

# The Case of the Team Spirit

*John Allison*

Download now

Read Online →

# The Case of the Team Spirit

*John Allison*

## **The Case of the Team Spirit** John Allison

Tackleford, England is a town full of mysteries. Shauna, Charlotte, and Mildred just want to help the mysterious old immigrant woman keep her home. Jack, Linton, and Sonny just want to find out why the owner of the local football stadium has been plagued by a curse. If only the two groups could stop fighting with each other, they might realize there's a shared solution...

Of course, when you're just starting your first year at Griswalds Grammar School, nothing matters quite as much as football, friends, stylish jackets, trading cards, or your nerdy teacher's fancy wife. And when all of these things are competing for your attention, just how are you supposed to find the time to solve mysteries, anyway?

## **The Case of the Team Spirit Details**


Date : Published April 2nd 2013 by Oni Press (first published March 27th 2013)

ISBN : 9781620100844

Author : John Allison

Format : Paperback 136 pages

Genre : Sequential Art, Comics, Graphic Novels, Young Adult, Mystery, Humor, Fiction, Graphic Novels  
Comics

 [Download The Case of the Team Spirit ...pdf](#)

 [Read Online The Case of the Team Spirit ...pdf](#)

**Download and Read Free Online The Case of the Team Spirit John Allison**

---

## From Reader Review The Case of the Team Spirit for online ebook

### Dolly says

This is Volume 1 of...

interesting quotes:

"Go! And remember! Zebra is fine creature to admire, but you do not have to ride it." (p. 99)

"" (p.)

"" (p.)

---

### Jeannette says

This took me much longer to get invested in that Allison's *Giant Days*, but once I was into it, I was far more into it. Part of the problem is that the story comes together more slowly (probably due to the comic's origins). I managed to keep entertained because I recognized some of the characters and references from Allison's other works, but it still required a bit of effort. I did like how the book begins, introducing each character as they are off on their first day of school, but then the characters kind of blend together for a while, at least until the threads of the story really come together.

Once those plot threads do start developing, I really began to find the story enjoyable. Not to mention, I was quite curious how the boys' mission and the girls' mission were going to both work out, given that they were, you know, opposites. I liked how Allison managed to work it out, and even though I wouldn't say the ending is completely satisfying, it worked.

Despite the little things I didn't like, this is definitely my genre, with the sly and silly wit, the quirky mysteries, and the random dropping of fantasy. I'll be picking up the next volume as soon as I can get my library to get it to me.

---

### Laura says

If you have been following this series online, this is the first collection from when it first started. If you haven't stumbled across *Bad Machinery*, and you like *Giant Days*, I would suggest giving this a try, as it has a similar, though much younger, group of quirky friends having adventures.

--additional edits on this review--

These are some pictures. As you can see, it is done in the same style as *Giant Days*, just with a younger cast.

As with Giant Days, things seem like a conventional normal story, until they don't and there are space aliens instead of little old ladies that emigrated from Russia.

If you like that kind of weirdness, I would recommend checking this out.

--end of additional edit--

Best way to know if you will like this, is to check out Bad Machinery. The first story on the site, after the preamble, is the story that is in this volume. And since this has been going on for a while, the children have grown up a bit in the latest stories.

Thanks to Netgalley for making this book available for an honest review.

---

### **Samantha says**

Think Scooby Doo and his gang but set in Britain and with clever, witty banter.

The cast of characters are divided along gender lines and both are fighting for a cause. The boys are concerned about the poor performance of their local soccer (football) team, while the girls are fighting for the housing rights of an elderly woman they refer to as Mrs. Biscuits whose home is threatened by the plan to build a new soccer (football) stadium.

The characters are fresh, fun, and cheeky. The dialogue was snappy and moved fast which made for an excellent read. Highly recommended for fans of Faith Erin Hicks' work. Grades 7 and up.

---

### **Emily says**

This caught my eye as it was passing through the library. I quite enjoyed the humor. The kids seemed older than they were supposed to be, and the one oddball supernatural element in the story felt kind of plunked in. Still, it was great fun, and I'm looking forward to reading more.

---

### **Sam Quixote says**

Jack, Sonny, Linton, Shauna, Charlotte and Mildred are six 11 year-old friends who're about to discover that high school isn't about lessons, homework and teachers; it's about sleuthing, social justice, family curses, and big business football - this is Bad Machinery (a title I've yet to understand)!

This first volume is quite a hefty paperback with slightly larger than A4-size paper set horizontally so the thing flops open like a car manual as you're reading it. But at 129 pages, it's not a long read though it took me a few sittings to get through. Part of that was the meandering nature of the story, which is mostly character-centric and wasn't terribly interesting plot-wise, but after a cursory google I discovered Bad Machinery is a webcomic with each page as a self-contained episode.

That explained the same sense of fatigue I got when I read Calvin & Hobbes and Peanuts collections - these are dailies not really designed to be read 100+ pages at a pop. It also explains why it's not heavy on the story

because if you're jumping in for the first time, you're going to be totally lost. But a group of funny characters riffing at each other always works, so the book is full of that.

I mentioned the characters' ages because, while I don't know any, I don't think 11 year olds are this clever and witty. These characters are very switched on and banter in a way most grown-ups couldn't manage. Then in the second half of the book they all start talking like Russell Brand which is very unpleasant.

Unconvincing dialogue aside, none of the kids mess around with mobiles at any point which makes me wonder when this series took place. Then again there's a ghost in this story so I'm probably leaning on the realism angle a bit too heavily.

Allison's art is kinda manga-ish and reminded me a lot of Kate Beaton's style who also has a similar jovial tone and silly characters which are both very much like her Hark! A Vagrant comics. And while the dialogue doesn't quite fit the characters, it is highly enjoyable and even funny at times.

Ultimately the format doesn't transition well to a collected edition. The comic doesn't flow very smoothly as a single narrative and the overall effect is like reading scores of short stories at once, which is quite wearying because of its stop/start nature.

But Bad Machinery has some fine characters which you can actually distinguish from one another, all with a charming sense of humour and plenty of witty conversation to say. It's also age-appropriate for 11 year-old readers to pick up and read about their fictional peers.

I liked The Case of the Team Spirit in parts but the story never grabbed me - it was too easy to put down. This is an ok comic but I don't really see myself picking up the next volume.

---

### **Sarah Schanze says**

Took some effort to get into this, and if I hadn't bought it I would have given up halfway through. Eventually, though, all the meandering characters and storylines came together and connected and had a cute little ending. Sometimes I felt like I was missing things, and was just a little lost. The earlier pages seemed to wander and not entirely make sense, but eventually the pages actually focused on the plot and it felt like tighter storytelling.

Some of my confusion might simply be cultural differences. I also didn't realize the kids were around 12 years old until a character had a birthday. They act and speak much older, which threw me off. Then again, I haven't been 12 in a *very long time*.

Regardless, once the ending wrapped everything up, I did like it, and I would look into further volumes.

---

### **Kerry says**

I love Bad Machinery. I read Scary Go Round (the webcomic which preceded Bad Machinery, whence Bad Machinery was "spun off") and liked it a lot; I think I actually like Bad Machinery MORE. I like that the protagonists are kids, clever kids; they're innocent and whatnot and that appeals to me. (Also the supernatural stuff is toned down a little bit, which I think I like as well.)

So this book is a collection of the first "mystery" of Bad Machinery. It introduces our six young protagonists. I like the art; I like the characterizations; I like the jokes (subtle! Not always laugh out loud! That's okay!) I like how British it is. I love Bad Machinery, thank you Jeff for giving this book to me for Christmas.

I should also note that the book itself is GORGEOUS. I've purchased Scary Go Round books before and they look all right; this beauty is oversized and crisp and clear and I love running my hand over the smooth pages. Really very nice. Recommended to all; if you want you can borrow mine.

---

### **Dov Zeller says**

This book started off as a "gag-a-day" web-comic, and perhaps would have been more accessible had it been written in graphic-novel form. But the humor was so spectacular I got over the weirdness of form and uncertainty of plot and eventually a mystery took shape.

I do not recommend this book to anyone reading for the mystery of it all or a tight, conventional plot. But if you enjoy off-beat British humor, and don't mind a sort of YA Hardy Boys and Nancy Drew with 6 sleuths, minor growing pains and much comedy, I think you won't be disappointed.

---

### **Mike says**

This volume collects the first "case" of the webcomic Bad Machinery, about 100 strips.

I didn't realize Bad Machinery was a spin-off of sorts before reading, so I am reviewing this without any familiarity with Scary Go Round.

Bad Machinery uses a combination of "long form" and "gag-a-day" structures to tell the story of six elementary school detectives who get involved in strange happenings in a stranger town. The comic has long running storylines divided into cases, but each strip generally has a gag setup to it with a punchline. The main character groups of three girls and three boys often get involved in the cases from different (although equally absurd) angles. The cast is fleshed out with a variety of colorful, memorable beings.

Bad Machinery was a weird read for me. I feel like I should have enjoyed it a lot more than I did.

I like several of the main and supporting characters, I find the light-hearted school kids mystery concept interesting, and I find the humor mostly amusing. The art isn't amazing but isn't bad either. But something just isn't clicking. It might be just a touch too off the wall and/or unfocused for my tastes, by that seems like a cop out since I enjoy some pretty strange stories.

Can't really explain it - as I mentioned most of the pieces seem fine, but it's somehow coming together as less than the sum of it's parts for me. I finished the second case as well and had the same feeling. Good characters and humor; slightly better than the first case; but kind of meh when all was said and done.

There's enough good points for me to recommend checking it out yourself, but personally I found Bad Machinery to be lacking something. I'll probably try some more in the future, but I'm not in a rush.

---

## **Bill says**

Fun, quirky episodic-webcomic-style story of kids at a British school solving mysteries (intentionally or not.) Definitely some confusing bits here for the non-British, although a glossary at the back helps a tiny bit. Seemed a bit disjointed at the beginning, but the plot threads tie together pretty well towards the end. The odd nonchalance about some of the stranger or more supernatural goings-on in town seemed odd, but maybe that's just more Britishness coming into play.

---

## **Faith Hicks says**

I loved this! I want to be British!

---

## **Raina says**

I think this is one case where being a daily comic actually hurt the overall story.

I like a lot of things about this book - the illustrations are kinda funky, and well colored; the characters are at least a touch out of the box; the setting is not my normal world; the magic realism qualities are neat.

But I found myself looking for the punch line at the end of every page (and finding it, then being disappointed). There was a fair amount of lingo I didn't get, too.

Good, fine, but ya know - I want more.

---

## **Seth T. says**

When I was a budding teen, I was probably just about what you were like. I was whip-smart, sardonic, and had no problems elucidating my every bursting thought with exactitude. I was, for lack of better description, charming. I wouldn't go quite so far as to say "debonaire," but really that's probably just modesty speaking. I dressed well, spoke well, and forged relationships well. With either sex. Didn't matter. I was basically the stuff. Except for the fact that none of that happened. I was instead probably just about what you were like. I was, for all my smarts, a bit of a moron. Couldn't properly express myself. Flummoxed and self-concerned around both boys and girls, but unconquerably so around girls. And then throw on top of that the fact that I was, as J.M. Barrie describes children, innocent and heartless.

Again, I was probably quite a bit like you. Not because you were a particularly horrible person but simply because budding teens are not very good at being the people they have the potential to be. Junior high is a terribly awkward stage. Our bodies are wrong, being trapped in the uncanny valley betwixt the hopefully adorable child-self and the hopefully awesome adult-self. Limbs jut out here and there in clumsy efforts to rush toward that which we yet aren't. Breasts leap from the canvas of our bodies. Unwished for erections

make tents of our jeans. Strange thatches and patches of hair appear at first as if mirages. New smells collect around us. Bleeding, nighttime ejaculations, hormonal spasmodics. It's a tough time to be a person. And all these physical oddities combine with the other demands and expectations of growing older to temporarily hobble the psychological state of the young. Stew all this together and you'll find that people in the age range of twelve-to-fifteen are some of the most difficult, unlikeable people you know.

And it's not like it's their fault. It's understandable. It happens to all of us. I just maybe don't want to read about such people. So the more realistically a book portrays its young teen protagonists, the more I find myself distanced from any ability to enjoy the work. *Harry Potter and the Order of the Phoenix* was nearly unreadable to me. Harry was so thoroughly unlikeable and whiny and stubborn and blind and conceited *because* Rowling did a fair job at approximating what a good kid in Harry's position would be like. I hated nearly every minute with him. It got to the point that I wanted him to lose just so it'd knock some sense into him. I mean, congrats to Rowling on writing a believable fifteen-year-old, but I almost left the book unfinished because of her triumph. So then, I'm glad for what John Allison does in *Bad Machinery*, a book thoroughly concerned with the lives of budding teens.

I'm not even quite sure of the alchemy by which he does it either. Most authors, having recognized that realistic teens are not enjoyable and entertaining teens, ditch the idea of realism and simply write their characters as adults in kid bodies and then strip out the more, quote-unquote, *adult* habits (drinking, swearing, sexing, stock-trading) from their characters. This leaves their young protagonists free to operate in generally reasonable demeanor and not flip the heck out over what adults might consider trivialities.[1] It's okay so far as it goes, but always ends up feeling a bit hollow. Allison, somehow, finds a warm place in between whereby his characters can carry on conversations like ridiculous, amusing, witty young adults while simultaneously skirting into realistic interaction with their world. Still, he sometimes draws close enough to the border that I grew uncomfortable or harboured ill feeling toward those characters.[2]

*Bad Machinery* is one of those strange Modern Hybrids that we've seen rise up with the advent of the web and its associated comics. The series unfolds in the macro sense over a series of mysteries. These arcs resolve themselves under the taxonomy of *cases*. The first is "The Case of the Team Spirit," which is followed by "The Case of the Good Boy." There are currently six completed cases and the seventh looks to be winding down soonish. Within each case however, each page is revealed a day at a time—and in common webcomic fashion, these each resolve in something like a punchline. The story unfolds across these brief punctuations with time and place often shifting dramatically from one page to another. Still, it all keeps together well, and it may be that the promise of a joke or witticism or revelation at the end of each page actually works to spur the reader onward. After all: it's easy to bookmark a page and let go for the night if you know you've got another thirty pages 'til the next breaking point. Not so easy to let go when there's a breaking point every page—not enough pressure to stop when it's only a thirty-second read to get to the next rest area.

Allison's series is the tale of boy detectives. And girl detectives. Youthful detectives, at any rate. They work, sometimes together and sometimes at odds, to solve various mysteries. I didn't consider it until just now, but I'm pretty sure that every mystery actually does have some sort of supernatural element to it. The reason I may not have noticed this is that even though there's plot for each of these arcs and you really do want to know how things are going to piece together, the real reason you're devouring these stories is Allison's magnificent characters. The kids, who alternate in good measure between realism and wonderful fantasy, are deliciously wrought. Their interaction and distinct personalities mesh so well together that I worry for them as they age, knowing that they'll eventually all move in their own directions.[3] After all, across the span of six cases, they've already aged two years, and now at age fourteen they're experiencing angsts and mysteries

unfathomable to the twelve-year-old's mind.

Allison's illustrations are fun and fluid and his use of expression sells his characters emotion and tone perfectly well. When Lottie says something, you can hear her words cascade exactly in the manner she intends, all due to Allison's art. It's easy to tell he's been at this for years and years. His style is reminiscent of what Bryan Lee O'Malley employs in *Scott Pilgrim* and *Lost at Sea*, only rather than O'Malley's squat figures, Allison's are stretched lean—almost perhaps Gorey-esque. In any case, I say reminiscent purposefully. The work reminds but never feels the copycat. It's pleasing and works for the material.

*Bad Machinery* surprised me. A friend referenced a page on Twitter and I happened to follow the link and said, "Hey, that looks fun." She said something along the lines of "Holy smokes, yes!" (I'm making things up at this point.) And then she said what I love to hear about anything I'm about to consume: "I envy you." She was right to say so and I will envy anyone else their virgin experience with the series. That frantic, flustered thirst to plow through the available material as quickly as possible. The laughs, the introduction to Allison's amusing blend of the wit and wordplay of the best comments from Imgur or Reddit or Twitter or whichever shortform social platform you may prefer. I can't wait for you to read this. Not so that we can talk about it, you and me—simply because I'm pretty sure you'll have a grand old time even as I did.

---

[Review courtesy of Good Ok Bad.]

---

### Footnotes

1) This does have the downside of making their flip-outs seem more calculated and trope-ic. Key times for hyperventilation in these books would be when a boy or girl likes you, when your parents wish to ground you for abusing their rules, and when a boy or girl declines your romantic advances.

2) It was pretty uncommon that I'd yell at the top of my lungs in the echoing dark chamber of my inner being, in my dark inside cupboards. Those moments did happen and I'd want to drag certain characters away from their foolishness so they could go on to enjoy the glorious future I had in their store. But the series is good enough that most all of these adolescent spasms are forgiven and slightly forgotten.

3) Looking at how well I kept up with my own junior high friends does not bode terribly well for these kids—and that makes me sad.

---

### David Schaafsma says

I have to say that this is pretty hilarious stuff, consistently full of laughs. It's funnier than *Giant Days*, surely, though to be fair *Bad Machinery* was set up as a web comic with a focus on regular gags vs. a coherent narrative. And *Giant Days* focuses on a group going to college vs. grammar school. A pretty coherent narrative does emerge, though, in this first long volume. I have no idea what "Bad Machinery" as a title means, I think the mysteries at the heart of the story are sort of peripheral for me to the great characters Allison creates (and the laughter they create), but I liked it a lot for what it is, which is funny.

We have Shauna, Charlotte, Mildred, Jack, Linton, and Sonny all just starting grammar school together in

Tackleford, England. So it's all initially about what kids might like to think about: football, friends, teachers, clothes. And sleuthing. The girls are interested in one mystery concerning an old lady pressured to move so they can build a new football stadium. Is there a connection between the mystery the boys discover, something about the Russian owner of the local football team? (Yes.) There's some supernatural elements thrown in, and I love Allison's art here a lot. It's funny and warm and sweet.

---