URGENT

To: DR. HENRY KISSINGER 860-927-1198
From: FAREED ZAKARIA

Dear Henry,

This is superb, not just more than I had hoped for but a fascinating meditation that abstracts out the essential elements of soccer. I would not dare to say this is your real expertise but clearly a real passion.

My tweaks are all suggestions. It is brilliant as is. Just have your office email me a final before you leave for Europe.

All best,

[Signature]
On June 9, host country Germany will open the competition for the 2006 soccer World Cup by playing Costa Rica, inaugurating a month of football frenzy. For the first two weeks, there will be three matches a day as the thirty-two survivors of a global competition that started three years ago are whittled down to sixteen by playing in eight groups of four. The top two teams of each group advance to a sudden-death round, culminating, after some 62 matches, in the final on July 9 in Berlin. Thus each team is guaranteed a minimum of three games, and the ultimate winner must prevail in seven games over the course of a month. Billions around the world will be glued to their television sets when the games are being played; this means early morning hours in Asia for the evening games. Millions will find ways to
interrupt their work schedules. The national morale in winners and losers will be affected particularly by the sudden-death elimination games.

I will be one of those viewers and have arranged my schedule to accommodate its necessities. Most viewers would find it difficult to describe what it is about the game that so enthralls the world. They would probably identify it with their passionate adherence to their favorite team – a passion that, in America, is shared only [by] the fanatical adherence of major college football teams.

I grew up in Fuerth, a little town in southern Germany, where soccer had the status of football in Green Bay. Soccer in the 1920s and 1930s was played by amateurs, and it happened that Fuerth won the German championship there [for the first] time in a decade. I have not lived in Germany for many more decades than I care to admit, [but] I still follow the fortunes of that club, which has fallen on
hard times in the age of high salaries and has been relegated to the second division. It makes periodic efforts to emerge from this condition but always manages to fall just short of the third place in the standings, which would enable it to advance — thereby guaranteeing the continuation of misery and hope that sustains the typical football fan. (This is true even of Brazilian fans, whose national team wins every third World Cup — a higher number than any other nation — but not satisfactory to its irrepressible and buoyant fans.)

But those fans who go beyond the frenzy evoked by eleven men on each side maneuvering a ball along a 100-meter long field into an opposing goal [see] additional mysteries of the game reveal themselves. For one thing, manipulating a ball by foot for prolonged distances requires an activity analogous to ballet. Especially teams that concentrate on this aspect of the game — like the Brazilians and many South American teams — astonish one with their versatility and
abandon. On the other hand, they sometimes are so infatuated by their artistry that they forget that the purpose of the game is to score goals, and they are sometimes overcome by more elementary and single-minded Tactics & formations. 

This is because only the rarest players – Pelé for Brazil, Maradona for Argentina, Platini for France – can score goals by essentially solitary efforts. In almost all other circumstances, it is teams, not players, which win games. The reductive quality of soccer resides in the almost intellectual penetration with which the best teams move the ball down the field to solve the challenge, which seems so simple but is prone to turn into a riddle: how to get a ball past eleven opponents, with each side moving at high speed, one of whom – the goalie – is permitted to use his hands to intercept the ball. This turns the game into an exercise like a mathematical equation, an ability to find uncovered open space, leading to a position from which
to launch an unimpeded shot on the goal. The great field generals like Zidane or Beckenbauer had the uncanny skill of distributing the ball among their teammates in a manner that seemed inconceivable in the abstract and self-evident in execution. Soccer at its highest level is thus a game of complicated simplicity.

Over the decades the game has become increasingly strategic: When I first became a fan, the ten field players were distributed as five attackers, three midfield players, and two defenders. As a result the attackers usually outnumbered the defenders – especially as the players were not as well conditioned as today, so they more or less stayed in their assigned positions on the field. Since then a radical change in deployment has taken place. It started with the center midfielder becoming in effect a third defender and one of the forwards taking his place at midfield. By now it has evolved into reducing the forwards to two and deploying the remaining players in various ways,
of which, for illustrative purposes, the 4:4:2 system is among the most widely used. As a practical matter one of the midfielders is usually assigned the role of libero that is to act as a "sweeper" in defense, charged with reinforcing the most threatened position on the field. Beckenbauer gave this role an additional significance by acting as a sweeper on defense and like an American football quarterback in directing the attack with his subtle passing. Whatever the formation, the speed of modern soccer and the conditioning of the players lead to a kind of total football, which means that, whatever the assigned position of the player, his task is to reinforce the center of gravity, attack or defense, depending on the situation.

The practical consequence is that goals are much harder to come by and that defense tends to dominate over offense, at least compared to the situation when I first became acquainted with the game. Teams therefore play first of all not to lose and rarely launch all-out attacks.

[You might note this is an interesting contrast to most other sports than have become more high-scoring over time.]
unless, of course, they find themselves behind. Since the number of
points on the field from which a shot on goal has a prospect of leading
to a goal is finite, a disciplined defense can occasionally thwart a
technically superior team. Thus a superbly coached Greek team
defeated a Portuguese team of probably superior individual players in
the 2004 European Cup, and a very disciplined German team
overcame a marvelous team from the Netherlands in the World Cup of
1974. Similarly, almost every Italian national team over the decades
has relied on its tenacious defense to wear down the opponent. These
theoretical aspects can be illustrated by looking at the finals of the
World Cup over the last twenty-five years. I have attended seven of
the last nine and never cease to be mesmerized by their different
character[s].

My first exposure to the exuberant all-or-nothing style of
Brazilian football [was in 1970.] Led by the incomparable Pelé and an
all-star cast of irrepressible virtuosos, the Brazilians overwhelmed a
very good Italian team by a score of 4:1. The Italian team scored
first, which usually in continental football gives it the opportunity to
apply its Machiavellian skill in frustrating the opponent into rash errors
by a give-no-quarter defense. But Brazil did not play by the book. It
abandoned whatever theoretical formation it entered the game with
and threw every player into a wild offense, literally running the Italian
team into the ground. Panache was aided no little by [the] high
altitude of Mexico City, which wore down the defenders [in] the brutal
semifinal between Italy and Germany. [It] was won by the Agguris
3:2 in overtime and [was] so rough that Beckenbauer, having
dislocated his shoulder, completed the game with his arm in a sling.

While offense triumphed in 1970, a psychological shift helped
turn the tables in 1974 in the game between the Netherlands and
Germany. The Dutch [team] was elegant and offensive-minded,
inspired by one of the all-time greats, Johan Cruyff. It had defeated Brazil in the semifinal by the complexity of its maneuver[s] rather than individual virtuosity. In the final it was awarded a penalty kick in the first minute, giving it a 1:0 lead. It proved a poisoned chalice. For it tempted the Dutch to abandon its finely tuned game in favor of an Italian-style defense. The Germans, led by Beckenbauer, thereupon threw everything into an all-out attack, reinforced by a frenzied home public. This led to a 2:1 lead, which Germany defended tenaciously through the second half.

In 1978, the Netherlands found itself once more in a final before a rabid hometown crowd. In an extraordinary game, the Dutch tied an Argentine team playing with Brazilian flair and European killer instinct in the last minute. But as four years earlier, they could not stay the course and lost in overtime to the home team, providing a demonstration of the healing power of soccer. Argentina was wracked
by near-civil war conditions and brutal repression so that official guests had to move with armed escorts. But for forty-eight hours after the Argentine victory, Buenos Aires celebrated with such tumultuous abandon as to observe for a brief moment the bitterness of the national style.

In the remaining final, I saw Italy beat Germany in Madrid in 1982. An Italian team that had been lethargic in the early group matches emerged as dominant in the finals. In 1990, in an uninspired game a systematic German team overcame a hard-boiled and uninspired Argentine side. In 1998, an elegant French team overcame a Brazilian squad which, after a brilliant semifinal victory over the Netherlands, turned inexplicably lethargic.

The most disappointing match for me was the final of the 1994 World Cup at the Rose Bowl in Pasadena. As honorary chairman of the organizing committee, I had hoped for a high-scoring match that
might do for American soccer what the Giants-Colts football game of 1957 did [by inspiring] the public interest in professional football.

Unfortunately, the game was decided in a penalty shootout after 120 minutes of scoreless tactical maneuvering.

Altogether, in the seven games I watched, I saw Brazil, Germany and Italy three times each, the Netherlands and Argentina twice. The only other start went to France.

Will this elite be broadened in the World Cup about to begin?

Not having seen the national teams, I dare not make a prediction. I expect England to reclaim major role, though the recent injury of its star player Rooney reduces its prospects. This may be the year for an African team to emerge; their technical brilliance has so far been thwarted by lack of experience. The United States plays in a very difficult initial group. It would have to overcome Italy and [the] Czech Republic, both established soccer powers, to reach the elimination
round. It if goes that far, the US team might reach the quarterfinals.

The German team has been a mystery. It has an inventive new coach and passionate public support. If it gets on a roll, it could go far. And there is always Brazil, which will guarantee excitement and fans aiming for happiness rather than endurance. We will know the answer by July 9. In the meantime, thirty-two games guarantee to shake the thirst for football of even the most frenetic fans – to the extent that their addiction to the game permits it.
On June 9, host country Germany will open the competition for the [2006] soccer World Cup by playing Costa Rica, inaugurating a month of football frenzy. For the first two weeks, there will be three matches a day as the thirty-two survivors of a global competition that started three years ago are whittled down to sixteen, by playing in eight groups of four. The top two teams [of] each group advance to a sudden-death round, culminating, after some 62 matches, in the final on July 9 in Berlin. Thus each team is guaranteed a minimum of three games, and the ultimate winner must prevail in seven games over the course of a month. Billions around the world will be glued to their television sets when the games are being played; this means early morning hours in Asia for the evening games. Millions will find ways to
Interrupt their work schedules. The national morale in winners and losers will be affected particularly by the sudden-death elimination games.

I will be one of those viewers and have arranged my schedule to accommodate its necessities. Most viewers would find it difficult to describe what it is about the game that so enthralls the world. They would probably identify it with their passionate adherence to their favorite team — a passion that, in America, is shared only [by] the fanatical adherence of major college football teams.

I grew up in Fuerth, a little town in southern Germany, where soccer had the status of football in Green Bay. Soccer in the 1920s and 1930s was played by amateurs, and it happened that Fuerth won the German championship there [for the first] time in a decade. I have not lived in Germany for many more decades than I care to admit, [but] I still follow the fortunes of that club, which has fallen on
hard times in the age of high salaries and has been relegated to the second division. It makes periodic efforts to emerge from this condition but always manages to fall just short of the third place in the standings, which would enable it to advance thereby guaranteeing the continuation of misery and hope that sustains the typical football fan. (This is true even of Brazilian fans, whose national team wins every third World Cup—a higher number than any other nation—but not satisfactory to its irrepressible and buoyant fans.)

But those fans who go beyond the frenzy evoked by eleven men on each side maneuvering a ball along a 100-meter long field into an opposing goal [see] additional mysteries of the game reveal themselves. For one thing, manipulating a ball by foot for prolonged distances requires an activity analogous to ballet. Especially teams that concentrate on this aspect of the game—like the Brazilians and many South American teams—astonish one with their versatility and
abandon. On the other hand, they sometimes are so infatuated by their artistry that they forget that the purpose of the game is to score goals, and they are sometimes overcome by more elementary and tactically-oriented teams.

This is because only the rarest players – Pelé for Brazil, Maradona for Argentina, Platini for France – can score goals by essentially solitary efforts. For almost all other circumstances, it is teams, not players, which win games. The reductive quality of soccer resides in the almost intellectual penetration with which the best teams move the ball down the field to solve the challenge, which seems so simple but is prone to turn into a riddle: how to get a ball past eleven opponents, with each side moving at high speed, one of whom – the goalie – is permitted to use his hands to intercept the ball. This turns the game into an exercise like a mathematical equation, an ability to find uncovered open space, leading to a position from which
to launch an unimpeded shot on the goal. The great field generals like
Zidane or Beckenbauer had the uncanny skill of distributing the ball
among their teammates in a manner that seemed inconceivable in the
abstract and self-evident in execution. Soccer at its highest level is
thus a game of complicated simplicity.

Over the decades the game has become increasingly strategic:
When I first became a fan, the ten field players were distributed as
five attackers, three midfield players, and two defenders. As a result
the attackers usually outnumbered the defenders – especially as the
players were not as well conditioned as today, so they more or less
stayed in their assigned positions on the field. Since then a radical
change in deployment has taken place. It started with the center
midfielder becoming in effect a third defender and one of the forwards
taking his place at midfield. By now it has evolved into reducing the
forwards to two and deploying the remaining players in various ways,
of which, for illustrative purposes, the 4:4:2 system is among the most widely used. As a practical matter one of the midfielders is usually assigned the role of libero that is to act as a "sweeper" in defense, charged with reinforcing the most threatened position on the field. Beckenbauer gave this role an additional significance by acting as a sweeper on defense and like an American football quarterback in directing the attack with his subtle passing. Whatever the formation, the speed of modern soccer and the conditioning of the players lead to a kind of total football, which means that, whatever the assigned position of the player, his task is to reinforce the center of gravity, attack or defense, depending on the situation.

The practical consequence is that goals are much harder to come by, and that defense tends to dominate over offense, at least compared to the situation when I first became acquainted with the game. Teams therefore play first of all not to lose and rarely launch all-out attacks.
unless, of course, they find themselves behind. Since the number of points on the field from which a shot on goal has a prospect of leading to a goal is finite, a disciplined defense can occasionally thwart a technically superior team. Thus a superbly coached Greek team defeated a Portuguese team of probably superior individual players in the 2004 European Cup, and a very disciplined German team overcame a marvelous team from the Netherlands in the World Cup of 1974. Similarly, almost every Italian national team over the decades has relied on its tenacious defense to wear down the opponent. These theoretical aspects can be illustrated by looking at the finals of the World Cup over the last twenty-five years. I have attended seven of the last nine and never cease to be mesmerized by their different character[s].

My first exposure to the exuberant all-or-nothing style of Brazilian football [was in 1970.] Led by the incomparable Pelé and an
all-star cast of irrepressible virtuosos, the Brazilians overwhelmed a very good Italian team by a score of 4:1. The Italian team scored first, which usually in continental football gives it the opportunity to apply its Machiavellian skill in frustrating the opponent into rash errors by a give-no-quarter defense. But Brazil did not play by the book. It abandoned whatever theoretical formation it entered the game with and threw every player into a wild offense, literally running the Italian team into the ground. Panache was aided no little by [the] high altitude of Mexico City, which wore down the defenders in the brutal semifinal between Italy and Germany. It was won by the Agguris 3:2 in overtime and was so rough that Beckenbauer, having dislocated his shoulder, completed the game with his arm in a sling.

While offense triumphed in 1970, a psychological shift helped turn the tables in 1974 in the game between the Netherlands and Germany. The Dutch [team] was elegant and offensive-minded,
inspired by one of the all-time greats, Johan Cruyff. It had defeated Brazil in the semifinal by the complexity of its maneuver(s) rather than individual virtuosity. In the final, it was awarded a penalty kick in the first minute, giving it a 1:0 lead. It proved a poisoned chalice. For it tempted the Dutch to abandon its finely tuned game in favor of an Italian-style defense. The Germans, led by Beckenbauer, thereupon threw everything into an all-out attack, reinforced by a frenzied home public. This led to a 2:1 lead, which Germany defended tenaciously through the second half.

In 1978, the Netherlands found itself once more in a final before a rabid hometown crowd. In an extraordinary game, the Dutch tied an Argentine team playing with Brazilian flair and European killer instinct in the last minute. But as four years earlier, they could not stay the course and lost in the overtime to the home team, providing a demonstration of the healing power of soccer. Argentina was wracked
by near-civil war conditions and brutal repression, so that official guests had to move with armed escorts. But for forty-eight hours after the Argentine victory, Buenos Aires celebrated with such tumultuous abandon as to observe for a brief moment the bitterness of the national style.

In the remaining final, I saw Italy beat Germany in Madrid in 1982. An Italian team that had been lethargic in the early group matches emerged as dominant in the finals. In 1990, in an uninspired game a systematic German team overcame a hard-boiled and uninspired Argentine side. In 1998, an elegant French team overcame a Brazilian squad which, after a brilliant semifinal victory over the Netherlands, turned inexplicably lethargic.

The most disappointing match for me was the final of the 1994 World Cup at the Rose Bowl in Pasadena. As honorary chairman of the organizing committee, I had hoped for a high-scoring match that
might do for American soccer what the Giants-Colts football game of 1957 did by inspiring the public interest in professional football.

Unfortunately, the game was decided in a penalty shoot-out after 120 minutes of scoreless tactical maneuvering.

Altogether, in the seven games I watched, I saw Brazil, Germany and Italy three times each, the Netherlands and Argentina twice. The only other start went to France.

Will this elite be broadened in the World Cup about to begin?

Not having seen the national teams, I dare not make a prediction. I expect England to reclaim major role, though the recent injury of its star player Rooney reduces its prospects. This may be the year for an African team to emerge; their technical brilliance has so far been thwarted by lack of experience. The United States plays in a very difficult Initial group. It would have to overcome Italy and the Czech Republic, both established soccer powers, to reach the elimination
round. It if goes that far, the US team might reach the quarterfinals.

The German team has been a mystery. It has an inventive new coach and passionate public support. If it gets on a roll, it could go far. And there is always Brazil, which will guarantee excitement and fans aiming for happiness rather than endurance. We will know the answer by July 9. In the meantime, thirty-two games guarantee to shake the thirst for football of even the most frenetic fans – to the extent that their addiction to the game permits it.
On June 9, host country Germany will open the competition for the [2006] soccer World Cup by playing Costa Rica, inaugurating a month of football frenzy. For the first two weeks, there will be three matches a day as the thirty-two survivors of a global competition that started three years ago are whittled down to sixteen, by playing in eight groups of four. The top two teams [of] each group advance to a sudden-death round, culminating, after some 62 matches, in the final on July 9 in Berlin. Thus each team is guaranteed a minimum of three games, and the ultimate winner must prevail in seven games over the course of a month. Billions around the world will be glued to their television sets when the games are being played; this means early morning hours in Asia for the evening games. Millions will find ways to
interrupt their work schedules. The national morale in winners and
losers will be affected particularly by the sudden-death elimination
games.

I will be one of those viewers and have arranged my schedule to
accommodate its necessities. Most viewers would find it difficult to
describe what it is about the game that so enthralls the world. They
would probably identify it with their passionate adherence to their
favorite team – a passion that, in America, is shared only [by] the
fanatical adherence of major college football teams.

I grew up in Fuerth, a little town in southern Germany, where
soccer had the status of football in Green Bay. Soccer in the 1920s
and 1930s was played by amateurs, and it happened that Fuerth won
the German championship there [for the first] time in a decade. I
have not lived in Germany for many more decades than I care to
admit, [but] I still follow the fortunes of that club, which has fallen on
hard times in the age of high salaries and has been relegated to the
second division. It makes periodic efforts to emerge from this
condition but always manages to fall just short of the third place in the
standings, which would enable it to advance—thereby guaranteeing
the continuation of misery and hope that sustains the typical football
fan. (This is true even of Brazilian fans, whose national team wins
every third World Cup—a higher number than any other nation—but
not satisfactory to its irrepresible and buoyant fans.)

But those fans who go beyond the frenzy evoked by eleven men
on each side maneuvering a ball along a 100-meter long field into an
opposing goal [see] additional mysteries of the game reveal
themselves. For one thing, manipulating a ball by foot for prolonged
distances requires an activity analogous to ballet. Especially teams
that concentrate on this aspect of the game—like the Brazilians and
many South American teams—astonish one with their versatility and
abandon. On the other hand, they sometimes are so infatuated by their artistry that they forget that the purpose of the game is to score goals, and they are sometimes overcome by more elementary and tactically-oriented teams.

This is because only the rarest players – Pelé for Brazil, Maradona for Argentina, Platini for France – can score goals by essentially solitary efforts. For almost all other circumstances, it is teams, not players, which win games. The reductive quality of soccer resides in the almost intellectual penetration with which the best teams move the ball down the field to solve the challenge, which seems so simple but is prone to turn into a riddle: how to get a ball past eleven opponents, with each side moving at high speed, one of whom – the goalie – is permitted to use his hands to intercept the ball. This turns the game into an exercise like a mathematical equation, an ability to find uncovered open space, leading to a position from which
to launch an unimpeded shot on the goal. The great field generals like Zidane or Beckenbauer had the uncanny skill of distributing the ball among their teammates in a manner that seemed inconceivable in the abstract and self-evident in execution. Soccer at its highest level is thus a game of complicated simplicity.

Over the decades the game has become increasingly strategic: When I first became a fan, the ten field players were distributed as five attackers, three midfield players, and two defenders. As a result the attackers usually outnumbered the defenders – especially as the players were not as well conditioned as today, so they more or less stayed in their assigned positions on the field. Since then a radical change in deployment has taken place. It started with the center midfielder becoming in effect a third defender and one of the forwards taking his place at midfield. By now it has evolved into reducing the forwards to two and deploying the remaining players in various ways,
of which, for illustrative purposes, the 4:4:2 system is among the most widely used. As a practical matter one of the midfielders is usually assigned the role of libero that is to act as a “sweeper” in defense, charged with reinforcing the most threatened position on the field. Beckenbauer gave this role an additional significance by acting as a sweeper on defense and like an American football quarterback in directing the attack with his subtle passing. Whatever the formation, the speed of modern soccer and the conditioning of the players lead to a kind of total football, which means that, whatever the assigned position of the player, his task is to reinforce the center of gravity, attack or defense, depending on the situation.

The practical consequence is that goals are much harder to come by and that defense tends to dominate over offense, at least compared to the situation when I first became acquainted with the game. Teams therefore play first of all not to lose and rarely launch all-out attacks
unless, of course, they find themselves behind. Since the number of points on the field from which a shot on goal has a prospect of leading to a goal is finite, a disciplined defense can occasionally thwart a technically superior team. Thus a superbly coached Greek team defeated a Portuguese team of probably superior individual players in the 2004 European Cup, and a very disciplined German team overcame a marvelous team from the Netherlands in the World Cup of 1974. Similarly, almost every Italian national team over the decades has relied on its tenacious defense to wear down the opponent. These theoretical aspects can be illustrated by looking at the finals of the World Cup over the last twenty-five years. I have attended seven of the last nine and never cease to be mesmerized by their different character[s].

My first exposure to the exuberant all-or-nothing style of Brazilian football [was in 1970.] Led by the incomparable Pelé and an
all-star cast of irrepressible virtuosos, the Brazilians overwhelmed a very good Italian team by a score of 4:1. The Italian team scored first, which usually in continental football gives it the opportunity to apply its Machiavellian skill in frustrating the opponent into rash errors by a give-no-quarter defense. But Brazil did not play by the book. It abandoned whatever theoretical formation it entered the game with and threw every player into a wild offense, literally running the Italian team into the ground. Panache was aided no little by [the] high altitude of Mexico City, which wore down the defenders [in] the brutal semifinal between Italy and Germany. [It] was won by the Agguris 3:2 in overtime and [was] so rough that Beckenbauer, having dislocated his shoulder, completed the game with his arm in a sling.

While offense triumphed in 1970, a psychological shift helped turn the tables in 1974 in the game between the Netherlands and Germany. The Dutch [team] was elegant and offensive-minded,
inspired by one of the all-time greats, Johan Cruyff. It had defeated
Brazil in the semifinal by the complexity of its maneuver[s] rather
than individual virtuosity. In the final it was awarded a penalty kick in
the first minute, giving it a 1:0 lead. It proved a poisoned chalice. For
it tempted the Dutch to abandon its finely tuned game in favor of an
Italian-style defense. The Germans, led by Beckenbauer, thereupon
threw everything into an all-out attack, reinforced by a frenzied home
public. This led to a 2:1 lead, which Germany defended tenaciously
through the second half.

In 1978, the Netherlands found itself once more in a final before
a rabid hometown crowd. In an extraordinary game, the Dutch tied an
Argentine team playing with Brazilian flair and European killer instinct
in the last minute. But as four years earlier, they could not stay the
course and lost in the overtime to the home team, providing a
demonstration of the healing power of soccer. Argentina was wracked
by near-civil war conditions and brutal repression so that official
guests had to move with armed escorts. But for forty-eight hours
after the Argentine victory, Buenos Aires celebrated with such
tumultuous abandon as to observe for a brief moment the bitterness of
the national style.

In the remaining final, I saw Italy beat Germany in Madrid in
1982. An Italian team that had been lethargic in the early group
matches emerged as dominant in the finals. In 1990, in an uninspired
game a systematic German team overcame a hard-boiled and
uninspired Argentine side. In 1998, an elegant French team overcame
a Brazilian squad which, after a brilliant semifinal victory over the
Netherlands, turned inexplicably lethargic.

The most disappointing match for me was the final of the 1994
World Cup at the Rose Bowl in Pasadena. As honorary chairman of the
organizing committee, I had hoped for a high-scoring match that
might do for American soccer what the Giants-Colts football game of 1957 did [by inspiring] the public interest in professional football. Unfortunately, the game was decided in a penalty shootout after 120 minutes of scoreless tactical maneuvering.

Altogether, in the seven games I watched, I saw Brazil, Germany and Italy three times each, the Netherlands and Argentina twice. The only other start went to France.

Will this elite be broadened in the World Cup about to begin? Not having seen the national teams, I dare not make a prediction. I expect England to reclaim major role, though the recent injury of its star player Rooney reduces its prospects. This may be the year for an African team to emerge; their technical brilliance has so far been thwarted by lack of experience. The United States plays in a very difficult initial group. It would have to overcome Italy and [the] Czech Republic, both established soccer powers, to reach the elimination
round. It if goes that far, the US team might reach the quarterfinals.

The German team has been a mystery. It has an inventive new coach and passionate public support. If it gets on a roll, it could go far. And there is always Brazil, which will guarantee excitement and fans aiming for happiness rather than endurance. We will know the answer by July 9. In the meantime, thirty-two games guarantee to shake the thirst for football of even the most frenetic fans – to the extent that their addiction to the game permits it.
On June 9 a game for the 1966 World Cup will open the 32-team competition. The play begins in Costa Rica opening a month of football frenzy around the world. Billions will be glued to their television sets when the games are being played - this means early morning in Europe in Asia for the evening games. For the first two weeks there will be three matches a day as the survivors of a global competition that started three years ago are distilled down to 16 by playing eight in each of four groups of four with the top two teams each group advancing to a sudden death round. After nine to 12 matches culminating in the final on July 9 in Berlin. Thus to each team is guaranteed a minimum of three games and the ultimate winner must prevail in seven games over the course of a month. Billions will watch in envy to intercept their work schedules. The natural morale to score and lose will be affected particularly by the sudden-death overtime games.
I will be one of these voices and have arranged my schedule to accommodate it. It is difficult to explain. What it is about the game that so
enthralls the world, no explanation will identify it with their passionate adherence to their favorite teams
- a passion that in America is shared only by the fanatical adherents of major college football teams. I grew up
in Freiburg, a little town in southern Germany personalized by the Green Bay Packers. The Packers and Green Bay were
played by the Laurels in the late 20's and 30's over the radio, and we all happened to be at the championship three
times in a decade. Although I have not lived in Germany for many more decades than I am to admit,
I still follow the fortunes of that club which has fallen in the age of high parity, balance, and life
in hard times, leaving much to be said of the second division.

It makes periodic efforts to emerge from this condition, but always manages to fall just short of the desired place in the standings which would enable it to survive.
- thereby guaranteeing the excitement of every game and hence the typical football fan.

This is true even of Brazil's fans whose national team wins every third World Cup - what of a higher number than any other nation had to substitute and satisfactory to the devoted fans.

But these fans would also beyond the frenzy evoked by eleven men on field with maneuvering a ball along a 100 meter long field with an opposing goal additional appreciators of the game reveal themselves. For manipulating a ball by foot for prolonged distances requires an activity analogous to baseball. This aspect of the game.

Especially teams that concentrate on this technique - like Argentina, Brazil and many South American teams - astonish one with their versatility and abandon.

On the other hand they sometimes are so infatuated by activity that they forget that the purpose of the game
is to score goals and they are sometimes overcome by more elementary and tactically oriented teams.

This is because only the recent players

- Brazil for Brazil,
- Argentina for Argentina,
- France for France - can score goals by essentially solitary efforts. For almost all to be circumstances, it is teams and players which win games. The deductive quality

of soccer resides in the intellectual penetration with the ball which seems to move the ball down the field to solve the challenge, which seems so mighty that is prone to turn with a subtle, how to get a balayer unexpected opponent

(skill with side moving at high speed) one of whom is eye - the final is permitted once his hands to intercept the ball. This turns the game into an exercise like a mathematical equation, an ability toThings

are uninsured open space, what to a poaching from which to launch an unimagined shot and
the goal. The great field generals like Cæsar or
Brennus have left the uncanny skill of distributing
the ball among their teammates in a manner that
seemed inevitable in its abstract and irresistibly
self-evident in execution. Even at its highest level
in this a game of unqualified simplicity.

And look back thru the decades as

strategic

what has
deployment

the

midfield

in

midfield

and

and

...
formal to 2 and deploying the remaining players in various ways. Vertical for illustration purposes the 4:4:2 system is among the most widely used. As a practical matter one of the midfielders is usually assigned the role of libero — to act as a "sweeper" or defense Smith's with reinforcing to most threatened positions on the field. Bedmarone gave the role an additional significance by acting as a quarterback in defense and like an American quarterback on offense. When the team punishes the speed of modern routes and the conditioning of the players results in a kind of total football which means that whatever the original positions of the players his task is to reposition the center of gravity, attack or defense depending on the situation.

The practical consequence is that for as much harder to come by that defense tends to diminish once offense is least compared to the situations when
I first became acquainted with the game because the play suited all my needs and rarely allowed all-attack unless of course they found themselves left behind. Since the number of players is high from which a good build is a high prospect of leading to a goal in infinite a disciplined defense can occasionally throw a technically superior team. Thus a regularly coached Greek team defeated a Polish team of the not quite superior individual players in the 2004 European cup and a very disciplined German team

overcame a somewhat lesser team from the Netherlands.

The only team in the World Cup of 1974, national team over 76 clubs to meet down the field. The tactical aspects can be illustrated by the booking of the finals of the World cup over the last 25 years. Three attended never

of the last nine and never seem to be over emphasized

by their different character.

1970 over my first experience is the combination all in nothing style of Brazilian
football. Led by its incomparable Pele, Brazil and all the rest of previous victories, the Brazilians finally came into a very good Italian team literally from a very good team into the ground by a score of 4:1. The Italian team was a free kick which usually in international football gives it the opportunity to apply its tremendous skill in frustrating the opponents with clear cut superior a give-no-quarter defense. But Brazil did not play by its book. It abandoned its aggressive theoretical formation and entered the game with everything. Players with a wild offense literally running the whole field was a solid team 3 into the ground. The Brazilians truly possessed a high altitude of pressure which kept them on a little bit by the semifinal between Italy and Germany.

Turned around by the Argentinians in overtime and no goal the game went in its favor last night.

That Brauenbauer's aerial display balance completed West German offense triumphed in 1970elped

a psychological shift to the table in 1974. A game between the Netherlands and Germany, the Dutch
was elegant + offensive-minded. To quiet a
one
of the all-time greats - Cruyff. It had defeated
Brazil in the semifinal by the simplicity of its movement in
the final, rather than by individualism. But if Brazil wouldn't
award a penalty kick to the Dutch, which turned out to be a fiasco. Awarded a penalty
kick in the first minute gaining it a 1:0 lead. It wasn't
a priorized battle. For it tempted the Dutch to abandon
their finely turned game in favor of an Italian-style
defense. The Germans led by Beckenbauer, therefore,
then everything into an all-out attack, successfully
by a frustrated home public. This led to a 2:1 lead
which Germany defended tamersingly through its entire
half. And 1978 the Netherlands found itself once
more in a final before a rabid international crowd.
In an extraordinary game the Dutch faced an Argentine
team playing with Brazilian flair and European
bility instead of trying to control. But after
years earlier, they could not stop the course and
leading

the same team. Argentina is

demonstration of the leading power of South
South America.

Argentina was reached last night was this tour
of this official

stay for four guests last night with armed escort.

But for forty-eight hours after the Argentine victory

celebrated with much

Buenos Aires over a mass demonstration, attended

visit to observe for a brief manner the celebration of

the national stage.

so-called

In the three games was apparently

the seven games I watched the new Brazil team

Argentina

and Italy three times and the Netherlands twice. The

only team that

better their stand in France

What to hope from this

What a team can the World Cup elite is

historically match to. Will this slight be balanced

again! Not least

in the World Cup over the left it is asked to judge

the national teams if this time

see enough

to predict. I expect England to maintain a place

major in the role through the recent signing of its star

name.
In the remaining games, Italy beat Germany in Spain in 1982. An Italian team that had been hit hard by the 1982 World Cup final, the country's national team emerged as dominant.

In 1986 an unexpected genome a systematic German team overcame a late-boiled and unexpected Argentine side. In 1988 an else French team overcame a Brazilian equal, which after a scintillating semi-final victory over the Netherlands turned inexplicably listless.

The most disappointing match for me was the final of the 1994 World Cup match at the Rose Bowl in Pasadena. As honorary chairman of the organizing committee I had hoped for a life-saving match that might do for American soccer what its event - the football finals of 1987 which inspired the public interest in professional football.

Unfortunately the game was decided
in a penalty shootout after 120 minutes of 
scoreless tactical maneuvering.

What was
player Rooney reduces its prospects. This may be the year for an African team to emerge, their lack of technical brilliance has so far been outweighed by its passion.

The United States plays in a very difficult

virtual group. It would have to overcome Italy - both established soccer powers - and Italy Republic in order to reach the final. Elimination cannot. If it fails and fare the US team would read the officials. The German team has been a mystery. It has overreinforced

wack and a passion public support.

If it gets in a call it would go far.

Then and this is always Brazil which will guarantee excitement and fans.

arriving for happiness rather than endurance.

But we will know the answer for the meantime.

30 Top games guaranteed to shake the braids

for football of even the most casual fans. It is enough

that their addiction to the game present.