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# EL JUEGO MATINAL

*'Where the truth never gets in the way of a good story...'*

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## 10 Basic questions about the tournament ...

By John.

After having read **Ricardo's** Straits Times version of the Saturday 'Championnat at the Padang', I have to ask some questions that may probably undermine the credibility of Ricardo's original report. Here are the 10 questions.

1. **Nacho** won a medal, what does that tell you about the tournament?
2. One of the finalists was the Maldives Island, now c'mon... Maldives a finalist???
3. What happened to Colombia was it overtaken by soccer powerhouse Panama?
4. The tournament started at 8 a.m. does anyone believe that **Mariano** was awake (and sober at that time?)
5. My sources inform me that the goals were about the size of a regular house door, so were the penalty kicks that hard to stop?
6. The picture in the Straits Times has an associate professor of an advance age attempting to kick the ball and Obviously missing badly. Was it him who missed the critical penalty that let Colomb..I mean Panama through?
7. **Javier** '9-goals' Gomez? if 48 year old Javier can score 9 goals, what does that tell you about the quality of the opposition?
8. **Ricardo**, the Panamanian hero?
9. **Mike**, scoring a decisive penalty?
10. **Chi** and **Xin**, Argentineans? What did they ever do to you guys to deserve that?

I did notice that most players had a certain confident style on Sunday, whether that was due to the previous week's tournament experience, or because they actually believed Ricardo's fantasyland report, I don't know. But clearly the quality of play on Sunday was very good. And it was particularly noticeable on Sunday; although having **Javier-Mariano-Victor** on the same team virtually guarantees an automatic victory (alongside superstar goalkeeper and genius penalty stopper Ricardo), they actually had to work hard for a very tight win of 5-3.



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**T**he quality of the Sunday game also improved significantly after Ricardo and I abandoned our goals to play on the field. Though we missed several easy chances, it is clear that we are a force to be reckoned with particularly on corner kicks, where we actually attempt to head the ball in the general direction of the goal.

And a warning goes out for **Nacho**, who injured our star defender **Mike**, something that also tilted the game in their favor. Mike had to go to goalkeeping (did anyone, by the way, notice Mike's rather comical attempt at diving on the last goal???) It turns out that it was Mike that actually kicked Nacho, but given Nacho's rather thick and heavy demeanor, the opponent is usually on the losing end of any challenge on Nacho. As a goalkeeper against Nacho most of the time, I can vouch for the dangers of clashing with Nacho, who by the way should invest in a new hat, because that red PCA hat is basically in more tatters than the Soviet Union.

Furthermore, **Nacho** has extended his verbal sparring with Mike to include Mike's son **Chris** (*'Eres un mentiroso como tu papa'*, which loosely translated to English means: *'the weather is very lovely today'*).

**Chi** and **Xin** were also key factors in keeping the score respectable. Their endless energy and Xins less that subtle tackles kept our team in the game. In fact, another novel thing about them is that they actually pass the ball to **Conrado**, so Conrado was not stranded alone under the tree hopelessly calling for the ball. But we do worry about the *'Argentinization'* of Chi and Xin. We accept that they pass the ball to The Honorable Consul of Argentina Conrado, but will they become 'humble and understated' like our Argentinean friends? Will they grow sideburns like Menem (and give Nacho nausea???)?



By the end of the game, it was probably **Olger** who marked the difference between the two teams. Although Wendy had him covered most of the game (while **Chris** totally dominated Nacho), **Olger** also has this annoying habit of never resting, never stopping running, and never giving up on a lost ball (and also taking full advantage of my crap clearances when I was in goal). Also even more frightening is that Olger comes early and actually warms up. His definition of warming up includes stretching and actually warming up the muscles of his body, and not discussing the previous night's results in the English Premiership, talking about the huge sized rats in the jungle behind the goal, and finding a tree to go to the bathroom, as several of us do prior to the punctual 10:23a.m. Start to the game.

It was nice to see **Richard** back again, as the departure of **Mini-Juan** had significantly reduced the Spanish influence on the game. But it was so hot that he could not use his Real West Ham de Sevilla uniform but at least he is back in good form, being a total nightmare defender, and annoying opposing goalkeepers when he goes up for his own team's corner kicks. He seemed to deal well with the double threat of **Camilo** and **James**.



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**F**inally, we are having some issues with the throw in lines, which for some reason are a bit blurry. While on the Singapore Swimming Club-side its easy, because we know the ball is out when the player either 1)falls into one of the many holes and twists their ankle or 2) runs into a tree and knocks themselves senseless. But on the other side, it is not clear, so the basic rule should be, 'if there is any doubt, the ball belongs to the team Nacho is not playing on...' (FIFA Rulebook, chapter 23, Section XXI, paragraph 3...).

*So we will meet again on Sunday, provided our new Argentineans allow us, and the large rats in the jungle don't steal the ball.*