

A Day in the Life of a Girl Who Loves Sports

KHADIZA KARIM CHOWDHURY

How does a day in our lives proceed? Well first of all, you have to accept the ultimate fate that you'll never have a decent sleep schedule. Dwindling into slumber at odd times and having to wake up at even stranger times are a given when your favourite team's located 8,116 kilometres away. Now that sounds easy until it's added that you'll not only be watching the Premier League but also the Formula 1, the Major League Soccer, the Wimbledon and virtually any apt sporting event one can access because of the adrenaline addict being you are made to be. The only thing certain about your existence – racoon eyes and disorientation regarding time and space.

At times, while watching your friends complain about the ample amount of their hard earned money they waste on things like munching on delicious delicacies, make up, and travels, you cannot help but wonder where all yours disappeared. Even though you took up yet another kid to home tutor, you utterly failed to save even a single penny to chuck it in the pink clay piggy bank - bought with the intention of saving money 3 months ago. You might as well beg for mercy to the Lord of piggy banks to exonerate your naïve and forgetful soul once again for this blasphemy. Indeed, you don't want to face his wrath.

Now, where did all those notes go anyway? Oh that's right, the new seasons kits and merchandise were available for pre-order and being a person with little self-control, you yielded. Regardless of the fact that you're

unlikely to wear the shirt more than once, as washing it makes the writing on the back turn into one of those deconstructed abstract pieces of modern art. Some might complain about how that's a huge waste but they are nothing but fools. Ten years down the line when you'll have an entire room devoted to display the large collection of sport memorabilia while others will question what they have achieved with their meaningless lives.

From the moment of euphoria one experiences when your team wins due to last minute goal when it appeared to be an impossible mission to dealing with the heart wrenching pain watching your team fail and the players who make you believe in miracles with tears cascading down their faces – the experiences can range from unbelievably rewarding to excruciatingly painful. Although brushing off claims that you only watch matches because you find a particular athlete cute can be pestering at times. But when your friends can guess the result of last night's match just by the look on your face it definitely illustrates how much it means to you. Netflix and chill? No, how about FirstRowSports and yelling at a player thousands of miles away to clear the ball.

Khadiza Karim Chowdhury is a part time science junkie and a part time sports enthusiast who anxiously swings from one to another and never walks alone, occasionally transitions into a panda or a cat. Have a say at rodellachowdhury@gmail.com



Stranger Things is 2016's Best TV

TV SERIES REVIEW

ZOHEB MASHIUR

As a 90s kid I view the 80s with distaste and bewilderment. By rights Netflix's *Stranger Things*, a love letter to that decade's America, should do absolutely nothing for me. And yet I love the show to teeny bits. How can such things be? It's because show-creators the Duffer brothers love the 80s so much it's hard not to get swept along for the ride. *Stranger Things*' homages to the era aren't merely skin-deep, though you'll find few TV period pieces that produce such a faithful, lived-in recreation of a time and place as the show's 1983 small-town America. Everything from the (thankfully) dated clothing and hairstyles to the wood panelling on the walls and station-wagon roofs speaks of loving attention. Pop culture isn't just used as props or dialogue flavour but as integral elements to the plot. The Clash's 'Should I Stay or Should I Go' is a recurring motif, and entire articles online have been dedicated to *Stranger Things*' affection for Dungeons & Dragons.

Even the premise sounds like a brainstorming session with Stephen King and Steven Spielberg. *Something* escapes from a super-secret government facility and causes local boy Will Byers to disappear, leading his D&D buddies to go out at night to find him – and instead they discover a frightened runaway with spe-

cial gifts. Plucky kids going off on their own and getting stuff done is the stuff of Spielberg's dreams, and If you like the sound of *Stand by Me*, *It* and *E.T.* having a group hug then you're in Duffer brothers territory.

While the *Stranger Things* sits comfortably in the trappings of the past don't make the mistake of assuming the show is dated or a boring remix. Every familiar element is twisted into

something new or framed in a way that's distinctly modern – this sci-fi story set during the Cold War is a reminder of how old worries about government overreach, conspiracies are, not to mention social issues such as bullying and ostracisation. The characters themselves are pretty trope-y but they always rise above it in some way: an interesting

backstory, a trait that breaks the mould, a story arc that leaves them changed or just damn

fine acting that fleshes them out. Amazingly, for such a huge cast, no one's a passive character. Everyone gets to do something at some point.

As lovely as the synth soundtrack is, it's the strength of the performances that really makes *Stranger Things* such a beauty. Winona Ryder (an 'only 80s kids will remember' name if there ever was one) stars as Joyce Byers, Will's mother, and underneath the surface trope of the hysterical, frazzled mother is a determination you can smash rocks with. Ryder's at once fragile and strong performance is just the first among equals; David Harbour's quiet competence as the haunted police chief is equally accomplished. While the adults are seasoned actors for most of the younger cast it's their first big role, but they don't let you down either. The teenagers each bring that little something extra that elevates their characters, but it's the kids that steal the show. 'Wow' is about all I could say when I saw Millie Bobby Brown and Finn Wolfhard (which is a real name) do their thing. There are Oscar winners who wish they could do what these kids do.

So, yeah. Watch *Stranger Things*. It's the show of the year.



Zoheb Mashiur is a prematurely balding man with bad facial hair and so does his best to avoid people. Ruin his efforts by writing to zoheb.mashiur@gmail.com