

Cadbury and Wallabies prove dads wrong

 By [Brendan Seery](#)

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All marketing roads - well, it sometimes seems that way - head to France in October for a little sporting contest over something called the Webb Ellis Cup.



Despite what its proponents tell us, though, rugby is still a minor sport in global terms...but for those of us in the “playing” nations, it is a very big deal. And, of course, when it comes to deals, sponsors and World Rugby are going to be spending, and making, billions out of the Rugby World Cup.

Patriotism

In South Africa, our rugby ads – at least for the Springboks – tend to be infused with deep patriotism and sponsors like MTN and Toyota hope that patriotism translates into money in the tills. What did the American car makers once say? Win on Sunday, sell on Monday...

Yet, Down Under, sponsor Cadburys and Australian Rugby are taking, a different – one might even use the by now cliched term “disruptive” – approach to their ads on behalf of their national team, the Wallabies.

I can't recall a Wallabies side which has performed worse in the modern era. We *klapped* them a few weeks back, the Argentinians did the same and this past Saturday, the All Blacks looked like they were doing an energetic haka on the grave of Aussie rugby.

Rugby in Australia is in the doldrums, as former Aussies star David Campese told *The Australian* recently. He said many kids he spoke to didn't even have favourite players. Others have said that young Aussies are just as likely to look over to the Kiwis for inspiration.

Lowering expectations

That's a pretty sad state of affairs. So, how do you celebrate Aussie rugby? You don't. You do the opposite. You admit you're awful, that everybody thinks you're awful and having lowered the bar of expectations, you can only seem better in the eyes of the fans.

And the man you use to do it is none other than Wallabies coach Eddie Jones. Remember him? He's the man who said he didn't want to bring his team to SA to play a second-string Springbok team...and then got thumped in the process. When the matter of his hubris was raised by a local journalist, his response was "Don't be a smart-arse, mate."

Jones is not an easy person to like but, you have to take your hat off to him for going along with the almost anti-promotion promotion.



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We see him in the "Tough Luck" barbershop as the man cutting his hair and a fellow customer believe the Wallabies are no-hopers for France. Eddie's response to the question about whether "you lot can win the whole thing" is simple: "Mate, we're not going to France for the croissants..."

Another execution has him visiting a typical rugby-loving family. He's met by the son who tells his dad that there's someone at the door asking questions about the World Cup.

Dad, predictably, points out that the Wallabies are rubbish, that France is playing in their own backyard, etc etc etc. All the answers are dutifully relayed to Eddie, waiting at the door with the clipboard.

“Who is this for?” asks the son at the door.

“The Wallabies,” answers Eddie... “We love proving dads wrong.”

It's brilliant because self-deprecating humour is something you seldom see in any advertising, anywhere. And it makes the subtle point: We've got something to prove. Just watch us.

After watching this, you get the feeling the Wallabies might be the surprise package of the Rugby World Cup. So, Orchids to Cadbury's and Australian Rugby.

Spam advertising

Still on the subject of rugby, I can see why Budget Insurance decided Springbok flyhalf Faf De Klerk would be a perfect mascot for them. They noted, correctly, that the pint-sized dynamo (in the SA flag Speedo) is loved by women. During Saturday's game, my wife's main comments were about how shiny his hair looked, even deep into the match against Argentina.

For my part, I got more and more irritated as he repeatedly gave away possession with his aimless box kicks...but my wife even had an excuse for that: That's the game plan and he's told to do that, she said. Funny how that wasn't in the game plan when we had another scrumhalf against the Aussies three weeks earlier...



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Yet Faf did remind me that it is not only his ads that irritate me about Budget.

Though I have never had anything to do with them (and they must have bought my contact details from some of these dodgy people who sell such lists), they nevertheless continue to spam me on a regular basis with SMS messages.

What really took the cake, though was this one: “Mr Seery, how many years has it been? We still miss you. Come back to Budget Insurance....”

If you do not know that I have never been your customer and therefore have nothing to come back to, how on earth can I trust you with something as important as my short-term insurance needs?

Budget you get an Onion for using the dreadful – and obviously potentially erroneous – shotgun approach to marketing. Stop wasting your (and your clients') money...

ABOUT BRENDAN SEERY

Brendan Seery has been in the news business for most of his life, covering coups, wars, famines - and some funny stories - across Africa. Brendan Seery's *Orchids and Onions* column ran each week in the *Saturday Star* in Johannesburg and the *Weekend Argus* in Cape Town.

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