

EDITORIAL

It's gotten to a stage where reality is becoming hard to grasp. I know that sounds alarmist and people often say these things without meaning them, but let me explain. Think about your best friend. You've been in contact this entire time, but whenever you think of your best friend, you're probably still thinking about the person you knew in March, right? But here's the thing, time changes people. Time spent isolated changes people even more. Do you really know your friends anymore, if you haven't met them in such a long time? Do your friends still know you? Do you know yourself? Which version of yourself is the reality? The one on Facebook or the one on Instagram? Or is it the one in the group chat where you think you can be your "real" self?

This is all becoming too much. We need to keep in touch with real world things. Maybe the news will help, a daily dose of reality. But wait, no, none of these things look real anymore either. Did that person really say that? Are you allowed to say that? Did that really happen? What?

-- Azmin Azran, Sub-editor, SHOUT



PLAYWATCH PODCAST REVIEW



The football podcast I needed, and deserved

AZMIN AZRAN

There's a subset of people who started watching Premier League football in the mid-2000s, whose first FIFA World Cup was Germany 2006, and who remember Peter Crouch really really well. He's a Premier League and England legend who's played for Queens Park Rangers, Portsmouth, Aston Villa, Southampton, Liverpool, Tottenham Hotspur, Stoke City and Burnley; he's also a comedy genius who's been doing one of the most brilliant football podcasts out there for the last two years.

That Peter Crouch Podcast is fundamentally just a show where a professional footballer talks about life as a professional footballer. Journalists Tom Fordyce and Chris Stark double as both fans and friends of Crouchie, and their ability to have fun on mic, or at least sound like they're having fun, is what makes the podcast. The early episodes had me worried that they were taking it a little too easy and maybe they eventually got cancelled, but it turned out quite the opposite. The podcast kept getting bigger and bigger as I listened to one episode after another, and you could tell that by the increasing magnitude of their running gags, as well as their end of season events. The fact that the listeners are made to feel involved in the growth of the podcast is a nod to the brilliance of the people behind it, and how meticulously they tapped into the market of people who

love football and footballers, and want to enjoy it as a human experience, a break from the commercialised product that's often on television.

I want to talk a bit about the running gags on this podcast, they have one or two every season, and they're all so ridiculous that it's brilliant. First, there was the search for the photo of Crouchie and Andres Iniesta that was taken at Ibiza, a photo that Don Andres allegedly asked for instead of it being the other way around. Then there was the manhunt for the footballer nicknamed "Parched", who was given that name because during breaks in training, he'd always be seen having a drink of water around the coaches and the manager. Unique details about a footballer's life are often revealed in this show, including but not limited to the fact that footballers have their underwear taken care of by the kitman.

The thing that I really love about That Peter Crouch Podcast is that the conversations sound exactly like what you'd imagine it'd be if you had a celebrity footballer as a friend. You'd ask stupid questions, they'd laugh at you, you'd laugh together, and then you'd be left flabbergasted at the answer because rich and famous people have crazy lives. That's the vibe of the show, and that's a big reason why I really love this podcast. The details and the insight on a footballer's life and struggles is what keeps me coming back. The fact that Peter Crouch is a bit like football's Forrest Gump is just the cherry on top.

