

*Punching the Mascot*

by Ellen Foos

It playfully taunted the referee  
by biting its own tail in dismay  
and shadowed an unsuspecting usher  
into the upper deck,  
crimes very soon forgiven,  
unless you hate showmanship.  
With its large head and poor eyesight  
you enjoy watching it flail at halftime  
in a match with the hometown mascot.  
The person inside the dark costume  
sighting only straight ahead  
doesn't see your approach,  
is deafened by imitating a beast  
in a crowd of excited onlookers.  
So to punch it seems cruel,  
with children watching  
who just shook its paw.