
EL JUEGO MATINAL

“Where the truth never gets in the way of a good story...”

Volume 1, The “Nacho” Edition

22 November 2002



Another star that leave us...

By John

We are very sad to see Nacho leave. Nacho added humor, life, and a lot of very colorful insults to the game. Although Ricardo and I had a very specific rivalry with Nacho, it is clear that most of us had special memories of our interactions with Nacho, be it making a bad pass to him, getting told that you just made a bad pass to him, and even worse, NOT making a pass to him(!) and having him remind you of that. Of course, getting clearly fouled by Nacho and have him contesting it (for the next six months); And on rare occasions, watching him score a goal on us.

What we'll miss the most:

- We will miss his *Maradona*-like headers that always out-jumped other players that were significantly taller than him (such as **Mike**, **Tall Paul** and **Richard**).
- We will miss his incredible *Ronaldo* like sprints, where he would take off from midfield, leave defenders behind and most of the time take on the goalkeeper (when it was Ricardo) and score.
- We will miss his *Ryan Giggs* work ethic, because unlike the rest of us, he would not stay up front all the time complaining and criticizing teammates, and instead he would always run back and support the defense.
- We will miss his *Luis Figo*-like accurate passing, though actually we won't miss that one that much, because he really didn't pass the ball that often.
- We will miss his *Veron*-like corner kicks. Because unlike most players, he did not try to find another player, he simply tried to score. And often times, he did!
- We will miss his sense of equality and balance; he could have the whole Real Madrid squad on his side (vs. your side that included a few Thai construction workers), and he would still try to convince you that on the whole, the teams were well balanced and that it would be a fair and even game. And then if another player arrived late, he would claim the player saying that you somehow had the advantage (and you would let him take the player!).

What we'll miss the most: (Cont...)

By John

- We will miss his latest and very modern soccer attire, which included a **Partido Comunista de Argentina** cup (from the times when the communists were actually relevant), **Arsenal's home uniform** (from the 1970s) and **Independiente shorts** (when they were World Champions, a time when most of us were not born yet, including our aging Javier...)
- We will miss his **colorful vocabulary**, including 50 ways to tell someone that their pass was absolutely awful and that they were the worst players in the world. And of course his famous "**Vammooooooooos**" which always was the official announcement that the game was about to start, and again when the second half started. And equally famous, we will forever have embedded in our minds, the first time Nacho shouted to each one of us: "**Sos HORRRRRRRIBLE!!**"
- We will miss meeting someone new...anyone, anywhere in Singapore, and within 10 minutes having this person asking you innocently if "*you knew Nacho, the Argentinean*".
- Ricardo and I will certainly miss his threats of physical violence after we forgot to accurately count the goals he scored the previous weekend (note: goals scored on Ricardo). We will also miss the fact that he is the only one who kept a tally of his own scoring record throughout the season and probably (secretly) knows how many goals he scored since he joined the Sunday game.
- Off the field we will miss his frantic devotion to Charly Garcia, chess, his all-in-one Sony Palm-Pilot-camera-phone-dishwasher-hair-dryer... Not to mention his devotion for the team of his heart: **Independiente de Avellaneda**, his hatred of Brazil and England teams and most things colored yellow and anything related to River Plate and Racing, and his general belief that despite official results in Japan/Korea 2002, **Argentina actually is the World Champion**.

In the end, he is probably sadder than I am, because he never managed to score a clean and legal goal on me. Though I am sure that after some therapy and medication he will be able to recover from this weekly defeat that he became accustomed to over the past three years.

The game will not be the same without Nacho and we will never forget him.

We will lose the most important member of the team, we will lose one of the characters that kept us all showing up to play every Sunday, rain or shine, hangover or no hangover (**even Mariano!**), either with three players on each side or twenty a side.

We are losing a true friend that kept us together and made coming to soccer every Sunday one of the best parts of the week.

We hope that one day Argentina comes out of its deep financial crisis, reopens the Embassy in Singapore and gives us back the pleasure, and the honor, of spending time with one of their great citizens.

That is Nacho.



Ode to Nacho:

By Victor:

Los pelotazos ya nunca llegaron a su destino,
La selva, la avenida, los alicaídos postes
Serán mudos testigos de balones perdidos
Ya nadie estará ahí parado esperando
Que todos los demás corramos desesperados
Intentando alimentar al goleador eterno
Que desde allá arriba siempre nos miro
Sin entender tanta ignorancia futbolística.

Los gritos cual avión superando la barrera del sonido
Ya no atronarán el aire llevando improperios
Insultos o castizas delicadezas varias
Nuestros tímpanos descansarán
Lo mismo que nuestros cuerpos en los entretiempos,
Ya nadie nos apurará con ese hambre de fútbol
Que solo alguien como Nacho supo y sabrá inspirarnos
Siempre.

Resonarán los ecos de esos alaridos salvajes,
Veremos la pelota describir curvas caprichosas
Buscando como extra; ¿a los pies del rayo
Tal vez algún día todos nos iluminemos y
Entendamos que su ligereza de pies,
Su capacidad de salto, su olfato goleador,
Su gorra cabezadora no eran humanas,
Que solo bajo del Olimpo, cual Mercurio
Para regalarnos un par de secretos y un mito
Mientras tanto, todos nos unimos en un pedido
Que nos sale de lo más profundo de nuestras entrañas:
Corre una pelota **HORRIBLE!!!!!!!!!!!!!!**

Un Amigo,
Victor.

The origins of this newsletter

By Ricardo.

There was one Sunday, long, long time ago, when the attendance to our games was at its lowest: Only two faithful players showed up that day: **Nacho and I.**

It was a sad ride back home that day after we waited and waited for other players that never came. **Nacho** then suggested that we should send an e-mail reminder to people the next week, so that they knew for sure that we will be there, rain or shine, same place, same (latin) time...

Week after week our e-mail distribution list grew longer and longer. The weekly game reminder then became a short game review where we honored all our "futbolistic" shortcomings and made fun of every big mistake and blooper we made, not without further embellishing the really impressive and world-class plays we sometimes witnessed.

Today, our weekly attendance is quite solid, as we became a family that adopted (temporarily at times) amateur players that came for all the four corners of the world. In the process, we all became better players, (*though some would argue that*), we all became a family of friends.

Thank you Nacho for bringing us together.

Otro Amigo,
Ricardo.



EL JUEGO MATINAL

E-mail messages from the Team:

Various:

Below is a list of e-mails I received from people that wanted to post these messages for Nacho.

"Dear Nacho, As one of the few people that has not tried to kill or critically maim me, I count you as a friend, and remember nostalgically the great moments that we have had playing football together. I wish you and your family the best of happiness in Indonesia. I hope that our paths cross again in the future. Hasta luego,"

Robert 'Bionic' Growden.'

"Si Independiente tuviera un 9 como Nacho ya hubiese salido campeón sin necesidad de esperar 8 años.
Lo mejor en tu nuevo desafío y gracias por tu amistad."
Un abrazo y nos vemos mañana."

Mariano.

"Thank you for your mail.

I am on a business trip from Nov.11 and I will be back on Nov.25.
I will have limited access to my e-mail."

"-Before Nacho: I used to run all the soccer field like crazy

-After Nacho: I learned running is not worthed. Better stay always between the oppositions goalkeeper and the last defender in clear offsite..the ball will arrive sooner or later.

-Before Nacho: I never said a bad word while playing

-After Nacho: I learned that the best way to beat the other team is through "Vulgaridades" like 'terrible', 'boludo', 'gracias Nacho', 'recorcholis' etc..

-Before Nacho: Never went drank alcohol the night before the game.

-After Nacho: Learned best strategy is to get drunk + do not sleep and arrive with headache to the game. The more you smell the less you will encounter defenders while playing.

-Before Nacho: Thought Argentinians had already superated the 5-0 defeat against Colombia.

-After Nacho: Confirmed that every time Nacho remembered this he started to say more 'Vulgaridades'

Bottom line I am a worse football player after Nacho....and that means I have more fun playing...good luck in Indonesia!"

Antonio "Bamb" Faillace

ESTOY TODAVIA PENSANDO A LA FRASE DE DESPEDIDA PARA PONER EN EL MATINAL..

MariJohn
