Forward flight

Carlos Tevez

AUGMENTED REALITY
THE DIGITAL STADIUM

ALGARVE CUP
WOMEN’S WORLD CUP WARM-UP

FRENCH GUIANA
DARING TO DREAM
“Everyone has a choice”
Growing up in Fuerte Apache, Carlos Tevez had to make a decision early on in life. By choosing the path of football, he found a way out of a neighbourhood where drugs and violence are part and parcel of everyday life. In an interview with Alejandro Varsky, Juventus’s world-class Argentinian striker discusses his childhood and career.

Sepp Blatter
Djibouti’s U-17 women’s team recently caused a stir within youth football. In his weekly column the FIFA President congratulates them on their latest achievement and expresses his excitement about the future of women’s football in this east African nation.

Screen time
Technological developments are changing our lives – and our visits to football stadiums. Ronald Duker takes a closer look at the apps and QR codes now offering fans real-time statistics, replays and match analysis.

Marvin Torvic
The French Guiana defender will soon be playing for a place in the Gold Cup in what will be an extremely symbolic match for the captain and his country.

Forward flight
Football helped Argentinian star Carlos Tevez escape the crime and drug-ridden environment of his youth. A conversation with the world-class striker.
Gonzalo Lauda / fotogloria

Honduras
Record champions Club Deportivo Olimpia only narrowly avoided defeat against their league rivals. (Pictured: Anthony Lozano)

FIFA Women’s World Cup
6 June – 5 July 2015, Canada

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**18 Algarve Cup**
FIFA President Sepp Blatter considers this prestigious tournament in Portugal to be a Women’s World Cup in miniature.
(Pictured: Alex Morgan (l) and Eugenie Le Sommer)

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**16 Portugal**
Arouca failed to take points from Benfica as they seek to avoid relegation.
(Pictured: Nelsinho)

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**12 Juventus**
Italy’s most popular club are on course for their 31st “Scudetto”.
(Pictured: Paul Pogba)
Unleash your confidence

ALL NEW
SORENTO

The Power to Surprise
The fan kitted out like a newspaper man could always be found on the same street corner beside the stadium. Come rain, shine or blizzard, he would call out to punters for a fanzine penned, produced and published entirely by him and a couple of friends. The magazine in question consisted of home truths about the club and team, accompanied by ample speculation, humorous exaggerations and false leads.

Nowadays the corner where the vendor once stood is usually occupied by fans looking at their smartphones – bringing themselves up to date with all the latest matchday happenings and making sure the app is working properly so that they can be furnished with all manner of facts and figures on the game and its players in real time.

Stadium visits have fundamentally changed, and not just on the way to the match. The experience inside the arena is now enhanced by catering, huge displays and comprehensive information via the public address system, immersing the senses and heightening the spectator’s perception of the event more than ever before.

Starting on page 24, our illustrated feature explains how augmented reality capitalises on the sophisticated interaction between man and machine. We take a look at how our increasingly digital environment can enrich the stadium experience. *

Perikles Monioudis
EVERYONE HAS A CHOICE
Argentina's world-class striker Carlos Tevez speaks to The FIFA Weekly about growing up in a troubled neighbourhood, his circle of friends, amusing language barriers – and his experiences in England and now in Turin with Juventus.

**Carlos Tevez was speaking with Alejandro Varsky in Turin**

Carlos Tevez, how are you getting on in Turin? Do you feel at home here?

Carlos Tevez: Things are going very well. After spending eight years in Manchester I received a very warm welcome to Turin. The people are very easy-going, in contrast to other parts of Italy such as Rome or Naples that are dominated by incredible passion. Here everything is much more sedate; life is very good.

Can you do things here that were impossible to do in Manchester?

England is generally much, much calmer than Italy, but then I’m not someone who likes to go out or be constantly on the go. I enjoy the peace and quiet of spending time at home with my daughters. At Juve there are games every three days, so you constantly have to be training or with the team. That’s why I prefer to stay at home with my family in my free time.

Do you have to disguise yourself slightly when you go out?

No, not at all – it’s not a problem.

You have played in Brazil, England and Italy; where did you find it easiest to settle in?

Here in Italy, not least thanks to the language because as a Spanish speaker you understand a little more, whereas in England I had real difficulties. I didn’t have any issues with the weather as I don’t mind if it’s hot or cold, so in that respect I don’t have any preferences. Nevertheless I found it easier to settle in here.

Do you miss Argentina?

Yes, definitely. I’ve always missed friends and family, right from the start. Luckily I get plenty of visitors so I’m not always alone. Los pibes, my old mates, have always been there for me no matter where I’ve been.

The European adventures of the lads from Fuerte Apache, your old high-rise neighbourhood in Buenos Aires, have generated plenty of anecdotes.

Oh yes, without a doubt- particularly in England! Can you imagine the fun the lads from Fuerte had there? And it’s always something to do with the language. Every time we go out, there are thousands of stories. It’s always good fun.

It’s difficult for someone who has grown up in an entirely different world – in Europe, for example – to imagine what Fuerte Apache is like.

It’s tough to make people understand what that life is like if they haven’t been through the same things as I or the other people from that neighbourhood have experienced, so people can make of it what they want. You simply can’t get inside the heads of other people and say to them: “Look, I went through some rough times.” It’s impossible to explain everything the streets taught me – and that was quite a lot.

Is there one particular experience that shaped your childhood?

My whole childhood was hard, so it wasn’t a matter of any individual incident. I lived in a place where drugs and murder were part of everyday life. Experiencing difficult things, even as a very young kid, means you grow up quickly. I think that enables everyone to choose their own path and not just accept the one others have taken before you – and I went my own way. I never condoned drugs or murder, and luckily I was able to make a choice.

It is said that your childhood friend Dario Coronel was every bit as talented as you, but he wasn’t lucky enough to be able to make that choice – is that right? He died at a young age.

I don’t think you can say that he wasn’t lucky enough to be able to choose. As I’ve said already, everyone decides for themselves what they’re going to do. He had everything he needed to be just as successful, but he chose a different path – criminality and drugs – and that ultimately meant that he is no longer with us. I truly believe that everyone chooses their own route through life, and he – and this has nothing to do with luck – chose the easier option, a life of criminality and drugs.
**About Carlos Tevez**

On the pitch Carlos Alberto Martinez Tevez has never been a shrinking violet. The Argentine goal-poacher likes a physical battle - indeed he goes looking for them - and it is then that the versatile, nimble and tireless forward is nigh on unstoppable. He plays at full throttle, can perform any role across the front and has that rare gift of being able to decide a game by himself, either with a mesmerising piece of skill or a shot from range with that rocket of a right foot.

As a child and throughout his teen years, Tevez played football within the confines of the relationships he forged growing up in the Fuerte Apache neighbourhood of Buenos Aires. He was frequently exposed to drugs and violence, but that he would go on to become a successful footballer was clear from an early age. He was recruited by Argentine giants Boca Juniors at the age of 17 and won the 2003 Copa Libertadores and the Intercontinental Cup, before moving to Brazil as South America’s record signing and joining Sao Paulo outfit Corinthians in 2005. A year later he was on the move again, this time to the English Premier League and West Ham United, whom he saved from relegation on the final day of the 2006/07 season by scoring the winning goal in a 1-0 victory away at Manchester United. The Red Devils turned out to be Tevez’s next destination, and in two seasons at Old Trafford he scored 19 league goals to help Sir Alex Ferguson’s side claim consecutive Premier League titles in 2008 and 2009, also lifting the 2008 UEFA Champions League and the 2008 Club World Cup. In 2009 he switched clubs yet again – this time close to home – signing for United’s local rivals Manchester City and helping the Sky Blues to the FA Cup in 2011 and his third league title in 2012. In the summer of 2013, he then departed England after seven years to join Italian side Juventus, winning the Scudetto in his first season in Turin.

Tevez has represented his country 66 times since making his international debut in 2004, but after Alejandro Sabella was appointed Argentina coach, he spent three years in the international wilderness, missing out on a place in the squad for the 2014 FIFA World Cup, where Argentina finished as runners-up after defeat to Germany in the final. He finally made his long-awaited return to national team action on 12 November 2014, when new coach Gerardo Martino played him in a 2-1 friendly win against Croatia.

A passionate golfer, Tevez is married to Vanesa, with whom he has two daughters.
lievably difficult to get out of there. But everyone’s fate is in their own hands, as I always say. You have to prove to people that we’re not all the same.

Is it true that you thought about all these things to motivate yourself on the journey to Berlin’s Olympiastadion for the 2006 World Cup quarter-final while looking at the Germans out on the streets?

Yes, that’s true. We were going to the stadium, and although you’re always in a reflective mood in those moments, this time it was totally different. It had never happened to me before and it hasn’t happened in the same way since. I was suddenly full of energy and said to myself:

“Today you’ve got to give your all out on the pitch because you come from a place it’s very tough to get out of.” I thought of how we played with balls made from rags as children and things like that, and that gave me a real shot of motivation. It all played out in my mind’s eye; it was all in my head. The thoughts just came to me like that. It really did give me a boost.

Did growing up in that environment make you the player and battler that you are today?

I don’t know if there’s a connection there. I’ve always played my way, or at least tried. I always say that whereas previously I played with the ball, now I play football, and
Every dream needs a kick-off.

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That's something different entirely. But I don't know whether my circumstances have made me the kind of player I am. It's very possible.

Which of these do you enjoy more: playing football or just kicking a ball about?

I have more fun kicking a ball about! When I play football it's my job, but when you have a kickabout you have fun and play with your friends; there's no pressure. When you have to play football, you do it in the knowledge that there's a lot riding on the match, be it money, your team-mates or the feelings of the fans. There's a lot of pressure behind it.

How do you feel when Juve's fans call your name after you score a goal? It's not something you hear often in South America. Is it a special experience?

No, I don't feel anything special when that happens. Scoring a goal is a unique feeling, but you don't notice anything that happens after it goes in. The feeling of scoring is always the same – it's indescribable. What happens after that doesn't change anything.

You wear the number ten shirt for Juve that was previously associated with players such as Michel Platini and Alessandro Del Piero. Does that feel like a burden?

I personally don't feel that it is. Although it's important...
Thanks to a spectacular goal from super talented French midfielder Paul Pogba in their game in hand against Sassuolo, Juventus already have one hand on what would be their fourth successive Scudetto. With an 11-point advantage over Roma – and even after an unlikely draw in their latest encounter with ‘I Giallorossi’ – the Turin club’s 31st official championship win now seems to be little more than a formality. Fans who still refuse to accept the Court of Arbitration for Sport’s decision to strip Juve of their 2005 and 2006 titles after the Calciopoli scandal are already celebrating their team’s 33rd ‘unofficial’ league triumph.

The word ‘Juventus’ comes from Latin and means ‘youth’. The Turin side are the darlings of a nation and its most popular team, with 14 million supporters in Italy alone. The club’s glittering, impressive history began 118 years ago on a bench on the corner of Corso Re Umberto I and Corso Vittorio Emanuele II in the northern Italian city it calls home. This innocuous site was where students from the Massimo d’Azeglio secondary school met after lessons to discuss a sport from England that was becoming ever more popular: football. It was on this very bench – now an exhibit at the J-Museum – that the club’s founding members chose the name Juventus.

The team’s first official shirt was pink with a black collar, cravat and shorts – a kit identical to that chosen by Palermo nine years later. Over time and after countless washes, these colours faded to a far less desirable shade, prompting the club to write to the “English champions” at the Football Association to request a more modern strip. The first team to respond to this letter was Notts County, whose black-and-white vertically striped shirt was adopted as the Old Lady’s official kit in 1903.

In the early 1920s, Juve witnessed a profound change that would decisively shape its history. Automotive company Fiat’s owners the Agnelli family assumed ownership of the club and have been inextricably linked with it ever since. Titles began to flow like cars off a production line as Juventus won the Scudetto five times in succession between 1931 and 1935 – a record that still stands to this day. During this era coach Carlo Carcano headed up a team that included stars such as Raimundo “Mumo” Orsi and Luis Monti, who both lifted the World Cup Trophy with Italy in 1934.

The club’s success continued after the Second World War along with the arrival of several notable names such as the “Magic Trio”, consisting of Giampiero Boniperti – who later served as Juventus president between 1971 and 1990 – Argentinian 1961 Ballon d’Or winner Omar Sivori and Welshman John Charles, nicknamed ‘Il Gigante Buono’ (The Gentle Giant). The Turin club’s trophy collection was further expanded by several European Cup victories with Giovanni Trapattoni on the bench, Dino Zoff in goal, Claudio Gentile, Antonio Cabrini and Gaetano Scirea forming a formidable defence, Marco Tardelli and Zbigniew Boniek working their magic in midfield and a front pairing of Ballon d’Or winners Michel Platini and Paolo Rossi providing a steady stream of goals. This was followed by the era of another Ballon d’Or winner, Roberto Baggio, who was swiftly succeeded by greats such as Gigi Buffon, Alessandro Del Piero, David Trezeguet, Fabio Cannavaro and Zinedine Zidane – the last pair also being awarded football’s most illustrious individual honour. I Bianconeri’s seventh Ballon d’Or recipient was Czech midfielder Pavel Nedved, who now serves as club president Andrea Agnelli’s right-hand man.

Carlos “Carlitos” Tevez and Paul Pogba can now count themselves among the tifosi’s most beloved current players. The 22-year-old Frenchman is currently enjoying his best season to
to me, I don’t pile any additional pressure on myself by pulling on a shirt that so many Juve idols have worn before me. From the start, I haven’t pressured myself to feel worthy of the No.10 jersey. You’d just go mad and be unable to do your job properly otherwise.

One last question about the Copa America. You’ve had very little luck at the tournament in the past, having been on the losing end of two finals against Brazil in 2004 and 2007 and then missing the decisive penalty against Uruguay in 2011. Do you feel like you have unfinished business there?

Yes, it’s definitely something that stings the current generation of players deeply. We all know that winning a trophy with the national team would be a fantastic way to round things off. It’s something that has eluded us for years, so it’s definitely unfinished business. The latest edition of the Copa America isn’t far away and we’ll have to prepare as well as possible to ensure we’re in top form.

...
THERE WILL BE HATERS
Kenya: Premier League

Hard work trumps magic

Mark Gleeson is a Cape Town-based journalist and football commentator.

Gor Mahia will be seeking a rare hat-trick of Kenyan Premier League titles once the current legal dispute in the east African country is cleared and the season gets underway in earnest.

Kenya’s most successful club have won the last two championships after ending more than a decade of a frustrating drought without any success and re-establishing their hegemony over the club game in Kenya.

In total, Gor Mahia have now won 14 championships since the first Kenyan league kicked off just over 50 years ago, two more than their arch rivals AFC Leopards, who will again be among their main rivals this season. Leopards won three championships in a row from 1980 to 1982 after which Gor Mahia bounced back with a hat trick of championships from 1983 to 1985.

Since, only the military team Ulinzi Stars have emulated that feat, from 2003 to 2005, during a period when the established order in the Kenyan club game was in upheaval. Now the traditional rivalry is strong again, adding a more dramatic spice to the KPL.

Gor Mahia have their origins in the mythology of the Luo tribe and are named after a fabled medicine man. Mahia means magic in the Luo language. Their nickname K’Ogalo is also a reference to the mythical conjuror.

Coach Frank Nuttall, who took them to the 2014 title, will need hard work rather than any sorcery to stay on track for yet another league crown. They embark on the season in tandem with representing Kenya in the CAF Champions League, where they have advanced through the first round and this weekend (March 14) play in the first leg of their second round tie against AC Leopards of Congo. Sharing the same name as Gor Mahia’s Nairobi rivals, the Congolese face a tough challenge.

The Kenyan Leopards, meanwhile, are equally ambitious and have appointed Zdravko Logarusic as new coach for the season in place of the Dutchman Pieter de Jongh. The new coach is Croatian and, to add some more intrigue to the equation, returns to Kenya after last working for Gor Mahia before being fired in 2013.

Other clubs with high hopes are Sofapaka and Tusker, also from the capital Nairobi, and Ulinzi Stars, based in Nakuru. Sofapaka were last season’s runners-up.
Benfica spoil the party

Arouca, in northern Portugal, is not somewhere that witnesses many momentous events. Four thousand people live in this small town situated a 50-minute car journey away from the sea. While tourists from around the world descend on fashionable Lisbon or Porto in droves, this historic village attracts international attention for one brief moment each year when hosting its annual short film festival.

Things have been somewhat different since 2013, when the town’s football club were promoted to Portugal’s top flight for the first time in its 62-year history to rub shoulders with the likes of Porto, Benfica and Sporting Lisbon. Since completing their phenomenal ascent two years ago, games at the 5,000-seater Estadio Municipal have more closely resembled small public festivals than football matches.

The same was even true last weekend when Arouca hosted record Portuguese league winners Benfica, and although the reigning champions ultimately returned home with all three points, their visit was anything but routine. The Arouquenses, currently embroiled in a relegation scrap, were out for every point they could snatch – and just seven minutes into the encounter, the hosts took a surprise lead thanks to Iuri Medeiros’s eye-catching strike from 14 metres out. Home supporters made the most of this unexpected turn of events and the warm spring weather by taking off their t-shirts in celebration.

Having finished their first season in the Primeira Liga in a commendable 12th place, Arouca managed to smother the attacks of their seemingly all-powerful opponents extremely well for much of the match. Nevertheless, like a young swordsman who somehow manages to inflict a wound on his master, the underdogs gradually began edging back towards the precipice. In the 50th minute, Arouca goalkeeper Goicoechea made a serious error that allowed the Eagles to equalise, and just five minutes later Lima fired home to give the visitors a 2-1 lead en route to their eventual 3-1 victory.

As spring arrives, Benfica’s primary focus is to salvage something from a largely unsuccessful season, having been eliminated from both the Champions League and the Portuguese Cup back in December. Now, with a 12-point advantage over Sporting Lisbon in third place, their chances of securing a 34th championship crown are at least bright. Only second-placed Porto, currently four points off the lead, can still pose a threat to Jorge Jesus’s side.

With ten matches of the season remaining, 15th-placed Arouca face a difficult away match against Benfica’s closest challengers this Sunday – not the easiest prospect for a team in the middle of a nerve-shredding relegation battle. Luckily the party atmosphere should return when the northern Portuguese club host 17th-placed Gil Vicente a week later.
Honduras: Primera Division

Missed opportunity

Sven Goldmann is a leading football correspondent at Tages­spiegel newspaper in Berlin.

Despite taking the lead against Club Deportivo Olimpia and playing over half the match with a man advantage, Club Deportivo Victoria were forced to settle for a 1-1 draw in their top­of­the­table clash on Matchday 8 of the Liga Nacional de Futbol Profesional de Honduras, thereby missing the chance to leapfrog their rivals at the division’s summit.

Few would have expected the two teams to be neck­and­neck at this stage of the Clausura. Based in the capital city of Tegucigalpa, Olimpia are Honduras’ most successful club with 28 league titles to their name, while Victoria’s only domestic crown in their near 80­year history came almost 20 years ago. In the most recent Apertura, the La Ceiba­based club missed out on the play-offs by a considerable margin after finishing bottom of the ten­team division, but Christian Guaita’s charges have come roaring out of the traps at the start of the Clausura and travelled to league leaders Olimpia in second place and in confident mood. Indeed, they almost returned to the northern Caribbean coast as table­toppers.

Olimpia, meanwhile, are still smarting from their defeat to arch rivals Motagua in the semi­finals of the Apertura back in December. The Blue Eagles, who share Tegucigalpa’s Estadio Nacional with Olimpia, even went on to defeat Club Deportivo Real Sociedad de Tocoa in the final, which did little to raise the mood among the record champions.

Things are looking up for Hector Vargas’ side, though, who avenged their last­four defeat to Motagua with a 3-1 win over their fellow tenants on Matchday 4 and sit top of the league with just one defeat in eight matches, although they were given an almighty scare at home to Victoria. The visitors’ fearless approach nearly paid off at the Estadio Nacional when Erick Andino, who has represented both clubs in the past three years, curled a 25­yard free­kick onto the crossbar. Andino was easily the best player on the pitch and opened the scoring on the half­hour mark after fine build­up play from Wilson Guity.

Olimpia’s cause was not helped when Bryan Johnson was dismissed for a second bookable offence five minutes before half time, but the hosts profited from a lapse in concentration by midfielder Hector Castellanos at the beginning of the second half to salvage a point. With goalkeeper John Bodden seemingly in control of the situation, Castellanos’ needless tug on Alberth Elis inside the penalty area sent the Olimpia forward tumbling to the floor. Javier Estupinan made no mistake from the resulting spot­kick, chipping the ball down the centre of the goal in the style of Czech Republic legend Antonin Panenka to restore parity. The Colombian’s penalty was undoubtedly the highlight of a forgettable display by the league leaders.
Under the Portuguese sun
The USA’s final goalscorer Julie Johnston (above right), Japanese midfielder Rumi Utsugi (below, in blue) and Germany’s Lena Goessling (below right).

COUNTDOWN TO CANADA 2015: 85 DAYS TO GO

1. USA
2. France
3. Germany
4. Sweden
5. Norway
6. Denmark
7. Brazil
8. Switzerland
9. Japan
10. Iceland
11. Portugal
12. China PR
USA come out top in Canada 2015 audition

Aspirants for the FIFA Women’s World Cup Canada 2015™ continue to test themselves for the June-July tournament and auditions don’t come better credentialed than the Algarve Cup. The 12-nation annual event on the sun-kissed Portuguese coast has long been a key part of the women’s football calendar, and its importance was magnified even more this year.

First held in 1994, the competition is the best regarded women’s football event outside FIFA tournaments. This year no less than nine of the 12-team field – Brazil, China PR, France, Germany, Japan, Norway, Sweden, Switzerland and USA – will be reacquainted in Canada. Also featuring over the eight days were Denmark, Iceland and hosts Portugal.

Once again USA came out on top, continuing their love affair with the holiday region and its tournament. A 2-0 win over France in Wednesday’s final gave the Stars and Stripes a tenth win in the 22nd edition of the event. The victory extends USA’s dominance with Norway next best on four wins, while Germany and Sweden have been crowned three times each.

Even competition
Each team played four matches – three group matches and a placement match. Yet only USA remained undefeated, which is a positive for the intensity of competition that can be expected in Canada.

Group A proved to be as fascinating as it was powerful. Three of the quarter-finalists from the Women’s World Cup 2011 featured – Germany, Sweden and Brazil – where they were joined by one-time powerhouse China PR. The three heavyweights all shared a win amongst each other, most notably Sweden’s opening with a 4-2 victory over continental rivals Germany, which ultimately proved enough to top the group. The Blagult then lost 2-0 to Brazil, who in turn ended with a 3-1 defeat against Germany.

USA topped Group B but it was tougher for the Stars and Stripes than the raw statistics suggest. They impressed in the middle match-day with a solid 3-0 win over the fast-developing Switzerland, but either side of that they were made to work overtime. The world No2 were forced to come from behind to defeat Norway 2-1 with a Carli Lloyd double, before being held to a scoreless stalemate against Iceland.

Group C was headlined by France and Japan where Les Bleues secured a dose of revenge over the world champions for their Olympic Football Tournament London 2012 defeat. The Europeans overran the Nadeshiko in the latter stages for a 3-1 win having been down at the break. It was enough for France to top the group with a perfect record after an impressive 4-1 triumph over Denmark, and a surprisingly tough 1-0 win over unheralded Portugal.

Glory and anguish
Despite little historical pedigree, home side Portugal claimed a minor triumph by defeating China PR on penalties in the play-off for a 3-3 draw. Japan finished ninth with a 2-0 victory over Iceland, but it was a modest campaign for Norio Sasaki’s side who go home with two wins and two defeats.

Overall results were even worse for Switzerland, who ended with a chastening 4-1 defeat to Brazil to return home boasting just one triumph. Fifth-place marked a return to form of sorts for Brazil following an erratic couple of years. Their superstar forward Marta proved popular among the local fans and she repaid that support with a two-goal showing against the Swiss.

Sweden were unable to reprise their opening-day win over Germany, with the latter triumphing 2-1 thanks to a second-half goal from Alexandra Popp which proved to be the winner. Sofia Jakobsson pulled a goal back for Sweden and, while it was not enough to earn a result, it meant the Blagult attacker finished as the tournament’s top-scorer.

First-half goals from young central defender Julie Johnston and talented attacker Christen Press were enough to lift USA to victory over France in the Algarve decider, and at the same time overturn the scoreline against the same opponents just a month. There was some solace for France, however, with striker Eugenie Le Sommer named player of the tournament.

The identity of the two US goalscorers provides evidence of a changing of the guard for the Stars and Stripes, with neither having yet played for the senior national team in a FIFA competition. And USA goalkeeper Hope Solo offered up an ominous warning ahead of Canada 2015. “We’re on the right track to peak for the World Cup which is still three months away,” she said. “We’re not at our best yet but we’re getting there.” ✩

tfw
First Love

Place: Kathmandu, Nepal
Date: 16 February 2015
Time: 11.47 a.m.
Photographer: Navesh Chitrakar
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Football is much more than just a game. Its universal appeal gives it a unique power and reach which must be managed carefully. FIFA believes it has a duty to society that goes beyond football.
Football experts voice need for quotas for women

Experts and leaders from football, business and wider society came together at the Home of FIFA to discuss ways to develop women’s football and to create more opportunities for women in leadership around the world during the Conference on Friday, 6 March.

To mark International Women’s Day, FIFA President Blatter signed the Brighton Plus Helsinki Declaration with the International Working Group on Women and Sport at the FIFA conference – a declaration which sets out principles to support the empowerment of women in society and to promote gender equality.

“Equality among men and women is far from being achieved,” said Lydia Nsekera, the first woman to become a full member of the FIFA Executive Committee. “We must have more women in the congresses of the associations and in the congress of FIFA. I would like to call on all women to work hard, with men, to overcome the existing obstacles.”

FIFA President Blatter said FIFA was eager to do more to drive more growth in women’s football and to improve the representation of women in leadership. “More than 30 million girls and women play football around the world,” Blatter said. “It is our duty to drive this growth to its full potential. It is our duty to make sure that there is equal opportunity for all across our member associations.”

FIFA has introduced one full, voting position for a female representative on its top Executive Committee, which guides and decides policy for the global football community, along with two positions for co-opted female members of the committee.

Moya Dodd, one of the co-opted female members of the Executive Committee, supported the use of quotas as a necessary tool to create a fairer society, especially in football. “In a perfect world, quotas would not be necessary,” she said. “I’m a believer in quotas because you get the benefits way sooner than you would otherwise. I would not be here if it were not for quotas.”

Blatter said these obligatory positions for female representation were a necessary move by the governing body because it was unlikely that the regional confederations were ready to choose a female representative from their own ranks to sit on the Executive Committee. The six confederations vote to decide the make-up of the FIFA Executive Committee, excluding the position of president and the women’s representative.

Piara Powar, a member of the FIFA Task Force against Racism and Discrimination, said quotas were necessary in football to force fairer representation on decision-making bodies. “There is a sure fire way to move this on, and that is to set targets,” he said. “We have to force people to do this otherwise they won’t.”

The conference featured contributions from FIFA officials and former players and coaches calling on further support from national associations to get more girls and women involved at all levels of football from playing to coaching and administration.

Breakthrough for Djibouti’s women

Djibouti are no Germany. The east African nation sits 206th in the FIFA Men’s World Ranking, above only the Cook Islands, Anguilla and Bhutan. Djibouti do not appear at all in the Women’s Ranking because the national team has not played in the last 18 months. Indeed, Djibouti’s only official women’s international match to date was a qualifier for the 2007 Women’s World Cup finals, which they lost 7-0 to Kenya.

Despite this, we recently received news of an extraordinary step forward in the development of the women’s game in this nation of 600,000: at the U-17 Arab Women’s Championship in Doha the girls from Djibouti made it all the way to the final, where they fell 1-0 to Lebanon. I salute this achievement and send my warmest congratulations to the players and association president Souleiman Hassan Waberi.

The success of Djibouti’s U-17 women’s team shows that FIFA’s Goal projects and the monetary support provided by our Financial Assistance Program (such as last year’s one-off World Cup bonus totalling US$1.05 million) are having the desired effect and facilitating productive development work at grass-roots level. The girls from Djibouti who have recently been making all the headlines will in future carry the women’s game in their country to the highest level.

The silver medal-winning heroines have already enjoyed a taste of the star treatment. On their return home they received a joyous welcome at the airport. Later they were invited to dinner by First Lady Kadra Mahamoud Haid at her private residence.

“Football is exceptionally valuable as a school for life. It promotes self-esteem, respect and also the motivation to achieve away from the field of play,” commented the First Lady.

Each of the players was presented with a spontaneous bonus gift of a tablet computer. The present certainly had symbolic significance. Football connects people and opens doors, even in regions where the struggle for social and cultural equality is only just beginning.
DIVIDED ATTENTION

Modern technology has brought huge changes to the way we experience watching a match at a sports stadium. How far will it take us?

Ronald Dueker (text), Mario Wagner (illustrations)

New technology does not simply appear out of nowhere. When a new product is launched that had previously been unavailable due to technological limitations, the chances are it had nevertheless already been imagined somewhere else, for example in literary fiction. This certainly applies to augmented reality. Long before it was made technically possible in the mid 1990s, the author Ray Bradbury gave the world an idea of what it might be like in his story ‘The Veldt’, which was published in 1951. It is probably a good thing that his tale only exists in books, as Bradbury’s vision of future technology did not end well.

Bradbury imagines the worst in his depiction of a family living in an automated house, where the parents have long since delegated the tasks of cooking,
serving meals, cleaning and looking after the children to the house itself. The walls of the children’s nursery are in fact screens, and the whole room can conjure up all manner of illusions. It can produce sounds and smells which are controlled by the children’s thoughts. Once the parents realise that the African plain their offspring dream up on a daily basis not only gets more realistic but also more real and more menacing, it is already too late. By the time they decide to turn off the room, which by now contains numerous wild African beasts, matters have already extended beyond their control: the children’s fantasies have turned against their parents and the animals have scented blood. A family psychologist who rushes to their aid arrives too late and discovers the parents have been mauled by lions in the nursery. Wendy, the youngest of the children, proceeds to offer him a cup of tea.

**Augmented reality**

Augmented reality relies on sophisticated interaction between humans and technology. A complement to reality

Augmented reality need not be terrifying, however; that was merely a bleak literary conception. In practice it is a lot friendlier, especially when used in football. But what exactly is augmented reality, or AR for short? Whereas ‘virtual reality’ allows users to immerse themselves in an artificially created, all-encompassing digital world, for instance by using an avatar in a video game, AR relies on sophisticated interaction between humans and technology. This means that virtual objects are incorporated into reality in such a way as to create a new image that is semi-real, or semi-virtual, depending on your point of view. The virtual additions serve as complements to reality. Take a well-known example that has long been used in football: confirmation of whether a player was offside. In instant replays during televised games, a line can be inserted on to the screen highlighting the position of the last defender at the moment the ball...
AUGMENTED REALITY

The term "augmented reality" refers to the expansion of human perception with the aid of digital technologies. The senses are electronically sharpened, so to speak, as the brain is supplied with computer-generated information via static and moving images on displays – or even by using glasses to place the information directly into the user's field of vision.

The idea of recording a football match in 3D with the help of dozens of cameras and showing it as a holographic projection at any stadium anywhere in the world emerged in Japan several years ago. Spectators would then see a realistic and true-to-scale representation of the original match – as if the players were actually present on the pitch.

The term "augmented reality" was played forward. By doing so, it becomes clear if the attacker was offside or not, and by how much.

Other uses have been found for AR more recently. For example, when a free-kick is awarded referees now mark the distance the defensive wall must be from the ball by spraying a white foam on to the pitch. In addition to this, television viewers get to see a virtual line on their screens showing if the defenders are in fact keeping the correct distance from the taker. At the last World Cup there was also the spectacular introduction of goal-line technology for the first time, giving spectators the chance to see a digitally simulated replay of whether or not the ball crossed the goal-line.

Yet the revolutionary thing about this development is not just that refereeing decisions can now be made based on precise facts, but that the clear digital replays of the most crucial moment in a game can be shown on the big screen directly to the crowd in the stadium. And those images can have a huge impact on the atmosphere. Could that create a 'Wembley effect', similar to the one in the 1966 World Cup final? Outrage over goals that are allegedly incorrectly awarded...
A fleeting moment of a game can be analysed extensively and in many ways.

or disallowed should become a thing of the past if everyone, including those in the stadium, can see with their own eyes whether or not the ball crossed the line completely.

Second screens
It is probably only a matter of time before new technology fundamentally changes the experience of watching a match live in a stadium. That is because the majority of fans no longer go through the turnstiles merely carrying club scarves and flags and so on, but now have smartphones too. Yet why would anyone want to look at their phone when the action is taking place right in front of them on the pitch?

One reason could be when a Quick Response Code, or QR Code as they are known, appears on the big screen. The encrypted image leads users to a website as soon as it has been scanned by a smartphone camera, allowing spectators in the stadium to view the content on their mobile devices. Club sponsors especially are hoping this will become a new advertising platform with which they can make use of different formats, including videos, rather than merely relying on the traditional adverts on the hoardings around the edge of the pitch. Alternatively, there is the stadium app Bayer Leverkusen have developed which aims to act as a ‘second pitch’ while at a live match. With it, the game can be followed using the live ticker function, while real-time match statistics, a live table and the scores of Bundesliga games being played at the same time elsewhere can also be accessed. Furthermore, there are plans for spectators to be able to use the app to view replays of certain moments during games.

In short, the differences that used to exist between watching a match on television and doing so at a stadium are set to disappear. Previously, if you missed a goal because you were rummaging for something in your bag or were queuing at the snack stand then there was nothing you could do about it. There also used to be huge distances between the terraces and the pitch, which sometimes made it difficult to recognise which player had scored. The only way to see a close-up picture of the goalscorer celebrating was to stay at home and watch on TV. The downside to doing that, of course, is the lack of the stadium atmosphere.

This kind of augmented reality is becoming sporadically available in schemes such as the one at Bayer Leverkusen’s BayArena, even if most stadiums are not equipped to follow suit. The internet connection at arenas is rarely good enough to be able to use the aforementioned services, a problem Leverkusen circumvented by installing a powerful WLAN signal at their stadium.

The complexities of tracking
Irrespective of how AR is used in television broadcasting or at football stadia, the basic principle is the same. It is there to enhance a football match, as fast and exciting as it may be, by implementing analytical and explanatory tools. A fleeting moment of a game can be highlighted extensively and in a number of different ways. In football this is done primarily though the medium of replays, whereas other sports, such as swimming, indoor track cycling, ski jumping and rowing, have already incorporated analytical tools into their live coverage. In those events it is possible to blend in a moving line on the screen to mark, for example, the world record pace to show whether the athletes are on course to beat it and can afford to ease off, or whether they need to exert themselves even more.

Football, however, is a team sport and there is no world record pace to be broken for an attacker sprinting down the wings. The sheer number of players on a pitch creates countless spontaneous moments that could potentially be collated, making football a lot harder to enhance with virtual visual aids. Nevertheless, analysts work furiously to compute as much information as possible and television viewers are now accustomed to seeing half-time analysis of decisive moments, such as players’ runs and the path of the ball – including where it could have been directed in addition to where it was actually played. In effect, specific match situations are laid bare to be dissected, and it is often only through such analysis that many viewers are able to pick up on details they missed in the hectic, real-time action.

Descriptive visual aids may now be considered par for the course by many spectators, but extremely complicated software is required to produce them. The most important component here is tracking: isolating and identifying...
moving objects caught on camera. The software has to be able to recognise if a person on the pitch is a referee, goalkeeper or outfield player, and to be able to detect which team they play for. Even the ball must be identified as an object with a specific role and factored into the process. Once that has been done, the next step is to integrate the additional virtual components, such as a line.

The better the connection between the computer-generated additional features and the real image picked up by cameras, the more seamlessly the two can be stitched together, making the end product more effective. However, that is no simple task. Things that are easy for the human eye to see, or that are second nature to experienced football observers, either at home or at a stadium – such as the intuitive ability to detect if a player is offside – are extremely demanding for the machines required to compute them.

Ongoing process
It is clear that we are still at the beginning of a process of development. There are many more technical obstacles to overcome, as well as dealing with human resistance to change that does not only come from entrenched traditionalists. For example, coaches are still not allowed to access the internet during matches in order to evaluate in-game statistics which could be used for tactical purposes. Do we really want to imagine what it would be like one day in the not-too-distant future when spectators wear a pair of Google Glasses to a match and are simultaneously able to see all manner of virtual enhancements in addition to the action on the pitch? And what will happen when a goal is scored and the fan jumps up in celebration wanting to hug the person sitting next to him, only to worry about breaking their expensive eyewear? Will people still join in the chants from the terraces if they are checking over possession statistics and heat maps of certain players at the same time? Yet there is no reason to panic: the augmented reality used in stadiums will not end as Bradbury’s vision did, and there will be no bloodthirsty lions. Nobody will die – although the experience of watching a game might.
FIFA WOMEN’S WORLD CUP
CANADA 2015
6 June - 5 July
Standing ovations

Sarah Steiner

It is the 64th minute of Newcastle United’s home game with Manchester United when Newcastle coach John Carver signals for a substitution. Fresh blood is needed to liven up the home side, and Ryan Taylor is the man to be withdrawn. Taylor’s replacement is standing on the touchline. Having pulled his shirt on over his face, he rubs his hands together. He embraces Taylor, stoops down to touch the turf, makes the sign of the cross and runs over to his position. His name is Jonas Gutiérrez, and every single spectator at St James’ Park is applauding him. For Gutiérrez, this is much more than just another appearance. It is his first for 17 months, during which time the Argentine international endured the toughest fight of his life: a battle against cancer.

In September 2014, international media first reported that Gutiérrez was suffering from testicular cancer, but the player himself had already known of his illness since early on in the year. He had an operation to remove one of his testicles and lost his hair while undergoing a course of chemotherapy. “This is the hardest match of my life,” he said at the time – and it would be his most important victory.

Heiko Herrlich, a former striker with Bayer Leverkusen and Borussia Dortmund, knows all too well the fear that Gutiérrez has had to live with. In the autumn of 2000, he was one of Germany’s leading strikers and his wife was three months pregnant. Life seemed perfect, until a malignant tumour was discovered in his brain. “I couldn’t comprehend it,” recalls Herrlich. “Hadn’t I done everything not to get sick?” He fought the disease – and won. He made his return to professional football in September 2001.

Eric Abidal is another player to have successfully come back from a life-threatening illness, but the Frenchman’s story borders on a miracle. In 2011 he was diagnosed with a liver tumour, which required immediate removal. Barely a few weeks later, he was back out on the pitch, but 12 months on he heard the devastating news that the cancer had returned, and only a liver transplant could save his life. His cousin came to his aid and donated part of his organ, and, for a second time, Abidal was on the road to recovery. In April 2013, he made his long-awaited first-team comeback for Barcelona, and he remains the only player to have played professionally following a liver transplant.

Even in the highly exclusive world of professional football, cancer still rears its ugly head. Some sufferers have lost their battles, but others have prevailed. Gutiérrez is one of the lucky ones, and after making it back out on to the pitch, he now hopes to give encouragement to others. “Money isn’t important. What’s important is your health. I decided to tell my story because it can help other people with cancer.”
Berlin, Germany

1920

A lick of paint for the wire mesh goalposts.
2014

The finishing touch: hanging the netting.
Official Mascot for the FIFA U-20 World Cup New Zealand 2015

Introducing Wooliam™

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Playing philosophy
Ronald Duker

French artist Francis Picabia once asserted that "our heads are round so our thoughts can change direction." Apply this approach to football in an attempt to fathom why the beautiful game's most important piece of equipment is actually round and you soon become entangled in the diffuse web where football and philosophy meet – one that seems to have been cast ever more widely in recent years. The sport has become a favourite topic in the feature pages, with writers from all corners suddenly feeling moved to shed new light on the game with profound interdisciplinary analysis. Meanwhile the phrase "playing philosophy" is one that has long since become commonplace among football fans.

But what happens when philosophers face one another on the football pitch without the ball changing direction at all? Would it somehow be possible to witness their invisible thoughts as a match unfolds? This is the question posed by British comedy troupe Monty Python in a sketch that aired on one of their German television specials in 1973. The skit imagines Germany and Greece squaring up for a final at Munich's Olympic Stadium that lasts just four minutes and ends in a 1-0 win for the Mediterranean side. Perhaps their victory is not so surprising; after all, despite the country's current beleaguered state, it has arguably always been home to the world's best philosophers. Kant, Hegel, Schopenhauer, Nietzsche, Heidegger and other German luminaries all feature in their team's starting line-up while Plato, Aristotle, Sophocles and Archimedes take to the pitch for the opposing side. The only slight surprise is the inclusion of a certain Beckenbauer, whose name seems out of place among the world's most revolutionary thinkers.

The commentary unfolds at lightning speed as the players make their way down the tunnel. Although the philosophers are kitted out in football boots, their otherwise historical garments – frock coats and suits for the Germans, floor-length robes on the Greek side - mean that their lack of competitive instinct is less than surprising. At first nobody seems interested in the ball, which remains untouched on the centre spot long after the whistle is blown for kick-off. Instead the thinkers stroll around, entirely lost in their thoughts and gesticulating with their arms as if seeking to share new flashes of inspiration with their opposite numbers.

The game's turning point only comes in the closing seconds as – eureka! – a flash of inspiration strikes Archimedes. Gathering the ball on the halfway line, he passes to Socrates, who passes to Heraclitus, who in turn crosses back towards an onrushing Socrates, and there it is – 1-0 to Greece, and the match is settled! Germany goalkeeper Leibniz does not even look up from his puzzled pacing between the posts as the winning header hits the back of the net. It remains unclear whether he has even noticed that Archimedes and Socrates have just answered one of philosophy's greatest questions; after all that contemplation it seems the ball is round so that it can roll and ultimately be steered into the opponent's goal. ☄
Share a Coca-Cola with FIFA
“A country’s size isn’t what matters in football”

In ten days’ time French Guiana will face Honduras in a decisive match to determine which side reaches the Gold Cup 2015. For French Guiana captain Marvin Torvic, it is also a hugely symbolic encounter.

I’m sure the evening of 25 March 2015 will be an unforgettable experience for me, and for French Guiana as a whole. As captain I’ll lead the national team out against Honduras in a game that will decide which side gets the final ticket to the Gold Cup 2015, the biggest continental tournament in the CONCACAF zone of North and Central America and the Caribbean. French Guiana isn’t a FIFA member association in its own right but a subdivision of the French Football Federation (FFF). Nevertheless, we’re allowed to participate at this CONCACAF competition.

I can’t describe my feelings about the game. I think about it all the time and it keeps me awake at night. We’re playing a team that took part at the 2014 World Cup. It’ll be the highlight of my career and the greatest moment in the fledgling history of the national team. The people back home can’t wait for it to kick-off.

I left my homeland for France at the age of nine, but I owe my love of the game to French Guiana. It’s where I first kicked a ball, at the age of two. Football would go on to become a huge passion of mine.

It means a great deal to me to play for my country. Guiana is my home - my family and friends are all there. I miss the country itself too, even if by now I’ve grown used to being away from it.

I never even considered not playing for French Guiana. It’s a huge honour for me to represent my country at international tournaments. We’re a very small nation, so being successful wouldn’t only be important for the team, but also for the young players to make a name for themselves on the international stage.

I’m proud of what we’ve achieved because we’re showing the whole world that we’re capable of competing at the highest level. Our results up until now have been incredible, especially considering that our best players, who are at European clubs, aren’t always able to travel to Guiana for national team fixtures.

Even just two years ago nobody would have dared to think that we’d be capable of accomplishing something like this one day. Now it’s edging ever closer. As captain it’s my job and my duty to believe in us at all times, and to motivate my team-mates to think the same way.

We’ve made a lot of progress and regardless of the outcome of the match, we’re on the right track. It only gradually dawned on us over time that we could qualify for the Gold Cup. When we faced the best teams in the Caribbean Zone we showed that a country’s size isn’t what matters in football.

Marvin Torvic was speaking to Emanuele Giulianelli
### MEN'S WORLD RANKING

**Rank** | **Team** | +/- | Points
---|---|---|---
1 | Germany | 0 | 1770
2 | Argentina | 0 | 1537
3 | Colombia | 0 | 1499
4 | Belgium | 0 | 1471
5 | Netherlands | 0 | 1455
6 | Brazil | 0 | 1348
7 | Portugal | 0 | 1191
8 | France | 0 | 1180
9 | Uruguay | 0 | 1164
10 | Italy | 2 | 1146
11 | Spain | -1 | 1130
12 | Switzerland | -1 | 1126
13 | Costa Rica | 0 | 1095
14 | Romania | 2 | 1081
15 | Chile | -1 | 1057
16 | Czech Republic | 1 | 1045
17 | England | -2 | 1031
18 | Algeria | 0 | 986
19 | Croatia | 0 | 960
20 | Côte d'Ivoire | 0 | 944
21 | Mexico | 0 | 935
22 | Slovakia | 0 | 932
23 | Austria | 0 | 916
24 | Ghana | 1 | 887
25 | Tunisia | 1 | 881
26 | Israel | 6 | 880
27 | Greece | -3 | 872
28 | Denmark | 0 | 863
29 | Ecuador | 0 | 852
30 | Bosnia and Herzegovina | 0 | 841
31 | Ukraine | -4 | 830
32 | USA | -1 | 826
33 | Russia | 0 | 789
34 | Poland | 6 | 778
35 | Iceland | 2 | 776
36 | Senegal | 0 | 772
37 | Wales | -3 | 763
38 | Cape Verde Islands | -3 | 761
39 | Scotland | -1 | 727
40 | Serbia | -1 | 709
41 | Nigeria | 1 | 701
42 | Iran | -1 | 692
43 | Northern Ireland | 8 | 679
44 | Greece | -1 | 669
45 | Sweden | -1 | 663
46 | Hungary | 2 | 659
47 | Congo DR | -1 | 651
48 | Slovenia | -1 | 649
49 | Cameroon | -4 | 646
50 | Equatorial Guinea | -1 | 630
51 | Mali | 2 | 626
52 | Congo | -3 | 625
53 | Japan | 2 | 617
54 | Gabon | 4 | 610

### Germany (unchanged)

### Italy (10th, up 2 ranks)

### Spain (11th, down 1 rank)

### Barbados, Bermuda, Grenada, St Vincent and the Grenadines (2 matches each)

### Israel (up 75 points)

### Barbados, Bermuda (up 11 ranks each)

### Lebanon (down 90 points)

### Lebanon (down 25 ranks)

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**Last updated:** 12 March 2015
The objective of Sudoku is to fill a 9x9 grid with digits so that each of the numbers from 1 to 9 appears exactly once in each column, row and 3x3 sub-grid.

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**LAST WEEK’S POLL RESULTS**

Who will be the top scorer of the 2014/2015 UEFA Champions League?

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<td>Karim Benzema (Real Madrid)</td>
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**THIS WEEK’S POLL**

Which team will win the 2014/15 CONCACAF Champions League?

- Alajuelense (CRC)
- America (MEX)
- Montreal Impact (CAN)
- Herediano (CRC)

Cast your votes at: FIFA.com/newscentre

**WEEK IN NUMBERS**

62,510 spectators poured into the Citrus Bowl Stadium in Orlando, Florida, to watch the opening game of the new MLS season between Orlando City and New York City. Never before – not even during the 1994 World Cup – has such a large attendance figure for a football match been recorded in the city.

32 hat-tricks in all competitions is the latest record set by Barcelona’s Lionel Messi. No other player has ever hit as many trebles in competitive games in the history of Spanish football; the previous best-mark was Telmo Zarra’s tally of 31.

9 successive home games without a win is the new unwanted club record set by VfB Stuttgart last week. Their 0-0 draw with Hertha Berlin also marked the ninth time this season that the Swabians have failed to score in front of their own fans. Only two clubs in Bundesliga history have ever posted worse home records: Tasmania Berlin, who failed to hit the net in 11 matches in 1965/66, and Greuther Furth, who fired blanks in ten games in 2012/13.