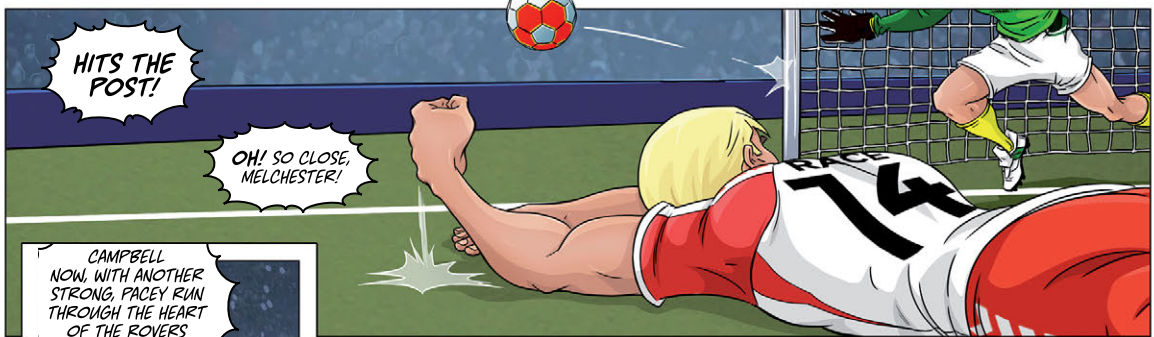
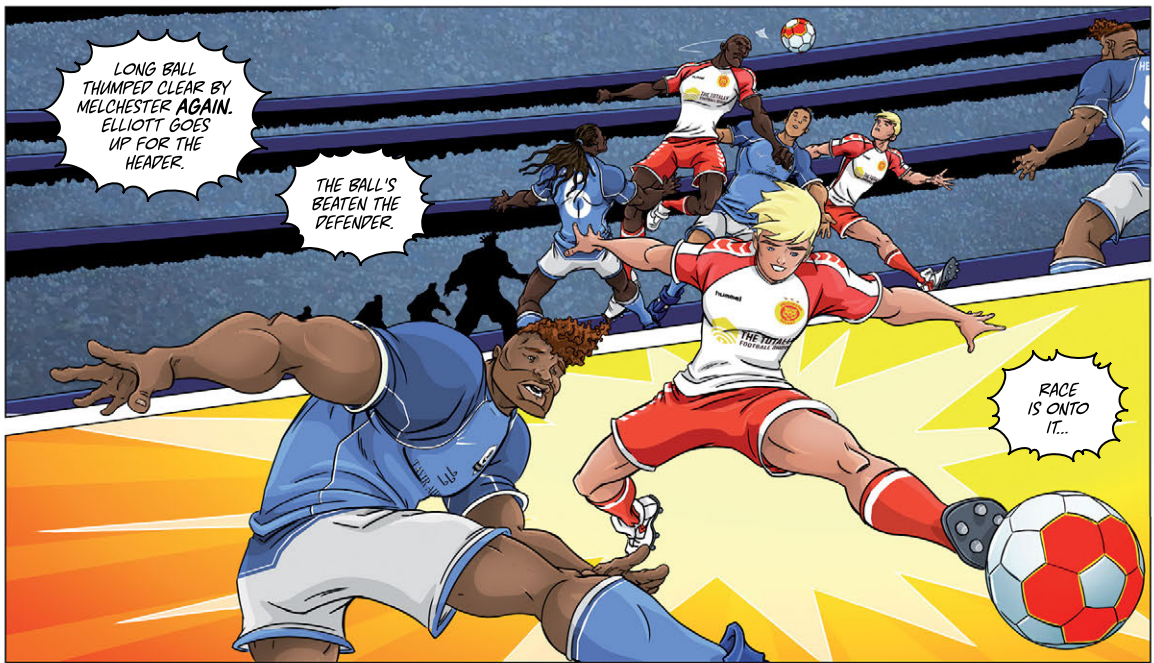
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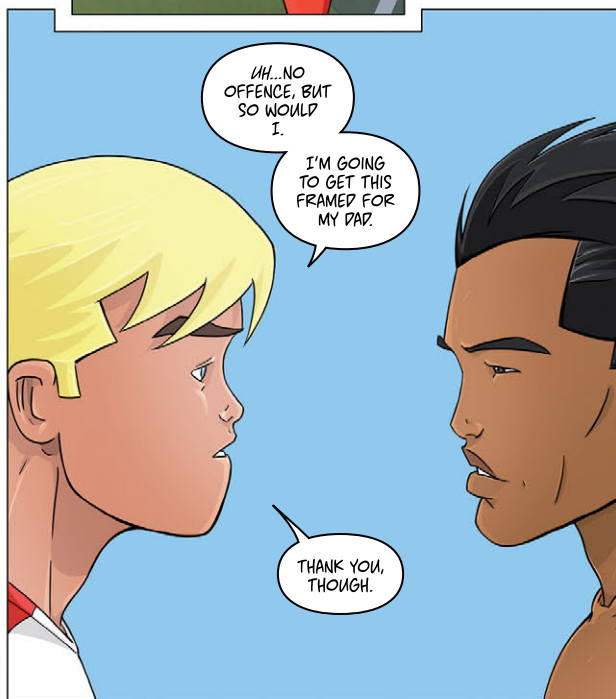
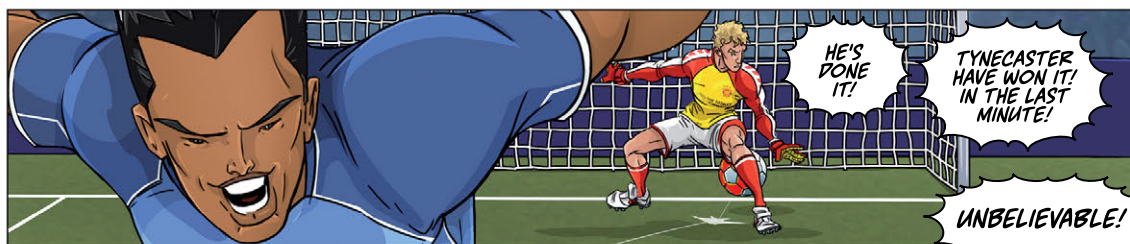














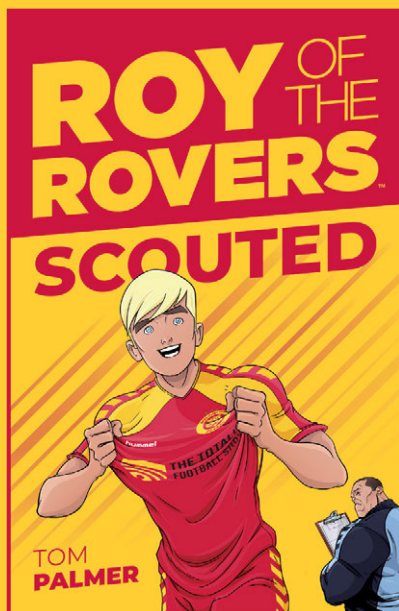


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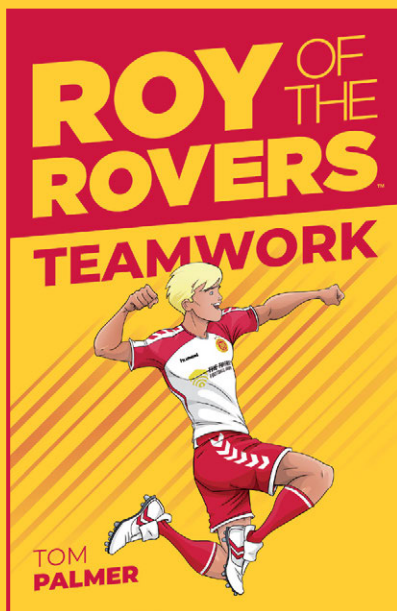


BOOK 1 **SCOUTED**

Author: Tom Palmer
Out: October 2018
ISBN: 978-1-78108-698-8

Roy Race is the most talented striker in Melchester – but is he good enough to catch the eye of the Melchester Rovers scouts?

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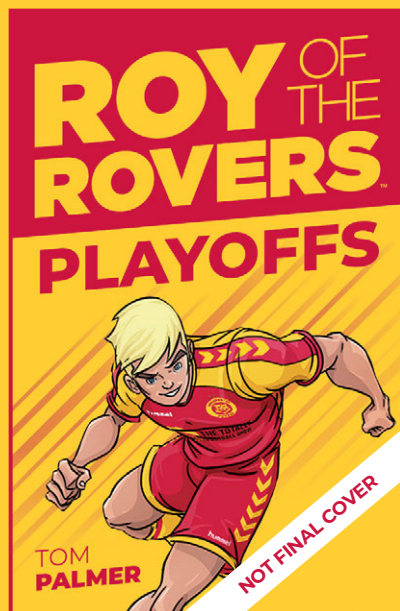


BOOK 2 **TEAMWORK**

Author: Tom Palmer
Out: February 2019
ISBN: 978-1-78108-707-7

Life gets tricky for Roy as he adjusts to life in the spotlight. Fortune and glory await, but can Roy juggle football, fame and family?

READ? ☐



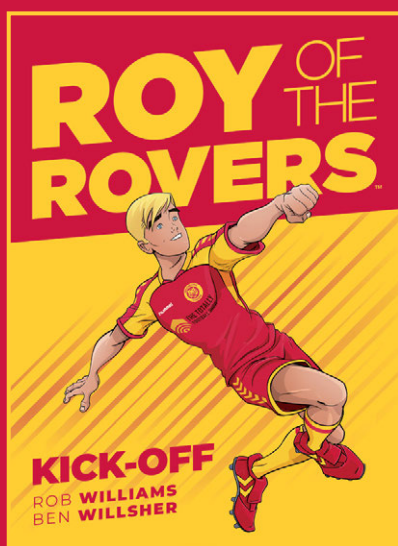
BOOK 3 **PLAYOFFS**

Author: Tom Palmer
Out: May 2019
ISBN: 978-1-78108-722-0

Crunch time for Rovers: the end of the season is here, the club is in deep trouble, and it's down to Roy to bring a bit of hope back to the Melchester faithful.

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GRAPHIC NOVELS

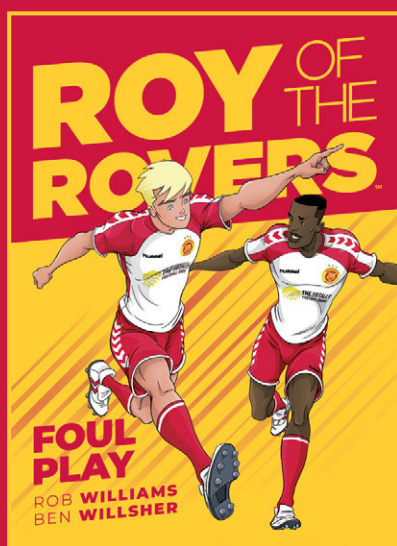


BOOK 1 KICK-OFF

Writer: Rob Williams
Artist: Ben Willsher
Out: November 2018
ISBN: 978-1-78108-652-0

Roy Race is 16, talented, and desperate to make it as a footballer. But is he good enough for Melchester Rovers? Now's the time to prove if he's got what it takes to become Roy of the Rovers.

READ? ☐

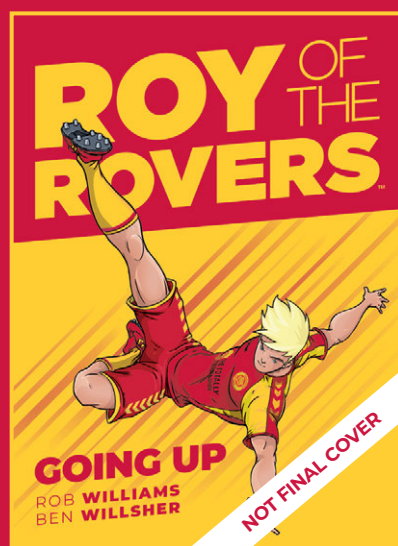


BOOK 2 FOUL PLAY

Writer: Rob Williams
Artist: Ben Willsher
Out: March 2019
ISBN: 978-1-78108-669-8

Roy picks up an injury that puts him on the sidelines, and suddenly there's competition for his place as a brand new - and brilliant - striker is brought in by the management...

READ? ☐



BOOK 3 GOING UP

Writer: Rob Williams
Artist: Ben Willsher
Out: June 2019
ISBN: 978-1-78108-673-5

Roy and the team have battled through a tough season, but have they got enough left to get promoted? Or will they fall at the final hurdle and see the club sold by its greedy owner?

READ? ☐



PLAYER INTERVIEW

Introduce yourself

Hi, I'm Roy Race. I'm the new Melchester Rovers striker!

Do you have a nickname?

At Melchester? Occasionally people call me Racey... same as at my old club Grimroyd.

Who was your favourite team growing up?

I'm playing for them! My family have supported the Rovers since, like, forever! My Dad is Melchester's biggest fan and knows literally everything about the club and its incredible history.

Who is the best player that you have played with?

So far, I couldn't pick one out of the Rovers side – they're all great. After trialling in goal for a bit though, I have a lot more respect for what Gordon Stewart has to do!

Who is the best player that you have played against?

Hugo is pretty spectacular. I felt for our defense whenever he was in possession of the ball during our cup game against Tynecaster. He really is a different class.

Do you have a pre-match routine?

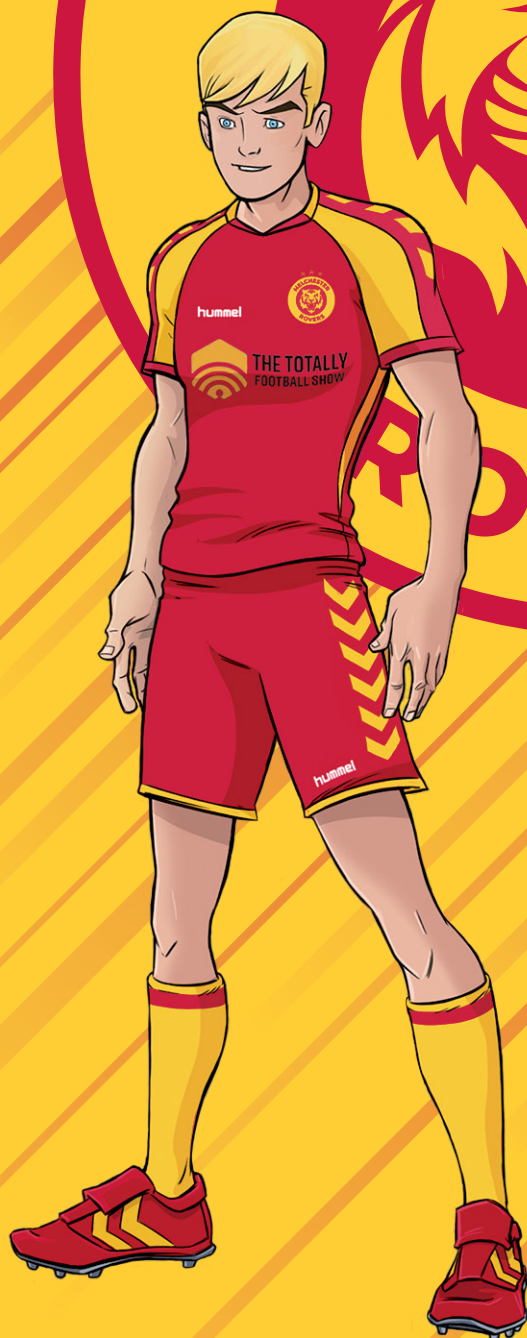
Before home games, I like to have breakfast with my Mum, Dad and sister Rocky, whilst wearing my favourite Melchester Rovers top.

What's your advice to young players?

Wow! Well, I'm kind of still a young player myself, so I don't know really. I guess I would say never give up and keep on practising.

What's your favourite social media network and why?

Instagram is cool... I've seen some great football clips on Snapchat as well.





PLAYER INTERVIEW

Introduce yourself

Lofty Peak. Defender.

Do you have a nickname?

Yeah, Lofty.

So what is your real first name?

It's not Lofty!

Who was your favourite team growing up?

I'm a local, so Melchester Rovers. I'm also a big B-ball fan as well, so I should shout out to my boys the Melchester Swish.

Who is the best player that you have played with?

My boy, Roy Race. Have you seen him shoot with that left foot? Devastating man! We call it Racey's Rocket on the training ground...

Who is the best player that you have played against?

Ha! Hugo, no doubt. That guy made me tired man, he's quality.

Do you have a pre-match routine?

Nah, not really. I listen to some music... get in the zone a bit, y'know?

What's your advice to young players?

What, am I old now?!? I would say just keep playing. And remember to do some proper stretching exercises before starting a game. It's important to keep limber!

What's your favourite social media network and why?

Twitter – keep it short and sweet man!







A LEGEND REBORN!

Times are tough for Melchester Rovers. Languishing at the bottom of League Two, the once-proud powerhouse of British football is out of money and out of luck.

Sixteen-year-old Roy Race always dreamt of playing up front for Rovers. Oozing with natural talent and possessing a powerful left foot, Roy may just be the answer to all of Melchester's prayers.

Can Roy break into the Rovers first team and bring back the glory days of old? Or will the pressure of problems on and off the pitch prove too much for the young prospect?

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