

I'm still trying to give up this nasty smoking habit

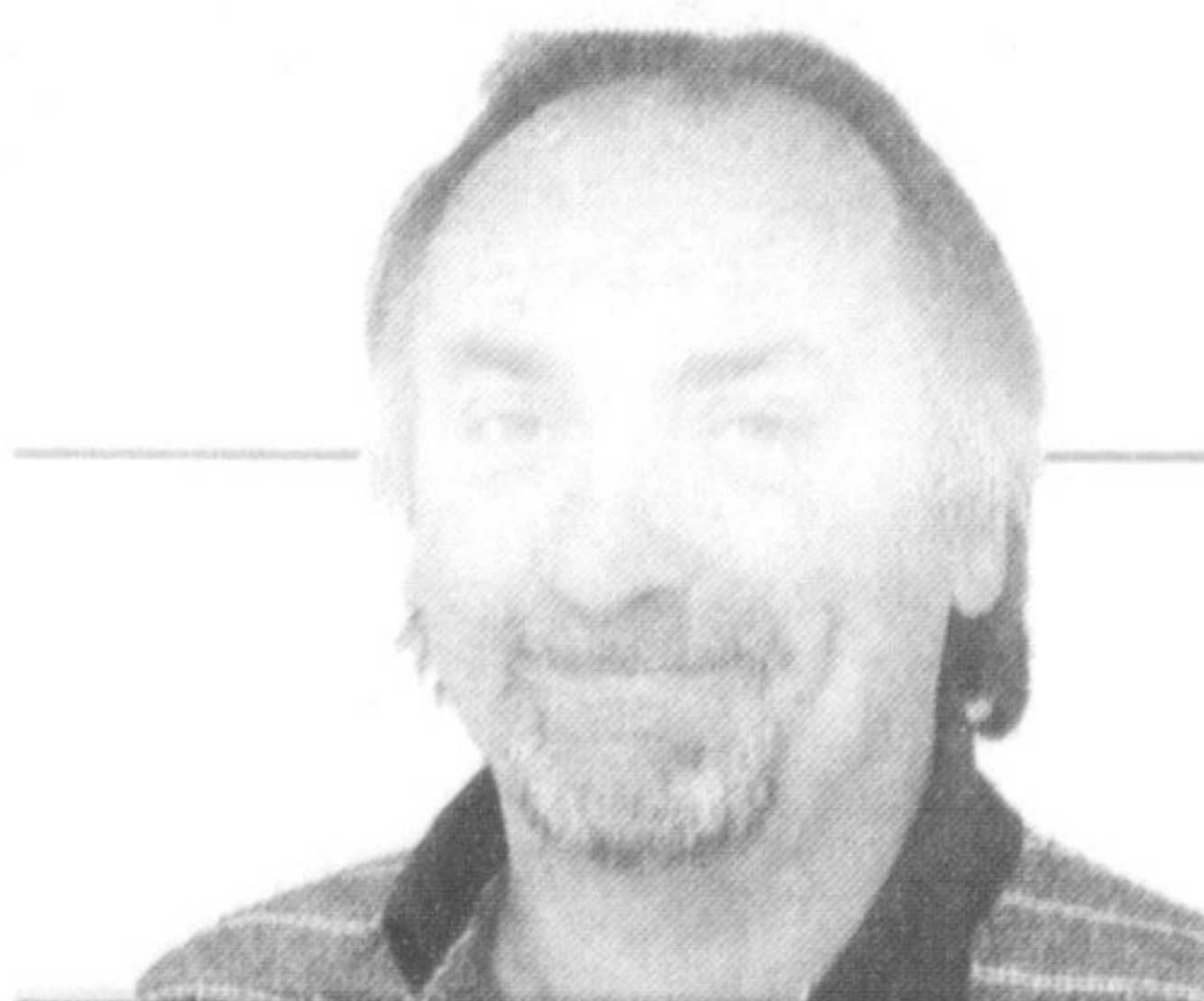
Veteran readers of this column will know that I've tried to quit smoking 8,621 times, and have been unsuccessful 8,621 times.

Actually, I did quit once for three years, but then one day while sipping on a cool one I figured just one wouldn't hurt. That was about 15 years ago. Funny how time flies.

I don't really like smoking, until I try to quit, and then I love it and miss it like it was my dearest oldest friend. So, I give in, and then wish I hadn't. After 8,621 times, you'd think I'd have learned something, but I haven't.

And did you know that smoking is bad for you? People still tell me that all the time, as if it's breaking news. I knew that 30 years ago when I started smoking, but as I said, I'm a slow learner.

I'm writing this the night before I quit smoking forever because I'm supposed to write a column this week, and if I'm not smoking, then I won't be able to write it because I won't be able to do much of anything. It takes at least three days to get out of the veg-



On the loose

with MURRAY TOWNSEND

etation state.

This will be my sixth time this summer quitting smoking forever, but the summer is the best time for quitting smoking because I'm too busy during the winter with hockey and 16-hour work days. Although, if the NHL doesn't settle its labour problems, I may have considerable more free time.

The Champion didn't ask me to join its non-smoking challenge. I don't why, but between you and me, there could be some jealousy after I blew away the competition in the weight loss challenge. Or it could be that I'd be a candidate for every bad habit challenge, so they thought they'd give some other people a chance.

I'm a shoo-in for the finger-nail biting challenge, the lazy good-for-nothing challenge, and the let's talk about our feelings with women challenge. Especially the last one.

Come to think of it, maybe I wasn't asked to join the non-smoking challenge because they thought I had no chance of success. I've already tried every single smoking cessation method, including hypnosis. That didn't work very well, and sometimes I start clucking like a chicken for no apparent reason.

I have just nine cigarettes left while I write this. Hold on... eight, I'm lighting one up now. The eighth last cigarette I'll ever have.

Each of the last eight cigarettes will be special, but it'll be the last one that I'll remember. I usually do. And when I take that last puff and put out the cigarette, I'll be happy to be free from the evils of smoking.

I'm writing this on Monday night, so I'm going to leave room for a report on Tuesday and Wednesday below to give an update on how I'm doing. I won't be able to think very well, so it won't be much. But for now, just let me enjoy my last eight cigarettes.

Tuesday: Okay, so I had to do some stuff today, so it wasn't the best time. Everything I wrote above still holds, however. Just change it from Monday night to Tuesday night.

Wednesday: Okay, so today didn't turn out to be the best day, at least in the morning. Everything I wrote above still holds, however. Just change it from Tuesday night to Wednesday night.

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