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,
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 enchalls 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.)

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 tactically-oriented teams. The former—dribbling & passing
but not scoring—are surely all tactics & no strategy.

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
focuses 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:
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five attackers, three midfield players, and two defenders. As a result
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midfielder becoming in effect a third defender and one of the forwards
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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. [I don't quite understand this. Why

bitterness?] 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
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רָמָל בְּרֵזֵה 3, 4, 5, 6, 7

קָו הַלֵּבָנָה 1, 2, 3, 4, 5

6

36

7, 8

77, 83

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6

78
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On June 9, a game for the 1950 World Cup will open the World Cup season in Buenos Aires, a month of football frenzy, and unrest - like the first two weeks there will be three matches a day as the survivors of a global competition that started three years ago are whittled down to 32 by playing in pairs in groups of four, with the top two teams from each group advancing to a sudden-death round. After some 62 matches culminating in the final on July 9 in Berlin, the two last teams are guaranteed a minimum of three games and the ultimate winner must prevail in seven games over the course of a month. Millions will watch in awe as they watch their work schedules, the natural mood to lose and their soccers will be affected dramatically by the sudden-death condition.
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(What is true of Brazil's fans when national teams win every third World Cup - and of a higher number than any other nation's - is, unfortunately, largely not satisfied with the satisfactory fans.)

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

This is because only the recent players - Pelé for Brazil, Zarabuen, for Argentina, Pelé for France - can score goals by essentially solitary efforts. For almost all the circumstances it is teams and players which win games. The deductive quality which resides in the intellectual penetration with the best which seems more the ball down the field to score the challenge which seems so might but in front & turn with a mobile. How to get a half pace slower opponents with each sides moving at high speed - one of whom is in - the finale is permitted to use his hands to intercept the ball. This turns the game into an exercise like a mathematical equation, an ability to finish off the uncovered open space and ca. a peripheral from which to channel an unexpected shot on the
the goal. The great field generals like Trevisan or Beckenbauer had the uncanny skill of distributing the ball among their teammates in a manner that seemed inevitable in their abstract and irresistibly self-evident in execution. soccer at its highest level is thus a game of uncomplicated simplicity.

And that doesn't mean the decade

that dramatized the game its increasing complexity

when it first

was strategy became a fan the ten field players

were distributed with five attackers, three midfield players

and two defenders. As a result the attackers usually

outnumbered the defenders especially as the players

more often played

were not as well conditioned as to stay on the field

in their assigned positions longer than a radical change;

deployment has taken place. It started with the

midfielder

 ushered back moving in effect a third defender

and one of the forwards taking his place at midfield.

By now it has evolved into redefining the attacking
## Page 6

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 intended to act as a "sweeper" in defense with responsibility to mark the most threatened positions on the field. Beckenbauer gave this role an additional significance by acting as a "quarterback" in defense and like an American football quarterback in the attack. His function is to push the speed of modern soccer and the conditioning of the players toward a kind of total football which means that whichever the assigned position of the player, his task is to reinforce the center of gravity, attack or defend depending on the situation.

The practical consequence is that for all many teams to come by that defense tends to dominate over offense at least compared to the situations when
I first became acquainted with the game. Because the play was of all sorts to lose and rarely scored all-attacks unless of course they found themselves left behind. Since the number of good players field from which a good club can be taken is a high prospect of leading to a goal infinite a disciplined defence can occasionally theta a technically superior team. Thus a superioru crazy team defeated a political, team of the superior midfielders players in the 2004 European Cup and a very disciplined German team overcome a mid-fielding team from the Netherlands five times the number in the World Cup of 1974. Material teams were the bookie to wear down the opp. These theoretical aspects can be illustrated by the bookie at the finals of the World Cup over the last 25 years. There专业技术 never of the best mine and never cease to be innovated by their different character.

1970 was my first exposure to the combined all-or-nothing style of Brazilian
football, led by its incomparable Pelé and an under 24 team which
ultimately came to a very good Dutch
team. Literally there was a good game in the
ground by a score of 4:1. The Dutch team was
"not invincible" in international football, gave
it the opportunity to apply its technical skill in
frustrating the opponent with a good one-
by-one defence. But the Brazilians did not
play by the book. It abandoned its tactical
formation, entered the game with and then every
player with a wild offensive literally running the field.
Penalty was scored in the second half of the game. At a high altitude of 3,000 m, the Dutch
offensive was repulsed, but the semi-final between Italy and Germany, which
was not agreed upon by the organizers, had to be decided in overtime and 3:2
for Italy, was a psychological lift. In 1974, the
same game was played between the Netherlands and Germany. The Dutch
was elegant and offensive-minded. The quiet game
of the all-time greats, Cruyff. It had reflected
Brazil in the semifinals by the simplicity of its movement.

But it had missed a penalty kick in the second half. The referee
awarded a penalty kick in the first minute gaining 1-0 lead. It was
a poised battle. For it tempted the Dutch to abandon
their finely tuned game in favor of an attacking style
of defense. The Germans, led by Beckenbauer, changed
their attacking into an all-out attack supported
by a jampacked home public. This led to a 2:1 lead
which Germany defended tenaciously through the extra
half. Also in 1978 the Netherlands found itself once
more in a final before a rabid hometown crowd.

In extraordinary game the Dutch tried an Argentine
Tend playing with Brazilian flair and European
kicks. Violence in its best moments. But after
years earlier they could not stay the course and
Proceeding

not in accordance to the home team Argentina,
a demonstration of the leading power of forces.

Although Argentina was not back at full strength,
several official staff for further games had issues with armed forces.

But for forty-eight hours of the Argentina meeting
celebrated with such excellent
tennis, soccer, and cricket, attended
for a brief moment the bitterness of
the national stage.

In the soccer games altogether in
countries

the seven games I watched I saw Brazil twice
+Argentina

and Italy three times and the Netherlands twice. The

only game that moved the France

What happened for the

What a time the World Cup elite is

historically north. Well this site be broadcast
again? Not happen in the World Cup almost the last it inland eighteen

the national teams it is haves

A prediction: I expect England to reclaim a place

in the role through the recent signing of its star

magnis
In the remaining games,
and Italy beat Germany in their 1992.

In Italian teams that had been allages in the
development emerged as dominant,
early favor became dominant in the finals.

In 1990 an uninvited genome a systematic
German team overcame a lack holed and
uninvited Argentinevich. In 1998 an old
French team overcame a Brazilian equal
which after a blackmail semi-final victory met
the Netherlands turned inexplicably Lladoer.

The most disappointing match for
one 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 life-saving match
that might do for American soccer what its friends
- lets football fan of 1984 which inspired the
public interest in professional football.

Unfortunately the game was decided
player. Rooney reduces his prospects. This may be the year for an African team to emerge; their lack of technical brilliance has so far been overshadowed by their passion.

The United States plays in a very difficult group. It would have to overcome Italy, both established soccer powers, and host Republic for reach the final. Elimination cannot. It goes and face the US team may be read to reach the quarterfinals. The German team has been a mystery. It has not won enough and a passionate public support. If it plays in a roll, it could go far.

Then and there is always Brazil which will guarantee excitement and fans arriving for happenings rather than endeavors by July 9. But we will know the answer for the opening of thirty-two games guarantee to make the choice for football of even the most fanatic fans. It is unknown that their addiction to the same game also.