

LITTLE HIAWATHA BOWLS AT LEONGATHA

by Harry Dunn

Received 3/11/13, updated 6/11/13

Recording a day in the life of Inverloch Men's Division Four Blues, also known as The Travelling Never-Willbees, and with apologies to Henry Wadsworth Longfellow, who created the original Little Hiawatha (a non-bowler) back in 1855.

**Little Hiawatha had to bowl at Leongatha,
That's the town of Leongatha,
Past hilly Korumburra
Which is south of Arawatta,
But north of Tarwin Lower,
Where the land is so much flatter:
Now, all this doesn't really matter
But it makes this skinny verse look just a little fatter.**

**The greens at Leongatha were harder and much flatter
Than the greens of Inverlochers;
So Little Hiawatha was advised to go out wider,
Like a crab or drunken spider,
But his bowls were mostly shockers;
For that day he had the mokkers,
He was a horse without a rider.**

**Now, Leongatha's skipper
Knew how to sink the slipper,
He was more than worth his tucker
And that cocky little bugger
Knew how to make 'em bend
And where their run would end;
He was a Pretty - Kitty hugger,
And he was also Minnehaha's friend.**

**But poor old Hiawatha
Was in a spot of bother,
He knew not which end was which,
And his bowls were mostly heavy
So they finished in the ditch,
And a Leongatha player -
I can't remember which -
Said "Too much weight and way off line,
But otherwise your bowls are fine"
Which Hiawatha thought was rather rich,
Coming from that mean old witch
Who played for Leongatha.**

Now, enter Minnehaha
Who also plays for Leongatha;
Minne laughed her mocking laughter,
(That must be why they call her Ha - Ha),
Watching Hiawatha, who was not a bowling master
Said "Mister Hiawatha, your bowling's a disaster,
When you bowl, they seem to roll
Way past the alabaster
Your size two heavy bowls,
Your Henselite Greenmaster".

He tried to slow them down
But those green bowls, they just went faster,
One even left the bowling club and headed into town.
And those treacherous Greenmasters,
They drew like mustard-plasters
Some *did* stay on the rink,
But most finished in the drink.

Those blokes from Leongatha
Now got their act together,
They were gaining on the Lochers,
And in spite of woeful weather
By the twenty-second end,
Invy's game was getting lumpy,
But - mostly thanks to skipper Nic Van Grumpy,
They still had a slender margin to defend.

At this point of game protracted
A little drama was enacted,
Relating to the Bowling Rules and Regulations,
And whether "end declared" can later be retracted,
A matter for *interpretation*,
Before justice is exacted.
And whether 'end complete' had clearly been declared.

The Leongatha skipper
Had bowled a first-bowl ripper,
Like the famous Shane Warne flipper,
Giving Leongatha
Three shots, and one bowl still in hand;
Their Third called to his skip
"Better not to bowl it, in case you make a slip,
Just let the three-up stand,
And declare this winning end":

**This advice the skipper took -
But then he changed his mind,
And marched up to the head,
To take a closer look**

**That skipper was confronted by the Invy Second, Treaddie,
Who said "No bloody way, Blind Freddie"
As he waved his wooden leg, and stared that skipper down:
"The end has been declared"
And the skipper who had dared,
Lost his nerve, and laid his last bowl down.**

**Now, the Invies found some form,
Fired up by Treaddie's gorm,
And bowled on to win their rink,
Before retiring to the teepee,
The Leongatha tee-pee
Wherein they sat down and ordered More Strong Drink.**

**And Little Hiawatha, from the town of Inverlocha
Said "I've no wish to sound dramatic,
But I am over Leongatha
And I don't think that I'll return
Until they fix that super-fast synthetic
With something less erratic,
Because bowling super-soft
On painted green macadam
Is a trick which I may never really learn".**

**And where was Captain Smith and his saviour, Pocohantas
Well - they weren't out there bowling, just to haunt us,
In Little Hiawatha's
Leongatha misadventure,
And as far as I'm aware,
That legendary pair
Were never keen lawn-bowlers,
Like you, and her, and me,
So they have no need to bother,
With Little Hiawatha
And that cheeky Minnehaha
Or this harmless little piece
Of lawn-bowling his-tor-ee.**