

Stewed tomatoes for breakfast part of Aussie's everyday life

NEW SOUTH WALES, Australia — I thought this last letter should be about aspects of everyday life in Australia — what people eat and drink, what they wear and what they watch on TV.

There's no typical Australian dish that I can find — no Kangaroo Casserole, for example — but there are some foods that you wouldn't find in the states. I've asked kids around here what a typical menu would be in their homes, and they said it's usually cereal for breakfast, sandwiches for lunch and chops or steak and vegetables ("veggies") for dinner or "tea." Dorm food, in that case, isn't quite typical. Breakfasts

here have sometimes consisted of stewed tomatoes, sometimes fish, sometimes baked beans on toast. Chunder city. I usually have Rice Bubbles — Rice Krispies — orange/mango juice, toast and milk. And hard-boiled eggs if they're available. Nearly everyone drinks coffee and/or tea at every meal, but I've never been fond of either, so I don't. I don't put Vegemite on toast very often, either. You've heard about Vegemite through Men At Work's "Down Under" song, but you have to taste it to appreciate it. It's some kind of yeast extract, and it has a sharp, vegetable-like taste. It's not horrible, but it's not as great as everybody around here says it is. It looks like black peanut butter, or maybe thick axle grease, but the Aussies eat it from childhood on.

They put a lot of curry in some dishes here, influenced, probably, by East Indian cuisine. We also have sweet and sour pork and some other Chinese food in the dorm, and in Sydney there are a lot of Indian, Chinese and Lebanese restaurants. There aren't many Italian restaurants, however, and the only pizza I've had has been twice in the cafeteria and once at Pizza Hut. (Yes, they have Pizza Huts, millions of McDonalds, Kentucky Fried Chickens and, as I wrote earlier, Burger Kings which are called Hungry Jacks.)

As far as what people drink, it's mostly coffee and tea aftermeals and beer after (during, or before) anything. Beer consumption, or should I say inhalation, is high here, second in the world, it's said, to Germany. Aussie beer supposedly is higher in alcohol content, at 4.9 percent, but I can't tell any difference from ours. Beer consumption in bars or "pubs" has dropped recently, though, because of a tough drinking and driving law. "Random breath testing" allows police to stop any motorist and check him for blood alcohol content.

Clothes, well, it's tough to generalize because there are so many different modes of dress. Businessmen look like businessmen everywhere, I suppose, but most other groups would be easily distinguishable from Americans.

Most of the kids who live in the dorms dress like kids would back home, with Levi's jeans the official uniform. But there are a lot of punkers around campus and anything goes with them. One bunch wears jeans, jean jackets and a T-shirt of some punk of New Wave band underneath the jackets. Another group wears long earrings, skin-tight pants or short skirts with black tights (I'm talking about the females now), lots of eye makeup and black suede ankle boots. A lot of males and females have spiked hair or hair piled high like the Stray Cats, or hair with different colors in it or various combinations thereof. Most of the hair that's dyed is bright red, but I saw one blonde girl who had purple at the ends of her bangs. I also saw a girl who couldn't have been older than 13 with a Mohawk haircut. It didn't look very good.

As for television, a lot of it is old junk from the United States. I counted 40 American television shows in a weekly listing with 13 of those during prime time. The most popular American shows are "Dallas," "Dynasty" (pronounced dihnstiy), "M*A*S*H" reruns, "Magnum P.I." and "Fame."

There's so much more to say about this place where I've been for two months and two days, but the Daily Nebraskan won't print anymore after this week. If you want to study abroad, go to the International Studies office in Oldfather Hall for information, because you'll never have a chance like this again.

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As far as what people drink, it's mostly




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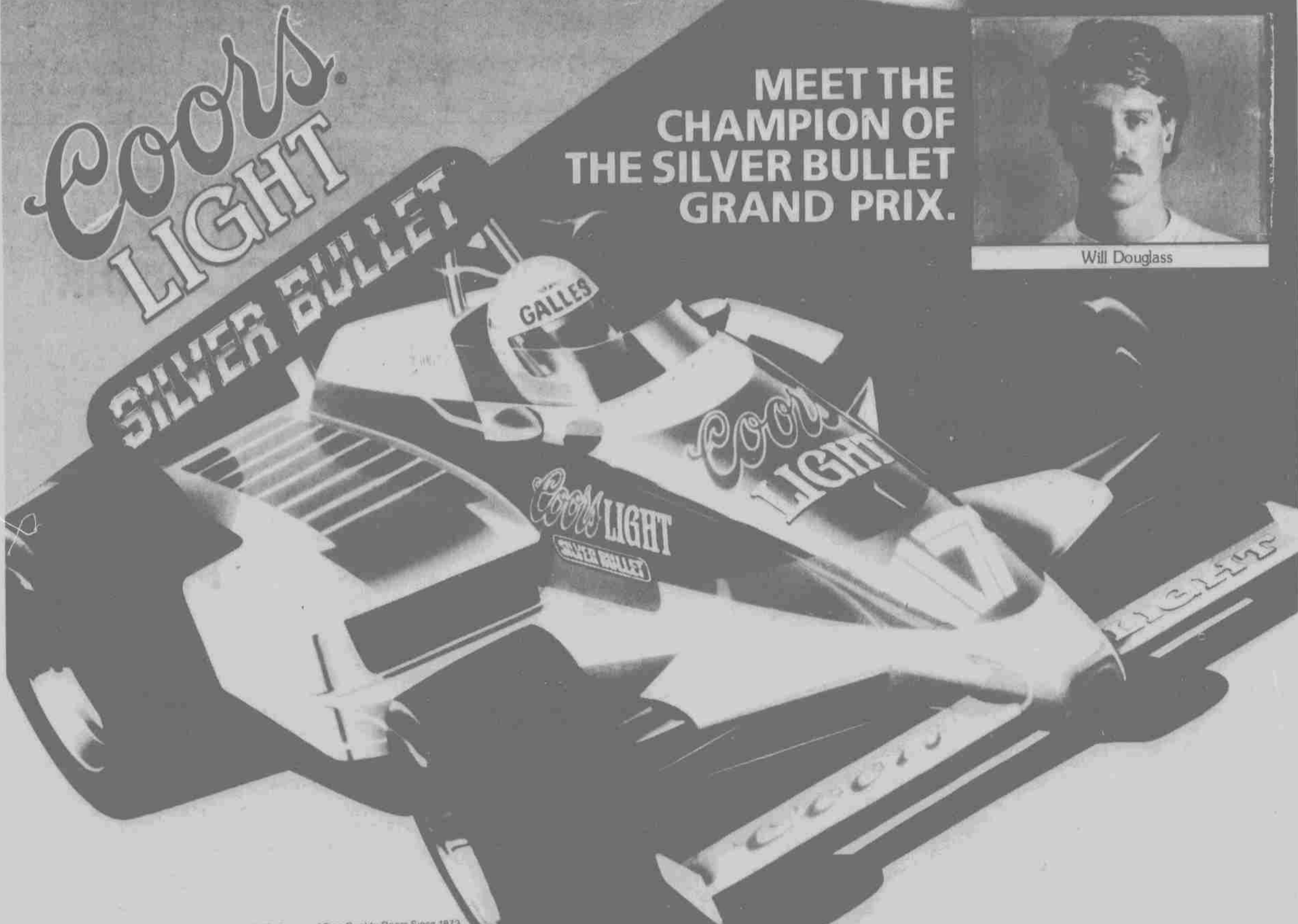
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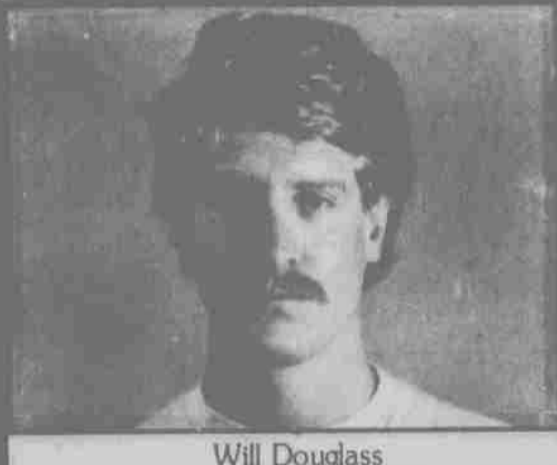
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