

THE WEEKLY

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The Netherlands

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FOOTBALL AND FILM

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THE RECORD BREAKER

6

Changing times in the Netherlands

What's going on in the Netherlands? Coach Louis van Gaal has publicly claimed that his team are not good enough to win the 2014 World Cup. Some of their stars have passed their peaks, while the younger players have not yet reached theirs. David Winner seeks to discover why the team that brought us 'Total Football' is on the decline.

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Spectacular 4-4 draw in the USA

Major League Soccer witnessed one of the most exciting matches in its history. The Portland Timbers and Seattle Sounders drew 4-4, with the visitors scoring two goals in the dying minutes.

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World Cup: 62 days to go

FIFA Secretary General Jérôme Valcke gives his views on Brazil 2014. "The improvements made to transport infrastructure will also benefit future generations."

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The best email of his life

Referee Mark Geiger has been officiating football matches since he was 13 and looking for some extra pocket money. Now, at 39, he is realising a lifelong dream after FIFA offered the American a refereeing spot at this summer's World Cup.



Oranje

No matter where in the world the Dutch national side may be, they can always count on their supporters to fill the stands with a distinctive orange hue.



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30 Longing for a World Cup win

American superstar Abby Wambach has achieved almost everything there is to achieve in her career - only the World Cup title is missing.



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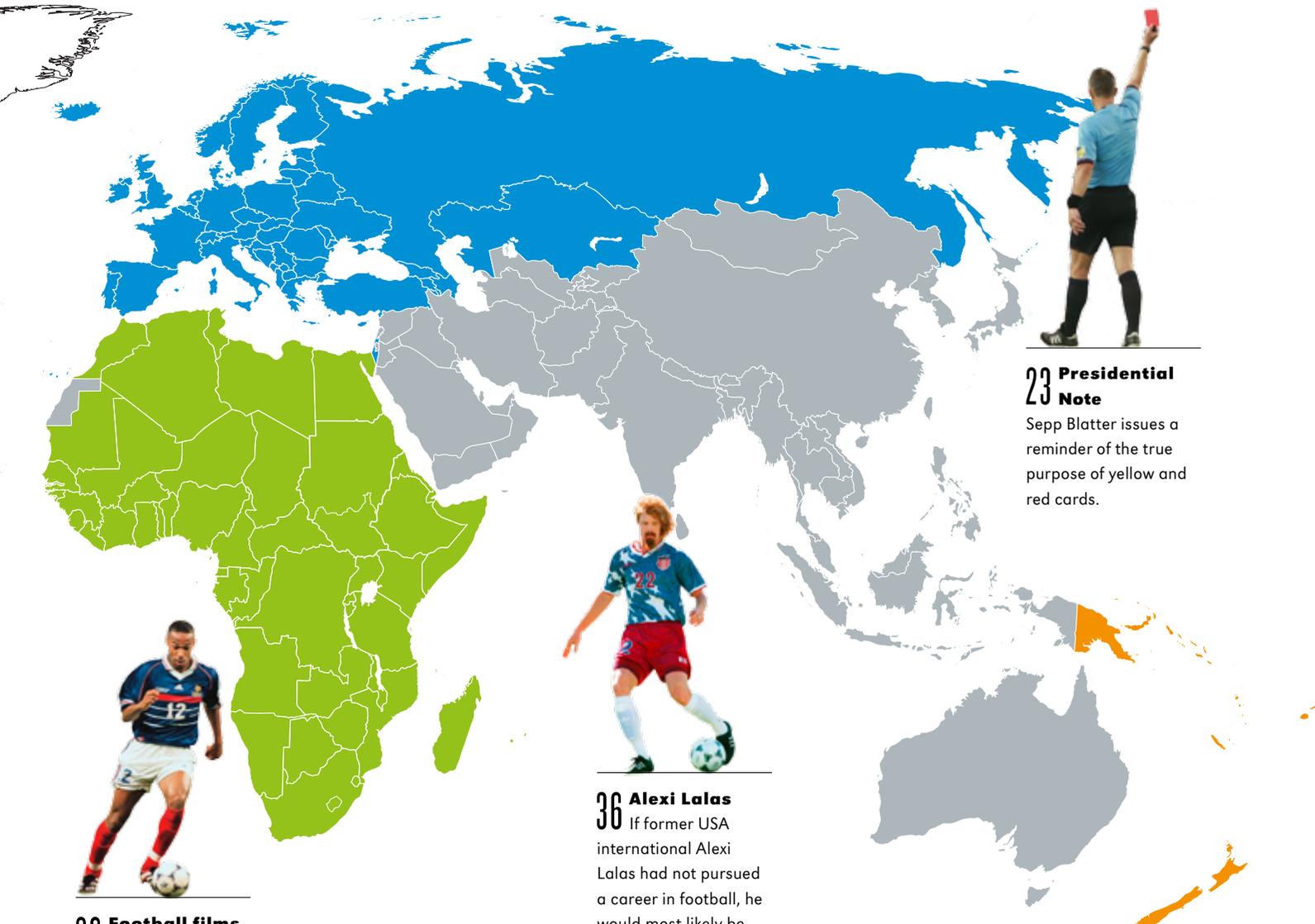
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Sepp Blatter issues a reminder of the true purpose of yellow and red cards.



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We checked in on the 11mm film festival in Berlin and sampled some spectacular recordings as well as previously unreleased material of Thierry Henry and the 1974 World Cup.



36 Alexi Lalas

If former USA international Alexi Lalas had not pursued a career in football, he would most likely be touring around the country with a guitar instead.



Sweden: Damallsvenskan
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England: Women's Super League
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USA: National Women's Soccer League
Season starts on 13 April 2014

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The art of winning



What now? Arjen Robben, a pillar of the Netherlands team, after their 2010 World Cup Final defeat by Spain in Johannesburg.

Some people see the Dutch national teams as an example of how to lose elegantly. All too often, the pioneers of 'Total Football' have produced inspiring, innovative play only to leave the pitch in defeat, such as in the 1974 World Cup Final against West Germany in Munich or the 1978 Final in Buenos Aires against Argentina. In the 2010 World Cup Final in Johannesburg, Holland even tried playing an extremely physical and unimaginative game, but were still unable to overcome Spain.

What now for the playing style in the land of the 1988 European champions? What plans and expectations do the Netherlands have for this summer's World Cup in Brazil? Our contributor David Winner, author of the definitive guide to Dutch football, *Oranje Brillant*, and more recently a biography of Dennis Bergkamp, highlights the greatest moments from Holland's history and identifies their current shortcomings.

Brazilian Carlos Niemeyer sought to commit the art of beautiful football to celluloid. His documentaries are legendary, and some are only now being discovered in the archives. At the 11mm football film festival in Berlin, the works of Niemeyer, who died in 1999, enjoyed a revival, and Ronald Duker went along to find out more.

Abby Wambach appeared visibly disappointed in Zurich last January when she was not named the 2013 FIFA Player of the Year. The US international, capped 218 times for her country and winner of the 2012 award, has recorded a magnificent achievement by breaking the international goalscoring record. With 167 goals to her name, Wambach has found the target more than any other international player. In this week's Interview, she reveals her next major aim - to win the Women's World Cup 2015 in Canada.

In his column, Sepp Blatter reiterates that yellow and red cards are not intended to be a demonstration of power over players and should only be shown in challenging situations. According to the FIFA President, a confident referee calls the player over to him, informs him of his decision and raises the card aloft for all to see - without exhibiting any emotion. ⚽

Perikles Monioudis

Dutch Masters



Dutch use of space In 1615, Frans Hals painted this tightly-packed scene of revelry in orange and red ("Merrymakers at Shrovetide").

The Netherlands, narrowly-beaten finalists in 2010 and usually one of the World Cup's most stylish teams, will head to Brazil with expectations lower than at any time in a generation. Is the Netherlands' skillful football on the decline?



Art comes from ability
Robin van Persie (front) and Arjen Robben (second from right) should find the target for the Oranje.



Forging new paths "If you love me, send me a tulip" (Dutch proverb).

David Winner

Louis van Gaal's side sailed through their qualifying group unbeaten and with a goal difference of 35-4. But an ageing or retired old guard, a dearth of mature new talent and a string of injuries to key players have combined to leave most Dutch fans fearing the worst. For the men in orange to reach a fourth World Cup final this year would be considered a miracle. Few in Holland expect them even to survive the first round.

Every World Cup seems to produce a 'Group of Death' but the one awaiting the Dutch looks particularly lethal. Their first match pits them against reigning World and European champions Spain, who play a superior version of Holland's own traditional game and beat them in the Final four years ago. Then come the awkward, physically powerful Australians (no Dutch team has ever beaten them) and, finally, the highly-fancied Chileans, Juventus midfielder Arturo Vidal and Barcelona's centre forward Alexis Sanchez among them.

Observers calculate that to have a realistic chance of reaching the quarter-finals, Holland have to win their group as finishing second would likely mean meeting Brazil in the first knockout round. At that point, says Auke Kok, one of country's leading sports writers, Holland's main ambition would be simply to avoid humiliation. "Can you imagine Ron Vlaar [candidate centre half, of Aston Villa] up against Neymar?" He asks rhetorically. "It's a terrifying thought. As a nation we no longer produce defenders like Jaap Stam or Frank de Boer."

Van Gaal has been one of the great club coaches of the last 25 years but he simply doesn't have enough top-level players to work with. No wonder he admitted this week he was "totally sick" of being bondscoach.

Imitators of Total Football

Only one of his three authentically world-class players is currently fit: winger Arjen Robben of Bayern Munich. Midfield rock Kevin Strootman – "the Dutch Roy Keane" – will miss the world cup because of a knee injury sustained last month playing for AS Roma against Napoli. Captain Robin van Persie is struggling with a knee problem of his own, though is expected to be fit.

Meanwhile, dominant figures of the 2010 team such as Giovanni van Bronckhorst and Mark van Bommel have retired and once-great midfielders Wesley Sneijder, Rafael van der Vaart and Dirk Kuyt are in the autumn of their careers, with Galatasaray, Hamburg and Fenerbahce respectively.

To understand the deeper reasons for Holland's World Cup predicament, however, it is necessary to divert briefly into history. In the nineteenth century Britain became a superpower thanks to the industrial revolution. The extraordinary burst of creativity and energy which produced railways, cotton mills and so on was possible only because of the cultural and political circumstances of Britain at the time.

But it could be copied – and it was. Technological and intellectual superiority gave Britain an edge, but only for a while. When larger nations learned to emulate and improve upon its methods the first industrial superpower was doomed to decline.

In football, Holland may be experiencing a similar arc. In the late 1960s, the Dutch invented a revolutionary new way of playing football. Total football emerged at Ajax in Amsterdam



Dreams unfulfilled The Dutch are still waiting for their first World Cup title (Amsterdam, 11 July 2010, World Cup Final against Spain).

thanks to Rinus Michels – FIFA’s ‘coach of the century’ – and a group of remarkable players including genius Johan Cruyff.

Their new style involved fluid movement, high pressing, phenomenal technique and all-out attack. It was beautiful to watch but difficult to master. When performed well by sufficiently talented players, however, *totaalvoetbal* was almost unbeatable. The Dutch writer Arthur van den Boogaard has called it the “metaphysical solution” to the game.

The invention of Total Football was possible only because of the cultural and political circumstances of the Netherlands at the time. New professionalism in sport combined with the sense of freedom and innovation that accompanied the country’s cultural liberalisation. And the Dutch tradition of creating and exploiting space that one sees reflected in the country’s art, architecture and landscape was applied to the football field.

Total football was quintessentially Dutch. But it could be copied. And it was. Just as Britain was eventually overtaken industrially and militarily, so the larger football-playing nations who learned most from the Dutch were likely to surpass them.

Hubris catches up with Holland

The defining elements of Dutch football as we understand can be traced the triumphs and traumas of the early 1970s. Until the 60s Holland have been a footballing backwater. Now Ajax won the European Cup three years running before Total Football reached near-perfection at the 1974 World Cup. Michels and Cruyff, who had both moved to Barcelona, were reunited with Ajax men like Ruud Krol, Johan Neeskens and Johnny Rep and joined by Feyenoord and Anderlecht stars Wim van Hanegem and Rob Rensenbrink. The result was Total Football played for the first time in orange shirts – and it was sensational. Holland’s clever, free-flowing, aggressive tactics bewildered and overwhelmed Uruguay, Bulgaria, East Germany and Argentina in turn before defending champs Brazil were swatted aside in the equivalent of a semi-final game.

Then hubris caught up with Holland. They had begun to feel themselves invincible and, against the hosts in the final in Munich, scored before any German player had even touched the ball. Disastrously, instead of trying to score again, the Dutch then mocked their

opponents who staged a fightback and won the game 2-1. Back home, where memories of Nazi occupation were still raw, the shock defeat was experienced as the worst national trauma of the late 20th century.

All subsequent Dutch national teams have been profoundly influenced by 1974. Playing beautifully became mandatory – but beautiful losing also became a habit. The Dutch have often been their own worst enemies, as in 1990 when their team of superstars including Marco van Basten and Ruud Gullit disintegrated amid a chaos of cliques and feuds.

Only the Cruyff-less 1978 side which was unlucky enough to meet hosts Argentina in the final, and the great 1998 team of Dennis Bergkamp, Edgar Davids and Patrick Kluivert lost their semi-final to Brazil on penalties can consider themselves truly unlucky not to have won the golden trophy.

Even the widely criticised 2010 team can be interpreted as a long-delayed reaction to the 1974 trauma. Bert van Marwijk’s team turned their backs on 40 years of tradition and played with a dour defensive pragmatism because they were simply desperate to lay the ghosts of Munich by winning.



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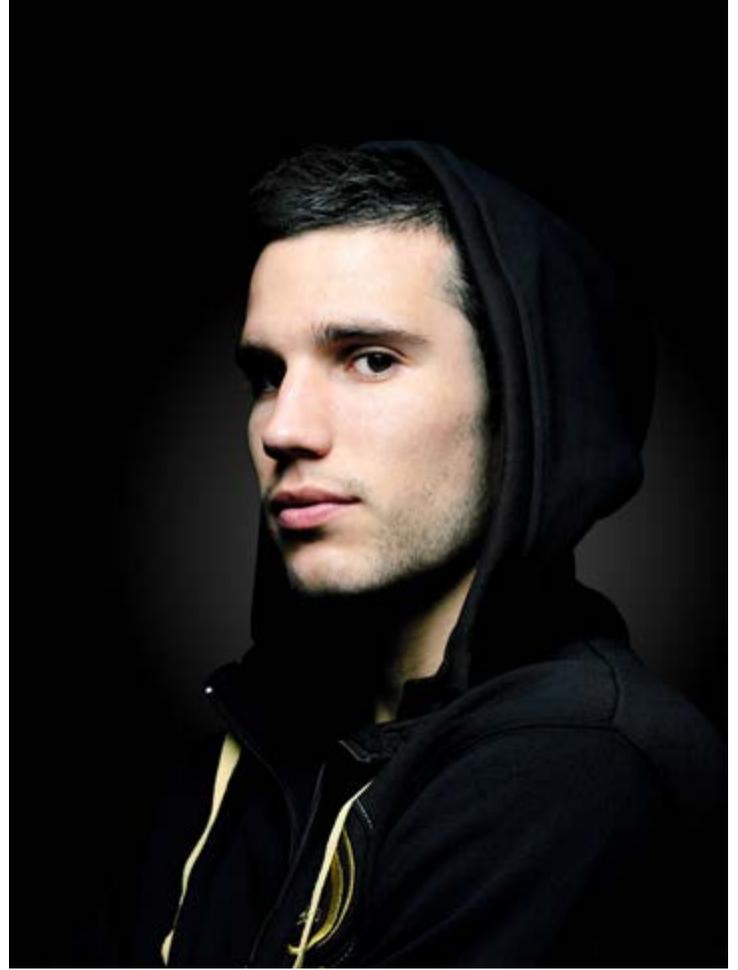
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A portrait painting icon Jan Vermeer's "Girl with a Pearl Earring" (created in 1665) makes eye contact.



An Oranje icon The eyes of the Netherlands will be on goalscorer Robin van Persie.

The fall in standards at Ajax

Meanwhile, total football had spread. Dutch players and coaches, convinced of the righteousness of their approach, took their football creed to outposts as far-flung as Toronto, Tel Aviv, Milan and Seoul.

The most important feature was Cruyff himself. He not only established total football at the National style of Holland but also imposed his vision on Barcelona, first as player, later as coach. As then Barcelona coach Pep Guardiola said: "Cruyff built our Cathedral. We just maintain it." The tiki-taka of the all but unbeatable Spain and Barca teams of our era has been a local version of the Dutch original. The other most influential Dutch coach of recent times has been Louis van Gaal, a devotee of Rinus Michels rather than Cruyff.

In the early 90s, when he was the boss at Ajax, Van Gaal built his own, speeded-up version of total football and nurtured a new generation of stars like Patrick Kluivert, the De Boer brothers and Edgar Davids, winning the Champions' League in 1995 before heading to Barcelona, where, among other things, he gave teenager Xavi Hernandez a crucial role in the team.

Perhaps more significantly, in 2009, Van Gaal joined Bayern Munich where he turned winger Bastian Schweinsteiger into a midfield general, promoted young talents like Thomas Müller and, within two seasons, had converted the most important club in Germany to Dutch ways. Bayern, currently coached by Guardiola, now have the best total footballers (and best club team) on the planet.

While Barca, Bayern and the German and Spanish national teams became powerhouses by adopting Dutch methods, the Netherlands itself has declined.

The Ajax way – based on technique, tactics and a spatially sophisticated passing game – are now firmly established as the national style. But the production line of Dutch genius has slowed and faltered. Particularly damaging has been the fall in standards at Ajax. The Academy there was moulded by Cruyff in the mid-1980s, later run by Van Gaal and became the model not only for Barcelona's famous La Masia but for academies around Europe, from Scotland to Belgium and Denmark.

But in Amsterdam there were problems. When Dennis Bergkamp returned to the club

of his youth as a coach in 2008 he was shocked to discover that the club's education system had become a soccer version of Stepford. In his autobiography he recalled: "It was as if all the kids had been made in the same factory. It felt strange. They were all good, tidy, rather technical players, but they weren't special or flexible or creative. They did what was asked of them. They knew their positions, played their roles, but even in the first team they had so little creativity. When they had to improvise they'd look helplessly to the touchline as if to say: "Now what do we do?" ... It was completely uninspired, totally lethargic. ... The heart was missing. I didn't see one of the typical old Ajax lads with that cheeky attitude: "Let me have the ball, I'll do something good with it."

In 2011 factions of ex-players supporting Cruyff and Van Gaal (the two men dislike each other, though no one seems to know why) battled for control of Ajax. In the end, Cruyff's side won and the club began to implement his radical reforms of the youth system with the explicit aim of producing new generations of world-class players. Out went the Van Gaalian



Always good for a surprise Netherlands national coach Louis van Gaal.

“TOTAL FOOTBALL”

mon. The term ‘Total Football’ is based on the underlying philosophy that every outfield player should be capable of playing in any position. This affects the players’ tactical, technical and physical training, but particularly impacts the playing system, which was regarded as groundbreaking when first introduced. If the team is in possession, all outfield players are involved in their side’s attacking efforts; conversely, the entire team defends when the opposition have the ball, from the strikers to the centre backs. The players can also swap positions when needed – a forward can act as a defender and vice versa. Gaps in positions should never arise, which places great demands on the players. In order for Total Football to be successful, you need individuals who can strictly adhere to the requirements of the system while at the same time being extremely creative. Johan Cruyff and Ruud Krol’s Dutch team of the 1970s were the first to demonstrate the effectiveness of Total Football.

emphasis on tactics and systems, and a new intensive approach to developing extraordinary individuals was set in place which was rather like football equivalent of an Oxford college or a French Grande Ecole.

Some of the best former Ajax players have become tutors, imparting their knowledge, wisdom and experience to exceptional young talents. The new Cruyffians in charge at Ajax - including Wim Jonk, Marc Overmars and Bergkamp - believe their new approach could render the old approach to developing talent obsolete. Within the next few we will know if they are right.

“Not good enough”

Meanwhile, under manager Frank De Boer, Ajax have won the Dutch league for the last three years, something the club only previously managed under Rinus Michels in the late 60s and Van Gaal in the 90s. This season, Ajax look headed for an unprecedented fourth title. But

the Dutch league is not what it was; and such domination does not by itself betoken a new golden age of Dutch football.

Ajax have some exciting young players, most notably skilful goalscoring playmaker Davy Klaassen. But in this year’s Europa League they were totally outplayed by Red Bull Salzburg and lost 6 - 1 on aggregate. This reflects a worrying pattern in big games since 2010. At Euro 2012 Holland lost all three of their matches, to Denmark, Germany and Portugal. In their most recent friendly, against France in Paris, an experimental Dutch side were outgunned and lost 2 - 0.

Henk Spaan, writer, TV pundit and editor of the magazine ‘Hard gras’ suggests the dearth of mature top talent is temporary: Holland are simply between generations rather than in long-term decline: “I think there are many very good players of 17 to 20 years old and they are not mature enough to play this tournament. We could have a pleasant surprise but it would

be on the basis of team play and physical strength. I think Van Gaal will try to form an enormous bond between the players, but this is the only chance they have because, as for talent, they have nothing apart from Robben and perhaps Van Persie”.

Auke Kok suspects Van Gaal may spring some sort of tactical surprise. “People in Holland who really understand football all say that it will be very hard for us to survive the first round. But at the same time everyone respects Van Gaal and I am sure he will come up with something very clever and original and unexpected as he has done many times before. He is always interesting and he will figure out something about that no one else would have thought of. But it will not be enough. The players simply aren’t good enough to do well this year.” ❄

Which Oranje players will travel to Brazil?

David Winner

Van Gaal has any number of decent players to choose from, but few world-class ones. This selection problem is so severe that even at this late date no one knows for sure who will be on the plane to Brazil. In Strootman's absence, the key defensive midfield role may go to AC Milan's Nigel de Jong, who was sidekick to the ruthless Van Bommel in South Africa and is mostly remembered for his dreadful kung-fu foul on Xabi Alonso in the final. This year youngsters like

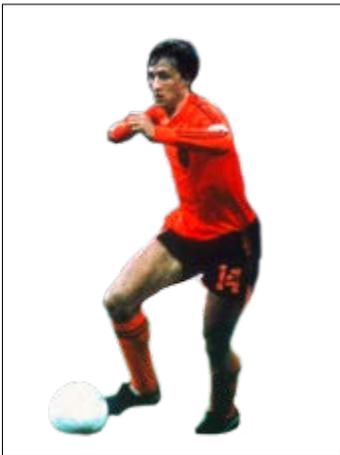
Adam Maher of PSV and Jordy Clasie of Feyenoord may figure. So could Jonathan de Guzman of Swansea.

The role of Schalke's Klaas Jan Huntelaar is unclear. He remains a prolific scorer against moderate teams, but has struggled against the best and fell out with teammates at Euro 2012. Only if Van Persie and Ajax's Siem de Jong, who is also injured, are not fit is Huntelaar expected to lead the attack.

Precisely who makes up the back line is anybody's guess. Candidates include Stefan de Vrij, Bruno Martins Indi and Daryl Janmaat, all

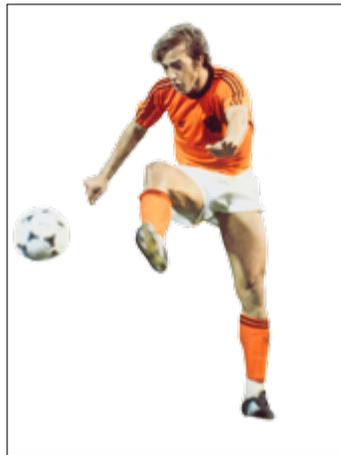
of Feyenoord, Ron Vlaar, Gregory van der Wiel of Paris St-Germain and Ajax's Daley Blind, son of nineties star Danny Blind who is one of Van Gaal's assistants. In the goalkeeping position once dominated by the great Edwin van der Sar there are no fewer than six candidates. Maarten Stekelenburg, one of the heroes of South Africa, has had a difficult time at Fulham. Van Gaal is said not to be keen on Tim Krul of Newcastle, Michel Vorm of Swansea or PSV's Jeroen Zoet. That leaves the Ajax pair of Kenneth Vermeer and Jasper Cillessen. ⚽

Missing Ingredients



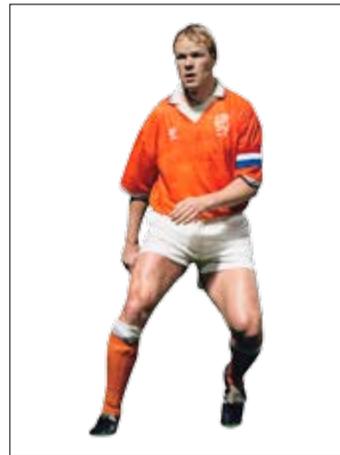
Johan Cruyff

Born: 1947
National team: 1966 – 1977
48 international caps, 33 goals



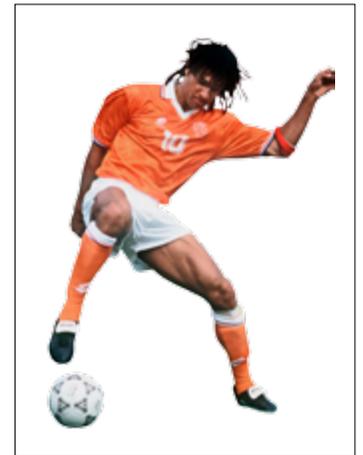
Johan Neeskens

Born: 1951
National team: 1970 – 1981
49 international caps, 17 goals



Ronald Koeman

Born: 1963
National team: 1982 – 1994
78 international caps, 14 goals



Ruud Gullit

Born: 1962
National team: 1981 – 1994
66 international caps, 17 goals



Defeat despite beautiful play In the World Cup Final in Munich on 7 July 1974, the Dutch were forced to accept defeat after Gerd Muller's (right) winning goal (final score 2-1 West Germany).

Missing Ingredients



Marco van Basten
 Born: 1964
 National team: 1983 – 1992
 58 international caps, 24 goals



Dennis Bergkamp
 Born: 1969
 National team: 1990 – 2000
 79 international caps, 37 goals



Frank De Boer
 Born: 1970
 National team: 1990 – 2004
 112 international caps, 13 goals



Edgar Davids
 Born: 1973
 National team: 1994 – 2005
 74 international caps, 6 goals

ON THE INSIDE



Chopper Harris eat your heart out Portland Timbers mascot Joey Webber wielding his monster tool

Major League Soccer

Joey Webber, the busy mascot



David Winner is a London-based author and journalist. His books on football include "Brilliant Orange" and "Dennis Bergkamp: Stillness and Speed".

It is hard to miss Joey Webber, the Portland Timbers' mascot. The bearded six-footer (part shaman, all lumberjack) wears love beads and a silver helmet and stands in front of the "Timbers Army" at the curved northern end of Providence Park with a giant chainsaw. Whenever the Timbers score – which hasn't been often lately – Joey fires up his monster tree trunk and, to the acclaim of delirious fans, holds it aloft like the head of a tyrant.

Four times during Saturday's epic match with Seattle Sounders, the old stadium throbbed to the roar of the chainsaw. Yet four times, too, in the opposite corner of the

ground, Seattle's "Emerald City Supporters" had their own excuse to practice raucous goal celebrations. The thunderous 4-4 draw between the bitter North West Pacific rivals was simply one of the most thrilling games the MLS has witnessed. The contest swung like a chandelier during an earthquake, sparkling with spectacular moments, littered with scarcely-believable defensive errors. The first quarter-hour produced four goals, shared equally. In the second half, Diego Chara and Maximiliano Urruti scored long-range screamers to give the home team a seemingly impregnable 4-2 lead.

At the death, Sounders' captain Clint Dempsey, skipper of the USA national team and best player on the pitch, popped up to score twice, completing his own hat-trick and breaking Timbers' hearts. The home side remain without a win this season. The match, played in front of what may be North America's two best groups of fans, was a marvellous advertisement for the MLS and, for the neutrals, a reminder of just how delirious football can be. In various guises the Timbers and Sounders have existed for nearly 40 years, and their rivalry, beloved by TV executives, is,

in the words of the New York Times, "one of the best feuds" in American sport. It still seems a bit weird, though. The fans have much in common. Their cities are geographically close and culturally and politically similar. Both teams even wear green. Yet each regards the other as "inauthentic".

Seattle gave the world grunge and slackers in the 90s. But Sounders supporters poke fun at modern Portland hipsters by quoting catchphrases from the TV comedy "Portlandia". Timbers fans, forgetting their own city's intimate relationship with corporate giants like Hewlett Packard and Nike, disdain "corporate" Seattle because it is home to Amazon and Microsoft.

It appears to be a classic case of what Freud called "the narcissism of small differences", namely that it is "precisely communities with adjoining territories, and related to each other... who are engaged in constant feuds and ridiculing each other". In real life, such narcissism has been the cause of discrimination and wars. In the symbolic dream-world of football it seems to stimulate more playful antagonisms. ☘



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 Oct. 19 St. Kitts & Nevis
 Oct. 21 St. Lucia
 Oct. 22 Barbados
 Oct. 25-27 Haiti
 Oct. 28 Grenada
 Oct. 29 Suriname
 Oct. 30 Guyana
 Oct. 31 Trinidad & Tobago
 Nov. 1 Curacao

Nov. 2 Aruba
 Nov. 3-4 Nicaragua
 Nov. 5-6 El Salvador
 Nov. 7 Belize
 Nov. 10 Israel
 Nov. 11 Palestine
 Nov. 12-13 Jordan
 Nov. 14-16 Egypt
 Nov. 17-19 Tunisia
 Nov. 21-22 Algeria
 Nov. 23-24 Morocco
 Nov. 25-26 Ghana
 Nov. 27-28 Kenya
 Nov. 29-30 Tanzania
 Dec. 1-3 South Africa
 Dec. 9-11 Saudi Arabia
 Dec. 12-14 Qatar
 Dec. 15-16 UAE (United Arab Emirates)
 Dec. 17-19 Bangladesh
 Dec. 20 Bhutan
 Dec. 21 Nepal
 Dec. 22-24 India
 Dec. 25-27 Myanmar
 Dec. 28-30 Thailand
 Dec. 31-Jan. 2 Vietnam
 Jan. 3-5 Malaysia
 Jan. 6-8 Indonesia
 Jan. 10-12 Chile
 Jan. 13-15 Argentina
 Jan. 16-17 Uruguay

Jan. 18-19 Paraguay
 Jan. 20-21 Bolivia
 Jan. 22-24 Peru
 Jan. 25-27 Ecuador
 Jan. 28-30 Colombia
 Jan. 31-Feb. 2 Venezuela
 Feb. 3-5 Guatemala
 Feb. 6-11 Mexico
 Feb. 12-14 Canada
 Feb. 16-18 Spain
 Feb. 19-21 Italy
 Feb. 22-24 Croatia
 Feb. 25-27 Turkey
 Feb. 28-Mar. 2 Sweden
 Mar. 3-5 Romania
 Mar. 6-8 Czech Republic
 Mar. 9-11 France
 Mar. 12-13 Wales
 Mar. 14-16 England
 Mar. 17-18 Scotland
 Mar. 19-20 Netherlands
 Mar. 21 Belgium
 Mar. 22-24 Russia
 Mar. 26-28 Poland
 Mar. 29-Apr. 2 Germany
 Apr. 4-6 Korea Republic
 Apr. 7-9 China
 Apr. 10-12 Japan
 Apr. 14-20 USA



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Saudi Professional League

Good times return to Riyadh



Sven Goldmann is a football expert at Tagesspiegel newspaper in Berlin.

Over the last few years plenty of big name stars have come and gone at Al Nasr, although none of them were able to help the club recapture the long-awaited domestic title. Bulgarian footballing icon Hristov Stoichkov scored once in the two games he played for the side from the Saudi Arabian capital Riyadh, while Brazilian attacker Denilson spent a season there at the tail end of his career before moving on. Ecuadorian forward Carlos Tenorio also donned the yellow shirt for a time, but even his impressive goal tally failed to fire the club to glory. Yet now, after six long years of living in the shadows of all-conquering city rivals Al Hilal, Al Nasr are back where their fans believe they rightfully belong: at the very top. Al Nasr picked up a 1-1 draw away to Al Taawun on Matchday 26 in the final round of Saudi Professional League fixtures, having ended a 19-year wait to finally bring a seventh league title back to the King Fahd Stadium a week earlier following a 1-1 draw with Al Shabab.

The name of the stadium is both an honour and a burden, with the team constantly striving to be worthy of their royally-titled arena. The monarch, who passed away in 2005, was a passionate football fan and it was his fervent backing of the national team that allowed Saudi Arabia to compete at four consecutive World Cups between 1994 and 2006. The Confederations Cup was founded in Saudi Arabia, although in its infancy the tournament was known as the King Fahd Cup. It was during this golden age for Saudi Arabian football that the national team won the Asian Nations Cup in 1996, while Al Nasr lifted both the Asian Cup Winners Cup and the Asian Super Cup two years later.

Memories of glories past remain strong in Riyadh, although recreating them has proven rather more difficult. Big international names often prefer to wind down their playing days further east in the Arabian Peninsula in Dubai, attracted by the hefty wages on offer as well as the chance to catch up with fellow veteran stars. That has forced Saudi Arabia to



Still a great entertainer Colombian goalkeeping coach Rene Higuita at Al Nasr.

alter its recruitment policy: players of the calibre of Stoichkov, Denilson and Tenorio are now a thing of the past. Rene Higuita, one of the world's most colourful custodians in the 1990s, is currently the most prominent figure at Al Nasr, where the Colombian now works as goalkeeping coach. The two standout players on the club's books are strikers Elton Rodrigues Brandao and Mohamed Al Sahlawi. The former, a Brazilian native on loan from Corinthians, has been at Al Nasr for a year having previously tried to make the grade in both Portugal and Poland. Al Sahlawi shot to

fame in Saudi Arabia in 2009 after his transfer from Al Qadisiyah to Al Nasr for 32 million Saudi riyals, roughly \$8 million USD, a record fee for a Saudi player at the time.

The architect of the team's success is Uruguayan coach Daniel Carreno, who has been in the dugout for the last two years. In addition to guiding the side to the league title, he also previously led Al Nasr to Saudi Cup glory. Most importantly of all for the club's supporters, arch-rivals Al Hilal finished as runners-up on both occasions. ⚽

On the home straight

Jérôme Valcke

Just landed back in Zurich from a development seminar in South Africa where I had the pleasure of witnessing again more positive footprints left by the 2010 World Cup. I remember well all the doubts and criticism which accompanied the last few months of the preparations in South Africa and how the event staging was constantly put into question by the media. Nearly four years later, the common perception

is that it was an outstanding World Cup, fueling the confidence of a whole nation, boosting the trust of international business and the country was also strengthened by the improvements in the IT and general infrastructure, enhancing tourism at the same time. Unfortunately, pessimism is a common trend when it comes to staging major events. But in the end it always works out.

And despite the tight race on Brazil applying the final key operational elements, people can already see exactly this same legacy tak-

ing shape – at least those who want to see it. All the reports I receive indicate just how fast and hard Brazil is working now to complete preparations, not only for the World Cup, but also for improvements to the country's cultural, urban and transportation infrastructure that will continue to serve generations to come. The diverse social projects, which include teaching people to work in a multitude of service sectors, are a great testimonial for this. Not to mention the sporting legacy, which should never be forgotten in the coun-



Opening ceremony on 5 April
Estadio Beira-Rio in Porto Alegre,
Rio Grande do Sul



try of football, as Brazil is on the verge of entering a new era in terms of stadiums and spectator services.

New era beckons for Brazil

Furthermore, FIFA has a comprehensive sustainability strategy ranging from the training of stadium operators to help them manage and maintain the stadiums in a sustainable manner, to providing audio-descriptive commentary services for blind and visually impaired fans for the first time in Brazil during the

World Cup. The equipment and the trained professionals will remain in Brazil and this will be another important legacy to be introduced at Brazilian championship matches to ensure football is for all.

Hope via “Walk again”

Another fascinating project is “Walk Again” led by Prof Miguel Nicolelis. We’re working closely with Prof. Nicolelis’ team to devise ways of presenting the project to the global public for the first time during the opening ceremony. Walk Again will allow a paralysed youth to walk onto the field of play using a robotic body suit controlled by brain waves. Football is about hope. This vision for the future, whereby millions of paralysed people could have the opportunity to experience what it is like to stand on their own two legs again and walk, appears to FIFA and to me personally worthy of our unconditional support.

the Opening Match, we are confident that the impact on the schedule will be limited and that the stadium will be able to host test events as of mid-May. And the testing is crucial and on-going at various venues across the country, as happened this Thursday in Manaus, when some aspects of the World Cup operations were implemented. Our operational teams have started to set-up the infrastructure for the broadcasters, the goal-line technology and the media facilities. It will be a record attendance from media – we expect about 18,000 media representatives from more than 160 countries around the world. With a joint effort by all parties, we will be in time, trusting that everything is being done by the host cities and the federal government so we can provide the best level of service in spite of the tight schedules. Last week hosted the 2nd leg of the preparation camp for the referees of the 2014 World Cup here in Zurich.



Lucas Uebel/AFP Photo

“With a joint effort by all parties, we will be finished on time.”

Appalled by the accident

As we enter the final stretch together, most of the preparations are well underway. More work remains in the next 62 days, however, and we are continuing our close cooperation with the Brazilian stakeholders, to ensure that everything needed for the matches to succeed is in place. This is our responsibility to nearly 2.6m fans who have bought tickets to date, and the 32 teams. Things are moving ahead at full pace in Curitiba and Porto Alegre – two of the three key challenges we face. I was, and am still, very sad about the tragic accident in Sao Paulo. Safety is paramount and that is the utmost priority whether it is during construction or the event itself. My thoughts remain with the family and the colleagues of Fabio Hamilton da Cruz. There have been some very tragic fatalities over the last months at the construction sites in Brazil which, as a family man and father, affected me deeply.

Highest standards of service

Given the advanced stage of the assembling of the complimentary facilities at the stadium for

I look forward to hearing more positive news from our partners in organising the World Cup in Brazil on how the challenges we still need to overcome are being accomplished over the next few weeks, just as I look forward to coming to Brazil again after Easter. Around the same time, the World Cup Trophy will land in Brazil on its final leg, the domestic tour presented by our partner Coca-Cola through all 27 states. This will be accompanied by the rhythm of the official song “We Are One (Ole Ola)”. 🎵

Jérôme Valcke is the Secretary General of FIFA

First Love



Place: Mirashkani, Georgia

Date: 4 June 2010

Time: 7.35 pm



Card games

Warnings and dismissals were communicated verbally until the 1960s, when a controversial incident at Wembley stadium led to the introduction of yellow and red cards.

Thomas Renggli

A referee blows his whistle to indicate a foul; when he brandishes a red card, it's time for an early bath. Officials have not always had it so easy when it comes to enforcing the rules of the game, however. Before referees were given tools with which to illustrate their decisions, breakdowns in communication between players and officials were not uncommon, as witnessed in the 1966 World Cup quarter-final between England and Argentina.

German referee Rudolf Kreitlin had already 'cautioned' two English players and three Argentinians at Wembley stadium, with *Albiceleste* captain Antonio Rattin on the receiving end of two warnings. For all that, Kreitlin's actions did little to restore calm among the players. "One more you go out", the referee is alleged to have shouted at Rattin in his broken English. Kreitlin only succeeded in further riling the Argentina skipper, who proceeded to berate the official at the top of his voice. Kreitlin had had enough. A tailor by trade – he was wearing a kit he had made himself – the diminutive official gestured for the giant Argentinian to leave the field.

Sporting revolution

While newspapers likened Kreitlin's performance to that of a Shakespearean actor, Rattin's display was no less dramatic. Protesting his innocence, he pretended not to understand the official. Chaos ensued as players from both sides were shoved and kicked. It was only when the police intervened and escorted Rattin from the pitch that play could be resumed. One of Rattin's team-mates is even said to have aimed a kick at Kreitlin in the tunnel after the match.

These unsavoury scenes at Wembley in 1966 sparked something of a sporting revolution in football and led to the



Dismissed Schalke 04's Kyriakos Papadopoulos looks stunned on receiving a red card.

introduction of yellow and red cards (see Presidential Note). Since 1970, 1904 yellow and 111 red cards have been shown at World Cup finals, as well as 48 further yellows for second bookable offences.

The first whistle

Nowadays, yellow and red cards are an integral part of the beautiful game. As it happens, officials were able to make themselves heard long before the cards were introduced. In 1878, the referee's whistle became the first technical aid to be used in the sport – 134 years before the introduction of goal-line technology. ⚽

The weekly debate.

Anything you want to get off your chest? Which topics do you want to discuss? Send your suggestions to: feedback-theweekly@fifa.org

It's annoying when referees make a big deal out of showing yellow and red cards, but it's also not right when they do it at too casually. Showing a card should be a clear signal to the players.

Andrew Moore, Manchester (England)

“Referees are figures who should be respected.”

I'm a referee myself and I know how difficult it is to take charge of a game. It's important to draw a line and make sure everyone is clear as to who has the final say out on the pitch. If you don't lay down the law right from the off, then the players will run rings around you.

Markus Herzog, Bregenz (Austria)

Increasingly in-depth television coverage and the breakdown of individual moves in slow motion have undermined the position of referees in the game. Against that backdrop I can understand why referees get

defensive and sometimes go over the top with their gestures. I think there's a simple solution though: refereeing should be professionalised. Only then would they be on an equal footing with the players.

Vigo Olsen, Bergen (Norway)

For me referees are figures who should be respected. They need to keep a cool head, act in a calm manner and not add fuel to an already heated atmosphere out on the pitch.

Dieter Barsch, Vienna (Austria)

I think referees are often too showy, even when they're speaking to players. A player should never be insulted or provoked by a referee. Officials are role models and need to stay in control both on and off the pitch at all times, without letting any negative emotions affect their behaviour.

Peter Horst, Dusseldorf (Germany)

Referees don't have an easy time of things. In the lower leagues in particular, players often vent the frustrations of their everyday lives on the referee, so it's completely understandable that their reactions are sometimes over the top. Ultimately, cards are the only means they have to create respect for themselves.

Rudi Scheepers, Utrecht (The Netherlands)

At the end of the day, referees are only human too. People always say they have to remain impartial over the 90 minutes, but so much happens out on the pitch that it would be difficult for anyone to cope with that without showing some kind of emotion.

Mirjam Knecht, Malmo (Sweden)

I believe less is more when it comes to showing cards. If a referee gives them out too freely then he loses his credibility. I think the way he shows a player a card should depend on the severity of the offence. Just like in any other situation during a game, referees have to go with their instincts when showing cards.

Olga Nabokowa, Donetsk (Ukraine)



A signal

Football uses colours in the same way as a traffic light: yellow means caution, and red means stop! English referee Ken Aston came up with the idea for the colours of the cards in the late 1960s, allegedly while negotiating the London rush hour by car. Cards were first used at the 1970 World Cup in Mexico. The first-ever yellow card was shown to Soviet player Kakhi Asatiani by German referee Kurt Tschenscher after 31 minutes of the opening match between the Soviet Union and Mexico.

Nowadays yellow and red cards are entirely routine in football, although we tend to forget the actual function of these disciplinary instruments: they inform players and spectators that a sanction has been applied. In former times the referee would deliver a verbal warning to the player and write the offender's name in his notebook. This is the origin of the standard English football term “booking”. A player who has been dismissed is “sent off”.

However, referees do not always seem aware of the purely informational nature of these tools. They sometimes misuse cards as a show of strength against the players, squaring up to offenders and ostensibly brandishing the cards in their faces. That is the wrong signal, unnecessarily raising the emotional temperature of what is, in most cases, an already heated situation. A competent referee has no need of such carryings-on. Instead, he should call the player over, inform him of the verdict and unemotionally hold up the card, regardless of whether it is red or yellow. The card is a signal, just like a traffic light. No more and no less.

Best wishes, Sepp Blatter

“Refereeing should be professionalised.”

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**A FIFA World Cup™
in Brazil is just like Visa:
everyone is welcome.**





Rebels

Alan Schweingruber

The FIFA communications section now has its own rock band. The search for a suitable name is still on, but after a long night and a live debut in front of a supportive home crowd, we can be sure of one thing: The Rolling Stones might as well give up now. Our creative five-piece from five different countries represents not only a stand against foreigner quotas, but also wowed the public from the stage with powerful, anthemic ballads. A female lead vocalist from New Zealand, a Swiss drummer, an Italian bass player, as well as a Frenchman and a British mastermind on the guitars make up the ensemble: Can there be any other team on the planet that invests more passion in their songs?

German speakers call football “the greatest trivial pursuit in the world”. For folk who think along those lines, the trivial pursuit of music is on a par at the very least. The euphoria generated by our live gig was yet more evidence of the deep and intense love affair between football and music. Top strikers relax prior to important games by clamping headphones to their ears. World Cup songs enter the annals of history even before their official release. And some players, Alexi Lalas for one, take to the rock ‘n’ roll stage almost immediately after hanging up their boots (check out our regular “Sound of Football” feature on page 36).

This connection has been closely examined in highly academic studies. The most intriguing conclusion is that humans find it hard to cope in the absence of contradictions and conflict. We’ve all seen the chain-smoking coaches of yesteryear, and the tattooed players of today. Football stars have always been rebellious. In the 1970s FIFA Weekly columnist Gunter

Netzer owned his own discotheque, drove flashy cars and almost drowned in love letters. It’s all a bit reminiscent of punk and rock ‘n’ roll, of the Sex Pistols, beer and cigarettes rather than plenty of sleep and separation dieting.

If it does you good, it is good. So there has to be a positive aspect to a long night. And provided you give it the time it needs, the body has its own regeneration mechanisms. At the peak of his career David Bowie was a wild and angry young man if ever there was one, but study his face today and you’d think you were looking at a much younger person. Ziggy Stardust for ever.

We may have done Mick Jagger and his band an injustice at the start of our article. Even though he’s 70, *Play With Fire* sounds just as good as it did in 1965. The Stones front man seems not quite as crazy about football as Rod Stewart, who occasionally played keepy-up on stage. But Jagger is up there with the elite players when it comes to distance covered, some 10 km per appearance. The Stones have been touring since 1962.

Incidentally, in the quest for a name the English contingent felt inspired by a song made famous by Blues legend Muddy Waters. The sadly missed man from Mississippi might almost have been thinking of our band with his 1952 hit *All Night Long*. ☘

The weekly column by our staff writers

Best of the Rest – the bottom of the All-Time European Club Rankings

- 987. Platz**
Domagnano (San Marino)
6 games / 0 points (0:22 goals)
- 988. Platz**
EPA Larnaca (Cyprus)
6 / 0 (0:22)
- 989. Rank**
Toftir (Faroe Islands)
4 / 0 (0:22)
- 990. Platz**
FC Lusitanos (Andorra)
6 / 0 (1:26)
- 991. Platz**
FC Zurrieq (Malta)
6 / 0 (1:27)
- 992. Platz**
Vikingur Reykjavik (Iceland)
10 / 0 (5:32)
- 993. Platz**
SP Tre Penne (San Marino)
6 / 0 (4:33)
- 994. Platz**
Stade Dudelingen (Luxembourg)
4 / 0 (1:32)
- 995. Platz**
Eztelle Ettelbruck (Luxembourg)
12 / 0 (4:36)
- 996. Platz**
Rabat Ajax (Malta)
8 / 0 (0:40)
- 997. Platz**
CE Principat (Andorra)
6 / 0 (1:49)



Meticulous Director Carlos Niemeyer spent prolonged periods filming the action. His work at the 1974 World Cup is legendary.

Ronald Duker, Berlin

Football like you've never seen it before

For fans of films and football, the 11 mm festival is not to be missed. We went to Berlin to take a closer look.

Football and film. The classic motion picture and the average match might both last around ninety minutes, but there are also fundamental differences between the two. A dramatic ending to a film is a foregone conclusion, planned down to the last detail and scripted in advance, whereas a football match is, and always will be, largely unpredictable. The sport is played in real life and is therefore just as uncertain as every other aspect of our existence. But what happens when the planned and the unpredictable – in

Canal 100 (3)

other words, film and football – merge together into one unique art form?

Look no further than the 11 mm international football film festival, the eleventh edition of which was held at the beginning of April. Gottrik Wewer, the Chairman of the German Football Federation’s Cultural Foundation that presents the festival, believes that film can “tell a lot about the people who love and suffer at the hands of football. Their passion, their feelings and their culture bring the game to life, both on the pitch and in the cinema.” And 11 mm has certainly not disappointed, with this year’s edition casting a number of international football stars in a very different light to how they are normally portrayed on television. The fans were also a focal point at the festival, with supporters ranging from recreational footballers to a group of fanatical old Argentinian men engaged in a fierce game of table football they had invented themselves in which buttons were used instead of balls.

Legendary tournament in the Amazon

Admittedly, there were not any westerns. Yet this one exception aside, the festival contained every conceivable genre or narrative form in existence. One feature film, *Die Vollpfosten*, told the story of a former football star who was driven to rack and ruin by alcohol, before making a new start to life as the coach of a crazy amateur team in the provinces. Another, *Heleno*, focused on how Brazilian star striker Heleno de Freitas managed to combine his life in the 1940s as a lawyer, womaniser and bohemian with a series of magical performances in the yellow of the *Seleção*, for whom he scored nineteen goals in just eighteen appearances. A third feature film, this one entitled *Je suis supporter de Standard*, portrayed the life of a fanatical supporter of Belgian club side Standard Liege who met a woman and subsequently began therapy in order to open up his heart – previously devoted entirely to his team – to a new kind of love.

However, the vast majority of the films at the 11 mm festival were documentaries focusing on the passionate fans of lower-league teams or reports from remote regions of the world in which the locals’ love for the game has taken on bizarre proportions. Have you ever heard, for example, of Peladao, the world’s biggest football tournament? It is held in the Amazonian city of Manaus, a location so deep in the Brazilian hinterland that it can only be accessed by boat or aeroplane. As many as one thousand teams take part in the competition, the majority of them sailing down the river in rickety old boats to reach the isolated host city. But what makes Peladao so special is its readiness to include both men and women. Each individual team, regardless of whether its players are local



Eleventh edition The 11 mm football film festival was held in Berlin’s Babylon cinema.

CANAL 100

Canal 100 was founded in 1950 by the then 30-year-old Carlos Niemeyer, who died in Rio de Janeiro in 1999. Just one year after his death, the company ceased all operations. Full-length films such as *Futebol total* or *Brasil Bom de Bola* were an exception for Canal 100, which had mainly produced material for the three-minute-long weekly news reels shown in Brazilian cinemas in the build-up to the feature film. Around 2000 hours of

film, in urgent need of digitalisation, are still stored in an archive now managed by Niemeyer’s son Alexandre.



Legendary
The images of the beautiful game captured by Niemeyer’s film company Canal 100.



Frankfurt, June 1974 Pele watches the goalless World Cup opener between Brazil and Yugoslavia.

***Futebol total* also depicted the legendary Pele, who had only just retired from the game at that point, wrapped up in a fur coat to keep himself warm in the cool German summer.**

tribesmen, deaf people, or the employees of a Toshiba factory, brings a beauty queen to Manaus. Why? Because the tournament serves two purposes: it is both a football festival and a beauty contest aimed at crowning the Amazon's most attractive woman. Perhaps even more bizarrely, though, both the catwalk and the pitch combine to form a rather complicated competition format. If one team is knocked out by another, for example, the victorious beauty queen is able to reinstate her team in the tournament. For the players and the women involved, participating in Peladao offers them a potential way out of poverty. And the film, shot against the stunning backdrop of the Brazilian rainforest, magnificently portrays the fervour and humour with which they approach their dream of becoming a professional footballer or a model.

With the 2014 World Cup in Brazil fast approaching, the country was inevitably a focal point at the 11 mm festival. The level of excitement surrounding this year's global showpiece might already be at fever pitch, but the footage in the archives of the Brazilian production company Canal 100 certainly whetted the appetite for the tournament in South America. The historical material, shot in black and white as well as colour, was crisp and clear enough on the screen to inspire sports photographers for generations. The festival marked the world premiere for *Futebol total*, a feature-length documentary film by director Carlos Niemeyer, whose close-up footage of the *Seleção* during the 1974 World Cup in Germany was nothing less than a cinematic sensation. Other directors later adopted a similar approach, with Sonke Worthmann's film *Deutschland. Ein*

Sommermarchen portraying the German national team at the 2006 tournament and Stéphane Meunier's *Les yeux dans les Bleus* following the French side as they won the World Cup on home soil in 1998.

Futebol total might now be almost forty years old, but the film was only retrieved from the depths of the archives by chance a few months ago. A fourth-place finish for 1974 tournament favourites Brazil was a painful burden for the South American nation to bear at the time, and with his countrymen so disappointed at Brazil's poor performance, Niemeyer was reluctant to release his film for public viewing. *Futebol total* depicted German pedestrian crossings in the rain and world superstar Pele, who had only just retired from the game at that point, wrapped up in a fur coat to keep himself warm in the cool German summer. With images



40 years in the archives The film *Futebol total* was only retrieved a matter of months ago.



Close-up Niemeyer's productions captured the emotions on camera.



Floodlight Canal 100 positioned cameras almost at ground level.



Bathroom discussion Thierry Henry (left) and Lilian Thuram in the documentary film "Les yeux dans les Bleus".

of spectators in the stadium linking hands, the-then German chancellor Willy Brandt smoking in the stands and a group of traditionally-attired performers dancing around a huge beer barrel at the opening ceremony in Frankfurt, the film really painted a contemporary and socio-historical picture for its audience. But the most breathtaking images are the ones of the action itself. Niemeyer's numerous camera crews filmed from a range of new positions and angles, with cameras almost fixed at ground level to ensure a close-up view of the stars. His approach transformed the players into larger-than-life heroes, but without casting them in the same combative light as the athletes in Leni Riefenstahl's legendary sports film. With music alternating between slow-motion and normal speed, the players' movements flowed together to become one single

on-screen ballet performance. The elegance and art of football has never been more vivid than it was through the lenses of Niemeyer's cameras.

Brasil Bom de Bola, a second feature film by the same director that was also included in the programme for the film festival, focused on the era between 1958 and 1970. With children chasing footballs in the streets and bare-footed players in action on the beaches of Copacabana, Niemeyer brilliantly portrayed the development of the game in his country. And while he may have fooled some of his audience into believing the sport had its roots in Brazil, there was no disguising that, for the South American nation, the beautiful game is about much more than just winning. Almost as dramatic as the film's images were the words of the narrator, who proclaimed: "Nationality, age and religion

are completely irrelevant in football." Wouldn't that be a wonderful motto for the World Cup in Brazil this summer? No other genre could portray such an idea as convincingly as the football film, a highly creative combination of two completely different art forms. ❄



Name

Mary Abigail "Abby" Wambach

Date and place of birth

2 June 1980, Rochester, New York

Position

Striker

Clubs

**Washington Freedom, Magic Jack,
Western New York Flash (since 2013)**

*National Women's
Soccer League (NWSL)*

Season starts: 12 April 2014

**New York Flash - Washington Spirit
on 13 April**

US national team

218 appearances, 167 goals

Major honours

USA Player of the Year

2003, 2004, 2007, 2010, 2011, 2013

FIFA Ballon d'Or 2012

“Obama’s tweet was a big deal”

Abby Wambach’s footballing genius once persuaded Barack Obama to tweet his congratulations. The 33-year-old has won almost everything there is to win except the World Cup. She intends to remedy the omission in 2015.

In our most recent interview last year you were pretty excited about the new league in the US. How would you summarise the first season?

Abby Wambach: I think the first season was a success. In previous years we maybe got ahead of ourselves in terms of how much money was spent on stadiums and salaries for players and staff. Now we’re kind of starting again from scratch. Some may say it looks like we’re aiming too low, and in some ways I’d agree. But it’s not like we’ve no potential for growth. I think that’s important for any professional league, especially with the women’s game in the United States. We need to grow from wherever we start rather than stand still or decrease. All in all I’m super proud of my New York Flash team and of all the players that participated because hopefully this league will last forever.

So your expectations of the National Women’s Soccer League have been fulfilled?

I think there will definitely be changes year by year. I know that US Soccer is committed to creating one of the best leagues in the world. To do that, you have to learn from your mistakes. Over time the facilities are going to be better, the contracts and the salaries will get better, and so will the coaching. Everything across the board will keep getting better as long as people keep coming and watching. This is what I’m really looking forward to. We know in the United States that the MLS has proved particularly successful in helping women’s teams make an impact. The Portland Timbers bought the Portland Thorns. They started this team and straight off they got 15,000 people for a women’s game. That’s nothing but good news. So I’m excited to see what happens in the future with the NWSL.

You’re only missing one major honour, a Women’s World Cup winner’s medal. Next year’s World Cup in Canada must be pretty important to you?

Some footballers may or may not admit this, but it’s stressful playing and competing

in a World Cup. It’s fun to actually just watch and be a spectator, so I’m excited about watching the men’s World Cup this summer. But yes, the 2015 Women’s World Cup in Canada will be amazing. It’s close to home and Canada are a big rival of ours. I hope it all falls into place for us. So much preparation goes into a World Cup but there are so many things you can’t control. I’m really excited and we’ll give it our best shot.

Who are your favourites for the title in Brazil?

I have to stick with my country. I think we got a tough draw, but if we can get some results maybe we can get through to the next round. The World Cup is so special. It’s a bunch of different countries, people from different worlds who come together and have this similarity, even if you don’t speak the same language. We all speak soccer and we all speak football. It’ll be amazing to see it happen, to see the games, watch how they finish and who ends up being top of the podium. You never know what’ll happen, and that’ll keep the folks in the United States hoping.

You broke Mia Hamm’s world record for international goals last year. How would you describe that moment?

It was definitely a special moment not only for me, but also for my team. I don’t know what Mia would say, but after scoring so many goals you reflect and you wonder: how did that happen? But of course it didn’t just happen, it was a long time coming and took a lot of effort not only by myself, but also from my team. They have to put me in a position to score goals. They not only have to be skilled in their position and good at what they do, they have to believe not just in me but in themselves. That’s what’s so special about this team. I’m not one of those players that beats you one-on-one, I’m a player that puts herself in the box to finish as many chances as she gets. Any kind of world record like this has to belong to my team-mates, they’re the ones that actually made it happen.

President Barack Obama sent a tweet after you broke Mia’s record: “Congratulations @AbbyWambach, the greatest goal scorer in the history of women’s soccer – you’ve made your country proud. #ChasingAbby.” Were you impressed?

You bet I was! I think his kids play soccer. To be recognised by the US president is a big deal. Even more than that, I received all these phone calls and text messages from Mia which were congratulatory and proud. Those were the things that really matter. I specially appreciated the friends and family members who contacted me right after that actual goal.

How important was Mia Hamm for your career?

I can’t really explain how important she’s been throughout my career. I was on her team at the beginning. She taught me a lot, both directly and indirectly. I don’t know if she was even aware of doing it. She really dedicated her life to the team, and I’d say it was the same for me. Mia taught me how to act on the field, and how to conduct myself away from the field. She was my idol, the person I looked up to and my mentor. She’s not only a friend and a fantastic team-mate. She’s somebody who pioneered the sport. 🙌

Abby Wambach was talking to Nicole Rätzmann

T H E N

Hanover,
Germany



1961

Players from Hannover 96 are put through their paces by jumping over a shortened piece of rope - an activity always guaranteed to make you sweat!

N

O

W

Gelsenkirchen,
Germany



2011

Schalke's players leap over a long rope - by no means a new technique, but one that is as effective as ever.

Tomorrow brings us all closer

To new people, new ideas and new states of mind.
Here's to reaching all the places we've never been.

Fly Emirates to 6 continents.

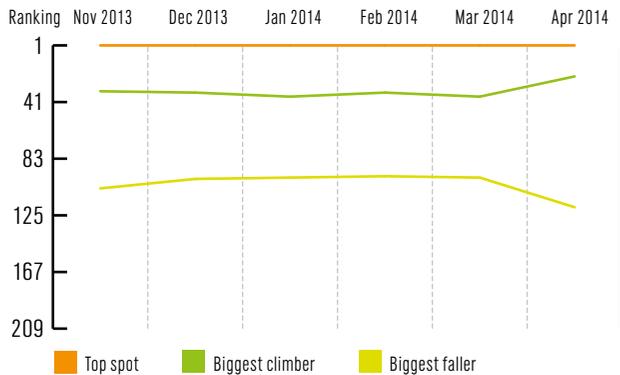


Hello Tomorrow


Emirates

FIFA WORLD RANKING

| Rank | Team | Change in ranking | Points |
|------|----------------------|-------------------|--------|
| 1 | Spain | 0 | 1460 |
| 2 | Germany | 0 | 1340 |
| 3 | Portugal | 1 | 1245 |
| 4 | Colombia | 1 | 1186 |
| 5 | Uruguay | 1 | 1181 |
| 6 | Argentina | -3 | 1174 |
| 6 | Brazil | 3 | 1174 |
| 8 | Switzerland | -1 | 1161 |
| 9 | Italy | -1 | 1115 |
| 10 | Greece | 3 | 1082 |
| 11 | England | 1 | 1043 |
| 12 | Belgium | -2 | 1039 |
| 13 | USA | 1 | 1015 |
| 14 | Chile | 1 | 1011 |
| 15 | Netherlands | -4 | 967 |
| 16 | France | 1 | 935 |
| 17 | Ukraine | 1 | 913 |
| 18 | Russia | 1 | 903 |
| 19 | Mexico | 1 | 876 |
| 20 | Croatia | -4 | 871 |
| 21 | Côte d'Ivoire | 3 | 830 |
| 22 | Scotland | 15 | 825 |
| 23 | Denmark | -1 | 819 |
| 24 | Egypt | 2 | 798 |
| 25 | Bosnia-Herzegovina | -4 | 795 |
| 25 | Sweden | 2 | 795 |
| 25 | Algeria | 0 | 795 |
| 28 | Ecuador | -5 | 790 |
| 29 | Slovenia | 2 | 787 |
| 30 | Serbia | -2 | 759 |
| 31 | Romania | 1 | 756 |
| 32 | Honduras | 4 | 754 |
| 33 | Armenia | 8 | 750 |
| 34 | Costa Rica | 0 | 744 |
| 35 | Panama | -6 | 739 |
| 36 | Czech Republic | -6 | 731 |
| 37 | Iran | 5 | 715 |
| 38 | Ghana | -3 | 713 |
| 39 | Turkey | -1 | 711 |
| 40 | Austria | 4 | 673 |
| 41 | Venezuela | -2 | 670 |
| 42 | Cape Verde Islands | -9 | 665 |
| 43 | Peru | -3 | 653 |
| 44 | Hungary | -1 | 623 |
| 45 | Nigeria | 2 | 620 |
| 46 | Slovakia | 4 | 616 |
| 47 | Japan | 1 | 613 |
| 47 | Wales | 2 | 613 |
| 49 | Tunisia | -5 | 597 |
| 50 | Cameroon | 0 | 583 |
| 51 | Guinea | 2 | 580 |
| 52 | Finland | 6 | 578 |
| 53 | Uzbekistan | 2 | 577 |
| 54 | Paraguay | 5 | 555 |
| 54 | Montenegro | -8 | 555 |
| 56 | Korea Republic | 4 | 551 |
| 56 | Norway | 1 | 551 |
| 58 | Iceland | -6 | 546 |
| 59 | Mali | -3 | 545 |
| 59 | Australia | 4 | 545 |
| 61 | Burkina Faso | 1 | 528 |
| 62 | Libya | 9 | 522 |
| 63 | Senegal | 6 | 511 |
| 64 | Jordan | 2 | 510 |
| 65 | Republic of Ireland | 3 | 504 |
| 66 | South Africa | -2 | 500 |
| 67 | United Arab Emirates | -6 | 499 |
| 68 | Bolivia | 2 | 497 |
| 69 | El Salvador | 9 | 488 |
| 70 | Albania | -16 | 486 |
| 71 | Sierra Leone | 1 | 484 |
| 72 | Poland | 1 | 479 |
| 73 | Bulgaria | -6 | 460 |
| 74 | Zambia | 0 | 456 |
| 75 | Saudi Arabia | 0 | 455 |
| 76 | Trinidad and Tobago | 0 | 454 |
| 76 | Morocco | 1 | 454 |



| | | | |
|-----|-------------------------------|-----|-----|
| 78 | Israel | -13 | 450 |
| 79 | Haiti | 0 | 446 |
| 80 | FYR Macedonia | 2 | 443 |
| 81 | Oman | 0 | 418 |
| 82 | Jamaica | -2 | 414 |
| 83 | Belarus | 0 | 404 |
| 84 | Northern Ireland | 2 | 400 |
| 85 | Azerbaijan | 6 | 398 |
| 86 | Uganda | -1 | 395 |
| 87 | Gabon | 1 | 386 |
| 88 | Congo DR | -4 | 380 |
| 89 | Togo | 0 | 374 |
| 90 | Cuba | 3 | 371 |
| 91 | Botswana | 4 | 369 |
| 92 | Congo | -5 | 367 |
| 93 | Estonia | -1 | 366 |
| 94 | Angola | 2 | 347 |
| 95 | Qatar | 6 | 336 |
| 96 | China PR | 2 | 333 |
| 97 | Benin | -3 | 332 |
| 98 | Zimbabwe | 4 | 329 |
| 99 | Moldova | 9 | 325 |
| 100 | Iraq | 3 | 324 |
| 101 | Ethiopia | -1 | 319 |
| 102 | Niger | 2 | 315 |
| 103 | Georgia | -4 | 303 |
| 104 | Lithuania | 1 | 293 |
| 105 | Bahrain | 1 | 289 |
| 106 | Kenya | 3 | 284 |
| 106 | Central African Republic | 1 | 284 |
| 108 | Kuwait | 2 | 283 |
| 109 | Latvia | 4 | 273 |
| 110 | Canada | 2 | 272 |
| 111 | New Zealand | -21 | 271 |
| 112 | Luxembourg | 8 | 266 |
| 113 | Equatorial Guinea | 6 | 261 |
| 114 | Mozambique | 1 | 252 |
| 115 | Lebanon | 1 | 251 |
| 116 | Vietnam | 9 | 242 |
| 117 | Sudan | 5 | 241 |
| 118 | Kazakhstan | 9 | 235 |
| 119 | Liberia | -22 | 234 |
| 120 | Namibia | 4 | 233 |
| 121 | Malawi | -7 | 227 |
| 122 | Tanzania | -5 | 226 |
| 122 | Afghanistan | 5 | 226 |
| 124 | Guatemala | 2 | 224 |
| 125 | Burundi | 4 | 215 |
| 126 | Dominican Republic | -15 | 212 |
| 127 | Malta | 7 | 204 |
| 128 | Cyprus | -6 | 201 |
| 129 | Suriname | 2 | 197 |
| 129 | Rwanda | 5 | 197 |
| 131 | Gambia | 5 | 190 |
| 131 | Syria | 6 | 190 |
| 133 | Tajikistan | -12 | 188 |
| 134 | Grenada | -2 | 184 |
| 135 | St Vincent and the Grenadines | 4 | 181 |
| 136 | New Caledonia | -18 | 174 |
| 137 | Korea DPR | -4 | 172 |
| 138 | Lesotho | 5 | 159 |
| 139 | Antigua and Barbuda | 5 | 158 |
| 140 | Thailand | 8 | 156 |
| 141 | St Lucia | 5 | 155 |
| 142 | Malaysia | -1 | 153 |
| 143 | Belize | -3 | 152 |
| 143 | Philippines | -13 | 152 |

| | | | |
|-----|--------------------------|-----|-----|
| 145 | Singapore | 4 | 144 |
| 145 | India | 7 | 144 |
| 147 | Kyrgyzstan | -1 | 143 |
| 147 | Puerto Rico | 3 | 143 |
| 149 | Liechtenstein | 2 | 139 |
| 150 | Guyana | 3 | 137 |
| 151 | Indonesia | 3 | 135 |
| 152 | Mauritania | 3 | 127 |
| 153 | Maldives | 4 | 124 |
| 153 | St Kitts and Nevis | 3 | 124 |
| 155 | Aruba | 7 | 122 |
| 156 | Turkmenistan | -14 | 119 |
| 157 | Tahiti | -19 | 116 |
| 158 | Hong Kong | -13 | 111 |
| 159 | Nepal | 1 | 107 |
| 160 | Dominica | -1 | 103 |
| 161 | Pakistan | -3 | 102 |
| 162 | Barbados | -1 | 101 |
| 163 | Bangladesh | -1 | 98 |
| 164 | Palestine | 3 | 91 |
| 164 | Faroe Islands | -2 | 91 |
| 166 | São Tomé e Príncipe | -1 | 86 |
| 167 | Nicaragua | 1 | 84 |
| 168 | Bermuda | 1 | 83 |
| 169 | Chad | 1 | 80 |
| 170 | Chinese Taipei | 1 | 78 |
| 171 | Guam | 2 | 77 |
| 172 | Solomon Islands | -7 | 75 |
| 173 | Sri Lanka | 0 | 74 |
| 174 | Laos | -2 | 73 |
| 174 | Myanmar | -1 | 73 |
| 176 | Mauritius | 0 | 67 |
| 177 | Seychelles | -1 | 66 |
| 178 | Curaçao | 0 | 65 |
| 179 | Swaziland | 0 | 64 |
| 180 | Yemen | 5 | 60 |
| 181 | Vanuatu | -1 | 55 |
| 182 | Fiji | -1 | 47 |
| 183 | Samoa | -1 | 45 |
| 184 | Comoros | -1 | 43 |
| 184 | Guinea-Bissau | -1 | 43 |
| 186 | Bahamas | -1 | 40 |
| 187 | Mongolia | 0 | 35 |
| 188 | Montserrat | 0 | 33 |
| 189 | Madagascar | 1 | 32 |
| 190 | Cambodia | -2 | 28 |
| 191 | Brunei Darussalam | 0 | 26 |
| 191 | Timor-Leste | 0 | 26 |
| 191 | Tonga | 0 | 26 |
| 194 | US Virgin Islands | 0 | 23 |
| 195 | Cayman Islands | 0 | 21 |
| 195 | Papua New Guinea | 0 | 21 |
| 197 | British Virgin Islands | 0 | 18 |
| 197 | American Samoa | 0 | 18 |
| 199 | Andorra | 0 | 16 |
| 200 | Eritrea | 0 | 11 |
| 201 | South Sudan | 0 | 10 |
| 202 | Somalia | 1 | 8 |
| 202 | Macau | 0 | 8 |
| 204 | Djibouti | 0 | 6 |
| 205 | Cook Islands | 0 | 5 |
| 206 | Anguilla | 0 | 3 |
| 207 | Bhutan | 0 | 0 |
| 207 | San Marino | 0 | 0 |
| 207 | Turks and Caicos Islands | 0 | 0 |





Nobody rocks it like Lalas

Hanspeter Kuenzler

Being multi-talented is never easy, especially when your gifts are showcased on a stage that remains a distant dream for most people.

Milla Jovovich began her career as a model before making the transition into film. At the age of just 19, she released her debut album, *The Divine Comedy*, which generated no small amount of envy. Indeed, despite its credible folk-pop content, the album was either ridiculed or studiously ignored.

Alexi Lalas has suffered a similar fate. Not only did his footballing talents see him become the first American to play in Italy's Serie A, but the red-headed, bearded defender also happened to possess the looks of a rock-star – as befitting the brand of slacker rock to which he devoted his spare time. Lalas' seamless transition between the worlds of football and Rock'n'Roll not only generated considerable jealousy, but also raised several

other key questions. How, for example, did this man succeed in combining the lifestyle of an elite athlete with that of a singer, songwriter and guitarist for the rock band The Gypsies?

Born in Birmingham, Michigan, Panayotis Alexander Lalas burst onto the soccer scene as a teenager. After playing for his college team at Rutgers University, he was named in the squad for the 1992 Olympics, before making his international debut two years later at the 1994 World Cup in the USA, despite never having played professionally. In the meantime, The Gypsies released their first album, entitled *Woodland*.

Lalas even recorded two songs for a Bruce Springsteen tribute album, which was released in 1995 and predominantly featured tracks by Spanish-speaking artists. He joined forces with Randy Edelman to sing the football-themed song *Kickin' Balls*

for the soundtrack of the film *The Big Green*, before releasing a second album, *Jetlag*, and embarking on a European tour as the warm-up act for Hootie & the Blowfish.

His first solo album, *Ginger*, was released in 1998. Two more have followed, most recently *So It Goes* in 2010. Had soccer never got in the way of Lalas' musical ambitions, he'd now be playing his guitar at venues all over the country. His songs have something of Nirvana and Springsteen about them, and are vaguely reminiscent of bands such as Soul Asylum and Gin Blossom. The subtly understated track *Pop School* is just one of several hidden gems. Unluckily for Lalas, the bottom line is that the football world will never forgive him for being a good singer, while the rock world will never forgive him for being a football star. 🚫



Perikles Monioudis

How do you wind up a footballer? With a key, apparently! Turning the key winds the spring inside the figure pictured above until you let go, at which point the entire tensioning force of the spring is transferred to the legs, which automatically kick out.

Of course, real footballers need far more training and motivation before they can let rip on the pitch. In this case, "winding up" means training, training and yet more training.

Luckily, people cannot be manipulated quite so easily as this amusing little toy. Everyone has to provide their own motivation.

The small, mechanical, red-and-white painted figure pictured above was made in the US zone in Germany during the 1950s and is part of the FIFA Collection. However, anyone looking for a keyhole on the figure would be left disappointed, as it is the ball, rather than the player, that must be wound up.

The metallic football can be opened along the line of its circumference to reveal the aforementioned spring. This spring operates the ball rather than the player, who runs – or rather rolls – along behind it in an effort to control it.

The question here is: who is playing with whom? And, more importantly, is it not the case that the ball is always the entity that governs events on the pitch, with the players merely accomplices to the action?

Looking at the figure and the opened ball, the answer seems obvious: anyone who can control the ball has motivated themselves to do it, but anyone at the mercy of the ball's capers and frivolities as it flies through the air or rolls around needs to get back to basics! After all, in real life there is no little key to help you. 🚫

“The email arrived at 2:24am”

American referee Mark Geiger has been officiating matches since he was 13. Now, 26 years later, his dream of going to a World Cup is finally being realised.

Football made huge strides in my country after we hosted the 1994 World Cup. The sport now has financial backing, the players are of a high standard and the fans are enthusiastic. Consequently, Major League Soccer has become the perfect working environment for me and refereeing has become a dream job.

I officiated my first match at the age of 13, and like so many other American kids, I loved to play football. Soccer is one of the most popular sports among young kids in the USA before they turn to American football, baseball or basketball in their teenage years. Back then, I needed a job and wanted to earn a bit of money, but it became so much more than that.

I received the email with FIFA's offer to go to the World Cup in Brazil at 2:24am. It's difficult to describe what went through my mind at that moment. I was speechless, thrilled, moved and proud. My dream was coming true. By the time the alarm clock rang at 6.30, I'd already received several text messages from friends congratulating me.

The reaction from fans, players and coaches was generally fantastic, and it gave me encouragement in my everyday work too. About a year ago, I gave up my dream job as a maths teacher to concentrate fully on my refereeing career. There are many parallels between teaching and officiating. You have to constantly adapt your style to suit the class or players in front of you; you have to be able to work well with people and be able to respond to them. On the pitch, we're much more than someone who blows a whistle and shows cards - we're managers. We have to use communication to help 22 players to play their game; we have to pro-



Name

Mark Geiger

Date of birth

25. August 1974

Hometown

Beachwood, USA

Occupation

Teacher

Honours

MLS Referee of the Year 2011

vide a framework and protect the players, and that's not always straightforward.

Football is all about emotions and these can sometimes boil over. Body language is important too: whether it's the way I move my hands or the tone of my voice, these things make all the difference when not everybody on the pitch speaks the same language.

The most important thing before any match is preparation. We have to know the coaches' tactics, the line-ups and the character of each of the players. The support I get from my assistants Joe and Sean is hugely important, and I wouldn't be where I am today without them. We complement each other perfectly - the chemistry is 100 per cent right. Now we've got to oversee our first World Cup

match. We'd love to progress through the tournament, ideally all the way to the Final on 13 July. In that respect, we're no different from the players. ❄️

As told to Sarah Steiner

In Turning Point, personalities reflect on a decisive moment in their lives.



game on or game over

all in or nothing
adidas.com/worldcup



The first red cards, the three fairest teams and four-time runners-up. Test your knowledge!

①



It was the first time red cards had been shown in the final of a global tournament. Three footballers from one national team were given their marching orders, but which stadium hosted this eventful match?

F Wankdorf

P Estadio Azteca

L Wembley

R Estadio River Plate

②

One player finished as runner-up four times in two months, in the World Cup, UEFA Champions League and his domestic league and cup competitions. Who recorded this historic achievement?



③

LABDARÚGÁS

サッカー

BAL-balan

Knattspyrna

PEDILUDIUM

When did a team from a country that uses the word "football" to refer to our sport last win the World Cup?

C 1998

G 1970

L 1966

N 1930

④



Some teams are exceptionally fair.

Three of these national sides completed an entire World Cup campaign without committing a single foul, but which one did not?

O Italy at Sweden 1958

E France at Spain 1982

H Argentina at Mexico 1970

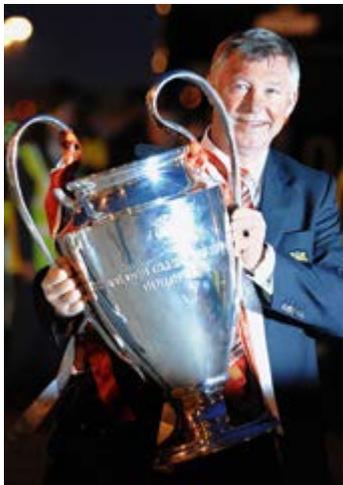
K England at USA 1994

The answer to last week's Quiz Cup was **MARK** (detailed answers on www.fifa.com/theweekly).

Inspiration and implementation: cus

Please send your answers to the E-mail feedback-theweekly@fifa.org by **16 April 2014**. Correct submissions for all quizzes received by 11 June 2014 will go into a draw to **win two tickets to the FIFA World Cup Final on 13 July 2014**.

Before sending in your answers, all participants must read and accept the competition terms and conditions and the rules, which can be found at <http://en.fifa.com/aboutfifa/organisation/the-fifa-weekly/rules.pdf>



Which coach has won the UEFA Champions League most often?

Jelena Zueva, Moscow

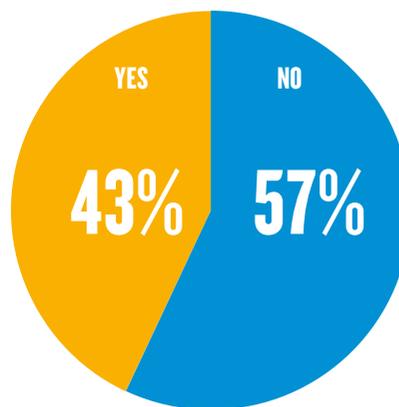
Answered by Thomas Renggli: Seven coaches have guided teams to Champions League glory twice: Jupp Heynckes, Pep Guardiola, Vicente del Bosque, Sir Alex Ferguson, Carlo Ancelotti, José Mourinho and Ottmar Hitzfeld. As a four-time finalist Ferguson has his nose in front of his counterparts. Over the course of his long career, the 72-year-old Scot oversaw 19 campaigns in Europe's elite club competition.



Blue is the colour! Chelsea celebrated a last-gasp win against Paris Saint-Germain in the quarter-final of Europe's premier club competition this week, but will the Londoners still be celebrating after the final in Lisbon on 24 May? Email your views to feedback-theweekly@fifa.org

LAST WEEK'S POLL RESULTS

Should the number of overseas players be limited in the world's biggest leagues?



THE MAGNIFICENT SEVEN



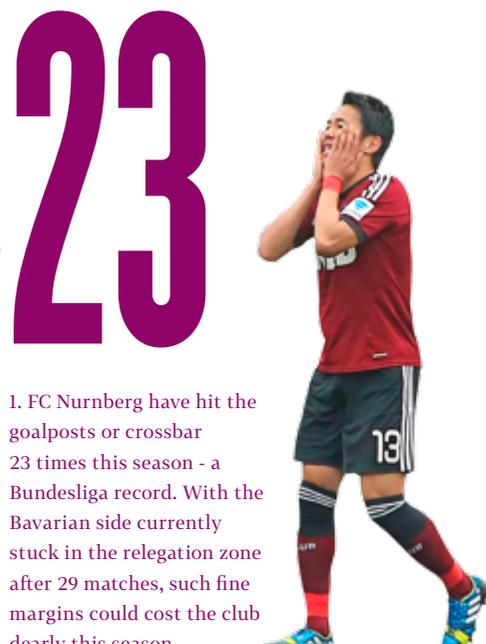
Japan's U-17 women's side posted seven wins in seven games at the U-17 Women's World Cup in Costa Rica thanks to their technical brilliance, tactical discipline and relentless attacking spirit. The cherry on the cake was their 2-0 victory over Spain in the final, with Meika Nishida (pictured) opening the scoring after only five minutes.

THE LONG WAIT



Liverpool have been waiting 24 years to win their 19th league title. With five Premier League matches left to play, they have a good chance of ending that drought and bringing the trophy to Anfield Road. The Reds are currently two points clear of Chelsea after Steven Gerrard's brace of penalties earned his side a 2-1 win over West Ham.

OFF THE WOODWORK



1. FC Nurnberg have hit the goalposts or crossbar 23 times this season - a Bundesliga record. With the Bavarian side currently stuck in the relegation zone after 29 matches, such fine margins could cost the club dearly this season.