

Read this first.....

Sometimes a story about you doesn't turn out quite the way you imagined. In August 2008 John Harley Weston got a call from a journalist at the Scottish Daily Express newspaper who wanted to do an article about Channel 7 Television featuring John's songs on their Beijing Olympics playlist. Below is the article/transcript that the journalist sent to his editor....it's nothing like the story that actually appeared in the newspaper - circled in red on opposite page.

Scottish Daily Express – Aug 2008
reporter Derek Watson

AN EXILED Scottish musician is on course for a surprise hit in Australia, after his version of Waltzing Matilda was chosen to feature in a national TV station's Olympic coverage.

Singer songwriter, John Harley Weston, who originally hails from Ayrshire, is hoping the coverage will boost sales of online downloads of the track, which has been re-released as a single, and help make it a worldwide hit.

More than half of Australia's prime time viewing audience, over 5 million people, have already tuned into Channel 7's coverage.

John, who has previously supported Wet, Wet, Wet and Duran Duran, said: "I've been playing it live for six years but I figure if I can't have a hit in Australia with Waltzing Matilda I've got no chance.

"I've had a couple of decent reviews and a few months ago I contacted the Australian Olympic Committee and eventually went to Channel 7, who are doing the official broadcasting, to see if they were interested in using it.

"I had dealings with them before because I wrote a song for the Brisbane Lions Aussie Rules team 1999.

"Eventually the executive producer had a listen and liked it and put the song on the playlist along with 'Believe in Yourself', which I worked on with another Scot, Sandy Jones from Wishaw.

"Ian Anderson has played it on BBC Radio Scotland recently and it's definitely a song which can work all around the world."

'Waltzing Matilda', and a second song, 'Believe In Yourself', both feature on John's album 'Welcome Back To Reality'.

John says so far there's been no eyebrows raised about a Scot singing what is the country's unofficial anthem and points out that Andrew "Banjo" Paterson who penned the lyrics in 1895, had a Scottish father and the tune is based on an earlier Scottish melody.

He said: "There's an amazing tradition over here of Scots involved in music. Colin Hay of Men at Work is a Scotsman, Jimmy Barnes, who is Australia's biggest rock singer, and half of AC/DC.

"Advance Australia Fair, the national anthem, was also written by a Scotsman, Peter Dodds McCormick, and Waltzing Matilda has a bit of a Scottish background too.

"The area where Banjo Paterson wrote the words at Dagworth station, north of Winton, is right out in the desert and even now you hear Scottish accents in a lot of the towns.

"He was first played the tune he used, Thou Bonnie Woods of Craigielea, by Christina Macpherson. She never gets credited which is a terrible shame."

Until 1997 John Harley Weston, as he is now known, was plain John Higgins from Stewarton and used to front Scottish band Frontier, who had Texas and Dire Straits as labelmates and toured with Wet, Wet, Wet and Gun.

But then after meeting his Australian wife, he swapped Stewarton for Surfers Paradise on the Australian Gold Coast.

The 41-year-old now lives on Tamborine Mountain with wife Susan, and daughter Mackenzie, 6.

He added: "It's a wonderful place to live with rainforest, wonderful weather and brilliant beaches but I do miss a decent pint and a great Glasgow pub. I'm starting to get referred to as the exiled Scot so I'm better get back and see my mum and dad soon."

John's hoping to raise thousands for Amnesty International with downloads of the track which is available on iTunes.

He said: "I would love to raise 10,000 dollars to give to Amnesty to show that the Olympics and human rights can work together. I'd love it to be a hit with people back home too.

"It's a chance to make a small donation toward a better world and fire up the music industry at the same time."

end

Oh well, at least I got on the same page as sprinters Usain Bolt and Allan Wells.....now that's something!

Daily Express Thursday August 21st 2008

Picture: PAUL McFEGAN, OLIVER HOSLEY and DARREN WHITESIDE. ITSUO INOUE



Cassie Patten; Bryony Shaw; and Usain Bolt

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and we just kind of knew when to kick at the right time."

Unexpected success came for Natasha Danvers, who is coached by her husband Darrell Smith, in the 400m hurdles. She won bronze despite Achilles and hamstring injuries earlier in the year. London-born Danvers, who now lives in LA, said: "I'm just so thrilled."

It came on the day the world's fastest man, Jamaica's Usain Bolt, added the 200m gold and world record to his 100m success.

Meanwhile, Britain's top heptathlete Kelly Sotherton was proved right after claiming that opponent Lyudmila Blonska was a drugs cheat. Yesterday Blonska, who won silver, was kicked out and stripped of her award after testing positive for anabolic steroids.



KNIGHT RIDER: Chris Hoy

Wells is backing 'Sir' call

SCOTS Olympic hero Allan Wells has joined the clamour to make golden boy Chris Hoy a knight.

Wells, who won gold at the 1980 Moscow Games, said Chris had earned a knighthood.

Allan, 56, said of Hoy, who has now won four golds and one silver over three Olympics: "Five medals surely deserves to be a Sir."

Yesterday a marketing expert predicted that Hoy, 32, will soon become a millionaire through endorsements.

Cycling clubs also reported a "Hoy effect" with the achievements of the former George Watson's pupil from Edinburgh inspiring a rush of youngsters to try the sport.

Waltzing to agony

DEPRESSED Aussies were just dealing with being beaten by the Brits in the medal race when they discovered the version of Waltzing Matilda played for their Olympic TV coverage is recorded by a Scot.

Channel 7 chose a recording of the song by John Harley Weston, originally from Ayrshire. He said: "If I can't have a hit in Australia with Waltzing Matilda I've got no chance."

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