

In Other Words it says 'Read Me.'

To the uninitiated, Rugby Union appears to have all the subtlety of a juggernaut and its devotees the social and sporting graces of Attila the Hun. Ian Telford, AAP's deputy sports editor, sees it somewhat differently.

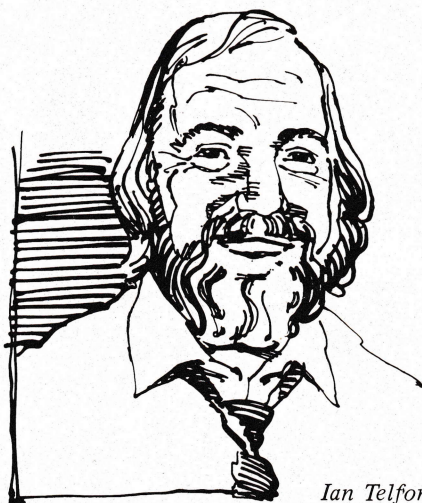
According to a successful Sydney University Master of Arts thesis, Telford's writings on the sport display a preoccupation with metaphor and imagery, national myth and folklore.

Telford, steeped in the game since childhood, was one of four main writers analysed for the thesis on Australian Literature.

The writer looked at 28 of Ian's stories from his coverage of the 1981-1982 Wallaby Tour of Britain and the 1982 Wallaby Tour to New Zealand. The M.A. student, Dac Croker, credits Telford with a unique brand of humour, an urgent writing style, literary allusion, a subtle control of dialogue, brilliant language manipulation and the craftsmanship of a good short-story writer.

"The audience must be knowledgeable to pick up all that is in Telford's work. It is not complex, but complicated, whilst seemingly simply", says Croker. And some of you probably thought sports writing was easy.

Croker's final judgment: "Rugby journalists do more than justice to their subject, they do justice to prose."



Pro-Logue Up Front.

Canberra political correspondent Peter Logue added to his bureau's already lustrous reputation for breaking major stories by revealing the formation of a new ALP faction in February, one of many triumphs for AAP journalists who scored during the month for material either exclusive to AAP or on which we made much of the running.

Logue's front page lead story in *The Australian* on February 17 occupied most of the top half of the front page and was displayed in a way to delight an agency journalist's heart. As well as the byline and AAP credit, *The Australian* made the most of a story worthy

of a splash by running pictures of eight federal ministers with it.

Logue's story on the faction, the Centre Left, led by Foreign Minister Bill Hayden, detailed its impressive strength, central figures and its genesis.

Its emergence, as Logue pointed out at the start of his story, was one of the most significant developments within the party in many years.

He also predicted at the beginning of February that the next federal election would be held in March, 1985, because of certain constitutional requirements. Mr. Hawke subsequently confirmed March as the likely date, for those same reasons.

They all Talk to Tony White.

The Sydney Bureau team reacted with practised efficiency when the city's second siege in less than a month saw a 72-year-old man barricaded in his shop at the Hyatt Kingsgate Hotel with enough explosives to bring a good part of the building toppling down.

Bureau night editor Tony White achieved a rare double by speaking to the man on the phone and getting his explanation of why he had taken this dramatic stand. The quotes were attributed to AAP in most newspaper stories the next day. Tony had earlier been the only journalist to get through by phone to one of the hostages held in the Commonwealth Bank by an armed robber who was later shot dead by police after a car chase through Sydney streets lasting several hours.

Our man on the spot at the Kingsgate siege was Bruce Millar who stopped off when he noticed all the activity on his way to work about 2 p.m. He was still there at 1 a.m. the next day when the siege finally ended with the man's surrender.

The story proved worth the wait. His bylined report led the *Townsville Bulletin* and was also fronted by *The Age*, *The Newcastle Herald* and *The Sun Pictorial*.

The other big story of the month for Sydney was *The Age Tapes* saga which dominated political life inside and outside parliament for weeks and finally led to the early State election being called for March 24.

State political roundsman Keith Gosman with help from Bruce Millar, in particular, won consistently good play on all the main developments.

John Bull.

The big surprise, though, was Elton John's wedding. Arranged at short notice, it provided a media extravaganza and front page material for most newspapers. Debra Bull was the lucky girl at the church well ahead of time to win the lion's share of the play.

Diana Plater's visit to Grafton for the House of Representatives Inquiry into the effects of asbestos mining on the Baryulgil community was a rewarding assignment with the story winning solid play in The Age and SMH as well as regional newspapers. Diana was the only journalist with the commission, an assignment she arranged on her own initiative and it paid off in column inches.

Sydney's largest byline of the month went to sports writer Ross Mullins for his interview with Australian Cricket Board Chairman Fred Bennett splashed across the backpage of the SMH and spilling inside.

Canberra — Three Federal by-elections were held last month and Canberra correspondent Mike Lawson previewed them all during a week on the road with Opposition Leader Andrew Peacock and later wrapped up the results. His byline appeared all around the country.

Bruce Jones travelled with Prime Minister Hawke to Japan, China, South Korea, Hong Kong, Malaysia and Singapore covering everything from Koala Diplomacy to potential new industrial co-operation with Peking, winning his customary wide play, including a good sprinkling of front page leads.

Darby Days.

HOBART — The most sensational court case of the month was covered by Andrew Darby who followed the unfolding of the gory tale of the American scientist who dismembered his wife and flushed her down the drains. His court copy won prominent, regular play in the Daily Sun, Adelaide Advertiser, The Age, Australian and Newcastle Herald.

DARWIN — In a month just bubbling over with good stories, we had Brian Johnstone bylined for the impact Christmas Island

voters could have on future Territory elections, Paul Everingham signalling a future move to Canberra and the tabling in parliament of the Territory's reply to the claims made by private investigators in the Azaria Chamberlain case, the latter well used in the SMH, and in The Australian with an AAP credit.

BRISBANE and ADELAIDE — Both bureaux scored heavily with features. Among bylines almost too numerous to mention were Jo Hawke on the Roxby standoff, Richard Pullin on the battle for control of 5AA, Ian Oliver on The Right Stuff, Gil Breittkreutz on the Barrier Reef, and Wayne Heming on the killer sting of the box jellyfish. MELBOURNE — Ian Pemberton made much of the running on the Bell/BHP battle with some valuable information from his inside source, and later the Supreme Court hearing on the wrangle and his interview with Holmes a Court. His finest effort was to lead the SMH finance page with a byline for Bell securing six million BHP acceptances, a product of inside information.

The Deep End.

New Melbourne industrial roundsman Ted Himmerreich had a baptism of fire going almost straight into the National Wage Case hearing and BLF dispute.

Easily the biggest scorer for Melbourne was Kerry Packer in the witness box before the Costigan Royal Commission. This story, written by Seaton Ashton, led the Courier Mail, was fronted in The Australian, used prominently in the Daily Sun and in the Financial Review which had a front-page pointer featuring a squirrel.

WORLD DESK — The desk, always a busy place, became even more so in the last few days of February, with the death of Soviet President Yuri Andropov and the subsequent political intrigue surrounding his funeral the main events.

Around the same time President Ronald Reagan chose to announce the withdrawal of the American marines from Beirut airport to ships offshore.

World features, under the unerring eye of desk editor Bruce Walkley, continued to win wide play in features, news and sports

pages of both metropolitan and provincial newspapers. Since late in 1982, when the desk stepped up the number of features moved, there has been a never-ending demand for them, with the current usage rate running at something like 80 per cent of material issued.

LONDON — London was probably the most active of our own overseas bureaux with Ron Watson winning a swag of bylines and credits in The Age, Sun Pic, Canberra Times, Newcastle Herald and Adelaide Advertiser from the OECD meeting in Paris attended by Treasurer Paul Keating.

Set to Blow.

PORT MORESBY — Chris Pash in Port Moresby had a big month, dominated by the threat of a volcanic eruption which could wipe out much of Rabaul. Pash has made all possible preparations for when he needs to go to the site including the purchase of a tent and camping gear plus emergency rations.

He also had a fresh outbreak of fighting on the border with Irian Jaya and refugees crossing into Papua New Guinea. He won good bylines in The Age, Melbourne Herald and West Australian and a consistently strong run in the Courier Mail, Canberra Times, The Australian, Daily Telegraph and Daily Sun.

First for Editors

AAP will be organising and hosting the first National Conference of Regional Daily Newspaper Editors in Sydney on May 4. Some 40 editors from Queensland, New South Wales, the ACT, Northern Territory, Victoria and Tasmania are expected to attend the conference at the Hilton Hotel.

Confirmed speakers include National Party leader Ian Sinclair, Reuters Editor-in-Chief Michael Reupke, Press Association Editor-in-Chief David Chipp and Bendigo Advertiser Managing Director Reg MacDonald.

Prime Minister Bob Hawke has indicated, too, that he will address the conference and we await final confirmation.