
Popular commentators

Posted by SamLKelly - 27-03-2008 01:49

The minute's silence before the France vs. England game on Wednesday night was, apparently, for a French TV commentator who was very popular in his homeland.

(I say 'apparently' because Sky Sports weren't considerate enough to give subtitles to explain what was going on for what I suspect was the majority of their audience watching in pubs, who thus couldn't hear their commentators explaining it. I only finished work about half an hour before the game started, went straight to the pub, and thought some newsworthy tragedy must have occurred for a while, until I realised the England players weren't wearing black armbands)

So, although I suspect it's probably a slightly morbid question - are there ANY British commentators who will be that sorely missed? I'm trying, but I can't think of one...

Re:Popular commentators

Posted by Albert Tatlock - 27-03-2008 07:56

The radio ones are better. I like John Murray.

Re:Popular commentators

Posted by Alderman Barnes - 27-03-2008 08:17

We had one for Brian Moore, but then he was a Gills fan and former director. I don't know if anything happened at other grounds.

Re:Popular commentators

Posted by ian.64 - 27-03-2008 08:33

I think that Motson would get one because he straddled the line that separated amiable, beloved familiarity and inane parody for so long before falling headlong into the latter. He's become a national institution, but in a dumb, hopeless, pitiful way.

If Peter Drury bought it, there wouldn't be a minute's silence nor applause. More along the lines of a large conga line, replete with cheerily-brandished bottles of champagne.

Re:Popular commentators

Posted by JtS - 27-03-2008 08:49

There'll be more than a minute's applause when Trevor "Snore" Francis passes.

Re:Popular commentators

Posted by ian.64 - 27-03-2008 08:53

The buggers won't be able to stop. Palm-readers will have to find a new line of work after the skin on the inside of everybody's hands has been worn away.

This goes for David 'Blathering Swine' Pleat, too.

Popular commentators

Posted by Crusoe - 27-03-2008 08:55

And that Lawrenson.

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Re:Popular commentators

Posted by ian.64 - 27-03-2008 08:58

On the other hand, that would call for a bank holiday.

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Re:Popular commentators

Posted by ursus arctos - 27-03-2008 09:48

The French guy (Thierry Gilardi), who was their main commentator for both national team and Champions League games and had hosted their version of Match of the Day, died of a sudden heart attack at the age of 49 on Tuesday.

I would expect England to honour even widely hated commentators (yes, I'm looking at you Tyldesley) in similar circumstances.

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Re:Popular commentators

Posted by Paxton Sprout - 27-03-2008 11:48

I mis-read 'honour' as 'hammer' there ursos. Oops.

More of a summariser than commentator but I'd like to think that Stuart Hall's passing would be marked by something suitably over the top.

I minute's of blowing raspberries and flicking V's would do for Alan Green's memory.

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Re:Popular commentators

Posted by twohundredpercent - 27-03-2008 12:11

Brian Moore died on the day of the Germany vs England match in 2001, and I don't recall there being a minute's silence for him. There may or may not have been one for Kenneth Wolstenholme - I can't remember. The death of my personal favourite commentator, Hugh Johns, last summer passed almost completely unremarked upon in the press.

Of those still alive, Motson has probably got a few years left in him and Barry Davies divided opinion, so I can't imagine that there would be much national mourning over either of those two. Martin Tyler is a legend to anyone that has Sky Sports, but to the rest of us he has merely been curiously quiet since he left Granada TV at the end of the 1980s.

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Re:Popular commentators

Posted by Hieronymus Bosch - 27-03-2008 13:38

There was a minute's silence for Moore -- which was disrupted at The Den, apparently.

Over here, when George Hamilton dies there will probably be some martial music for a few minutes on Lyric FM.

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Re:Popular commentators

Posted by StephL - 27-03-2008 18:36

Like Ursus said, Thierry Gilardi was only 49, and had 3 kids. He came from Canal+ to TF1 a few years ago, replacing the charming Thierry Rolland. He seemed to be a nice guy, although his commentating style was a mittle bit over-excited at times. I was quite shocked when I heard about his sudden death.

R.I.P.

Re:Popular commentators

Posted by Phoebe Disco - 27-03-2008 20:33

Having a minutes silence for a commentator seems wrong really. We should spend the minute doing impressions of them*, or if you're at Hereford the day Motson carks, you should run on the pitch wearing a parka.

*Except Gerald Sinstadt, of course.

Re:Popular commentators

Posted by twohundredpercent - 27-03-2008 20:37

Actually, I'd support a minute's silence for My Mate Gerry Harrison too, now I come to think of it.

He's so tall.

Re:Popular commentators

Posted by ant259 - 27-03-2008 21:48

I for one will be gutted the day Barry Davies snuffs it - I've always been a big fan of his knowing, assuming-the-moral-and-cultural-high-ground style of commentating. And every time the cork pops on a bottle here at Ant Acres, I can never resist screaming "AAAOOOOHHH!!!! The taste of French wine! Abso-LOOT-ly mag-NIF-icent!" in B.D.'s honour. Mrs. Ant does not find this as amusing as I do, however.

Re:Popular commentators

Posted by Dr Collins - 27-03-2008 22:19

In the unlikely event of Barry Davies having an open casket funeral, mourners could lean in and yell "His face, just look at his face", their voices cracking on the second "his" in respectful imitation of Barry's commentary on Frannie Lee's goal for Derby v Man City (the one that starts "Interesting...interesting...oh, very interesting...").

Re:Popular commentators

Posted by Paxton Sprout - 27-03-2008 22:23

That's got to be post of the day. Excellent stuff.

Re:Popular commentators

Posted by ale - 27-03-2008 22:47

none of them....prefer to spend live TV games with the sound down and the music up...

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Re:Popular commentators

Posted by EIM - 28-03-2008 02:26

I suppose I should have put this on the 'people I hate myself for liking' thread, but I've got a lot of time for Lawrenson. I think he's piss funny. Not, perhaps, as piss funny as he thinks he is, but hey, who is?

When his ex-wife did a kiss and tell to the papers, the worst she could trudge up about him was that he folds his pants before he puts them in the washing machine. No wonder he always looks so smug on MoTD, not only is he wearing immaculate pants, but his wife never found out about his coke and hooker parties.

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Re:Popular commentators

Posted by Hieronymus Bosch - 28-03-2008 03:19

No offence EIM, but Lawrenson belongs on the "people I should hang myself for liking" thread.

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Re:Popular commentators

Posted by EIM - 28-03-2008 03:25

Yes, I see this.

But still, there's something about his demeanour I really like. His whole 'I know this is shit, I don't care this is shit, I'm showing everyone I think this is shit, but I'm not Lee Dixon, so I win' schtick is really appealing to me.

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Re:Popular commentators

Posted by EIM - 28-03-2008 03:26

And also, when you spend that much time around Alan Green, you're going to eventually come out looking good. Relatively speaking, like.

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Re:Popular commentators

Posted by Wyatt Earp - 28-03-2008 10:32

I won't mourn any football commentator all that much, I don't think. Whereas when Benaud goes, I'll wear widow's weeds for two years.

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Re:Popular commentators

Posted by ursus arctos - 28-03-2008 10:47

That's an interesting tangent, Wyatt, and I think the relative pace of the two games has a lot to do with the different relationship people feel with at least some cricket commentators.

I feel the same way about baseball, particularly radio-centric baseball commentators, who really become a part of one's life over the course of a 162-game season that is full of opportunities for random musings. Several generations of Dodger fans will have heard more words from Vin Scully than any other human being.

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Re:Popular commentators

Posted by Aldo Simoncini - 28-03-2008 11:16

Malcolm Allen is a universally popular Commentator in Wales. The Allen-isms pearls of wisdom, as well as how his Welsh has improved dramatically (must have been to classes to help his vocabulary at some point) make him a really popular figure on the whole.

I saw him late at night at Tesco, Bangor a few weeks ago and he noticed my Bangor City apparel. He was the one keeping me talking by the end. I'd never met him before that.

For the record, I never much liked Barry Davies.

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Re:Popular commentators

Posted by Fuzzy Dunlop - 28-03-2008 12:51

I'd imagine there would be a lot of obituaries/tributes when Archie MacPherson shuffles off. Don't know about a minute's silence, probably one of those situations when applause would be the better option.

Personally, I'd mourn the loss of Bob Crampsey more.

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Re:Popular commentators

Posted by Hieronymus Bosch - 28-03-2008 13:03

Macpherson is a rubbish commentator but a surprisingly good writer. I have his books about Scottish football and Jock Stein and they're both very readable.

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Re:Popular commentators

Posted by Fuzzy Dunlop - 28-03-2008 13:06

Yeah, he's very poor. Far too critical for my liking. He's very much an 'establishment'/national treasure type, though.

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Re:Popular commentators

Posted by Bafflin Smoke Signals - 28-03-2008 22:32

I spent quite a long time writing a thing about Thierry Gilardi the other day, explaining how decent he seemed, how he also loved rugby, how he was vice-president of Stade Francais, how the French football and rugby communities each gave what appeared to be heartfelt tributes to him on the national news before the England game, how the news presenter only just made it to the goodnight bit at the end without breaking down because he was with him the morning he died, how they illustrated his commentary alongside memorable sporting moments from the last few years, and how it was all really quite moving... and the board timed me out and I couldn't be arsed to re-type it all.

However, on the subject of popular commentators, I will say that despite his tendency to become increasingly precious, I always had a lot of time for Barry Davies.

Mainly this is because I once had to contact him and several other people in the world of TV football. Not only was he one of the few to be decent enough to ring me back, but he also left a message on my home answerphone that began, "Hello, my name is Barry Davies, and...". Not "THIS IS Barry Davies..." It struck me that this said a lot about him as a person. Funnily enough, I never heard a word from Alan Green.

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Re:Popular commentators

Posted by SamLKelly - 28-03-2008 22:38

I've got admit Barry Davies is one I find it just a bit too hard to dislike. If only for his schoolmasterly tone ('Completely uncalled for...'). My best mate's got a 'best bits of France 98' video in which one crowd shot zooms in on a bootlicious Jamiacan woman shaking her thang in the stands, and giving a broad smile to the camera. Barry's response said it all: 'Oh, I say!'

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