

Fur and Feathers

The emus formed a football team
Up Walgett way;
Their dark-brown sweaters were a dream
But kangaroos would sit and scream
To watch them play.

'Now, butterfingers,' they would call,
And such-like names;
The emus couldn't hold the ball
— They had no hands — but hands aren't all
In football games.

A match against the kangaroos
They played one day
The kangaroos were forced to choose
Some wallabies and wallaroos
That played in grey.

The rules that in the West prevail
Would shock the town;
For when a kangaroo set sail
An emu jumped upon his tail
And fetched him down.

A whistler duck as referee
Was not admired.
He whistled so incessantly
The teams rebelled, and up a tree
He soon retired.

The old marsupial captain said,
'It's do or die!'
So down the ground like fire he fled
And leaped above an emu's head
And scored a try.

Then shouting, 'Keep it on the toes!'
The emus came.
Fierce as the flooded Bogan flows
They laid their foemen out in rows
And saved the game.

On native pear and Darling pea
They dined that night:
But one man was an absentee:
The whistler duck — their referee —
Had taken flight.

Paterson, AB 1933, *Fur and Feathers*

'Buzz' "the football game has started, the 50th premiership game at Walgett in the dusty outback of NSW with the team's Kangaroos vs Emus." States the commentator. This is a very competitive football game here in Walgett although it looks terrific when the players have a beautiful sunset behind them. Once the Kangaroos got the ball the Emus brutally drove them into the ground. The Emus got the ball, they would run as fast as lightning. The kangaroos scored a triumphant try and the crowd erupted like a volcano. When the Emus got the ball they would carry it with their wings because they had no hands, and the Kangaroos would call them 'butterfingers' because of it. By Dean

For Forty nine years the tall long tailed Kangaroos and the large flightless mammals the Emus have formed a bitter rivalry in the Walgett Way Premiership cup. On one hot sunny day a small stubby Emu was running down the dry dusty footy field, about to score a try for the Emus. Suddenly, "BANG!" A fierce Kangaroo viciously barged the poor Emu over, sending him flying and preventing him from scoring a try. The Emu suffered a fractured collarbone, he was the best player on the Emus side. Since then the Emus had a tough time beating the Kangaroos. By Harry

The sweaty Kangaroos were sitting in the old smelly change rooms. Unfortunately in the first half, 7 Kangaroos were injured and weren't able to play for the rest of the game, so the captain explained that they had to choose some wallabies and wallaroos to play with them. When they hopped out onto the field they were furious because the wallabies and wallaroos were tiny and they got tackled really easy. The unhappy Kangaroos saw the huge advantage the Emus had, the Emus were big and fast, and the wallabies were going to let them down. By Sophie W

BUZZ! The final half had started and Will the Wallaroo has caught Eddie's magnificent bomb and was on his way to victory. But the Enormous Emus had a dare devil plan to jump upon those cunning Kangaroos tail and stop them in their path OUCH!! Ethan had jumped on poor Will's small, stubby tail and Will couldn't move. Kade the Roos coach called "Oy mate that's cheating". Ethan was pleased that his nasty plan was working like a charm. Kade was furious at what had happened and called for a team huddle. "Oy listen up Roos we have to watch our backsides and keep on pushing". The roaring Roos rushed onto the field again with pride. Will passed the old, torn, leathery football to Kaden and he bolted down the field and dodged pass Ethan but then Eddie came out of now where and got right on the tail. By Maddison

The dark brown, loud, annoying, pestering whistler duck, wouldn't stop blowing his brand new, shiny, silver whistle. All of a sudden Eddie emu shouted "That thing is so annoying. Can ya shut it up?!" The whistler duck, Bob, didn't like the comment that was made to him. So he just kept blowing is loud whistle and pestering and pestering and pestering the players. Finally he stop distracting the important game, and started to watch it. "Ey, you can't jump on their tails! Its kangaroo's ball!" He just kept on whistling his metallic silver whistle earlier, that now no one was listening to him. Eventually he gave up and he went and sat in a gigantic, shady, tall gum tree. No one even noticed, until Eddie emu said, "Hey maties, anyone one seen old Bob, the whistler duck?!" no one knew and no one cared. By Jada

A shining smear of fur struck his side.

Brisbane twisted his neck around, glimpsing Grace cackling as she leapt gracefully in the direction of the ball. *This match is falling to pieces.* He briefly hesitated for a split second, then swiftly ducked beneath her tail, bashing his rock-hard skull against her neck as he emerged. Her eyes widened, but it was far too late to do anything now; she was knocked out of the air, skidding across the dusty grass. Brisbane feebly scooped the ball under his strong muscular wings, desperately hoping that he'd be able to hold it long enough to reach Marsh.

As though he'd read his mind, the towering emu galloped beside him, flapping his wings frantically. "Hurry up and pass it to me!" he shrieked urgently. Brisbane tossed the rough leather ball to him, and with one swift swing of his knobbly leg, Marsh sent it flying through the air before anybody could stop him.

1-1.

The crowd erupted into fiery roars like an active volcano. He couldn't remember the last time they'd screamed and cheered so deafeningly loud, until he realised there hadn't been a last time. *I guess even they've gotten bored of the Kangaroos scoring all the time.*

Within moments, the ball soared over his head again. This time, a brawny kangaroo sprang after the ball, his paws thumping heavily on the chalky ground. Another emu rocketed into his side, sending him tumbling.

The final minute.

A second emu swept past, firmly snagging the ball under his wing. Out of the corner of his eye, Brisbane spied the rather ancient marsupial captain, zipping at the emu alongside a hefty pack of wallabies. The loftiest wallaby smacked into the emu's legs, causing him to topple over into Marsh. Brisbane zoomed by, hurtling over the wallabies' heads, and walloped into the captain's shoulder, steadily pinning him against a crumbling patch of earth.

At precisely that instant, the second emu wrestled out from under the wallaby, vigorously heaving him off his chest with his talons. He grappled to his feet, just as Grace surged through the air, crashing down in front of him. "You're not scoring NOW!" she screeched as she barrelled towards him.

Then Brisbane did the only brave thing he'd ever done in his life.

He smashed into Grace's side like a rocket, sprinting at breakneck speed like the fate of the whole world was lying in his talons. She was launched into the air, screaming as she shot past the other players. There was a dull thud and a horrible *crack* as she thumped into the same tree the whistler duck had fled up, and fell limp, splashing into the collection of mud puddles. The crowd went silent once again.

And then the ball flew above the posts.

1-2.

By Mia

That dark cold night after the tremendous game the exhausted kangaroos and the empty emus dined that night. They were dining at the old clubhouse as rusty as an old shed. The floorboards screaming as the dirty players walked on it. Eemond emu said "ello mate, sorry for cheating", he said to Kanga kangaroo. "Mate it's alright, we've been in the international team a lot". There was nicely made food and there were multiples of tasty treats. Everything was going good until Eddi emu said something. "ey mates have ya seen the ref". Everyone began searching the room. Kanga kangaroo said "guess he took a flight and starting to cry". Everybody started to have fun not caring about the annoying whistler duck. By Mahir