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MINUTE

SOCCER
magazine

Volume 1 Number 2



RUIZ

Intensity Unleashed

Chivas

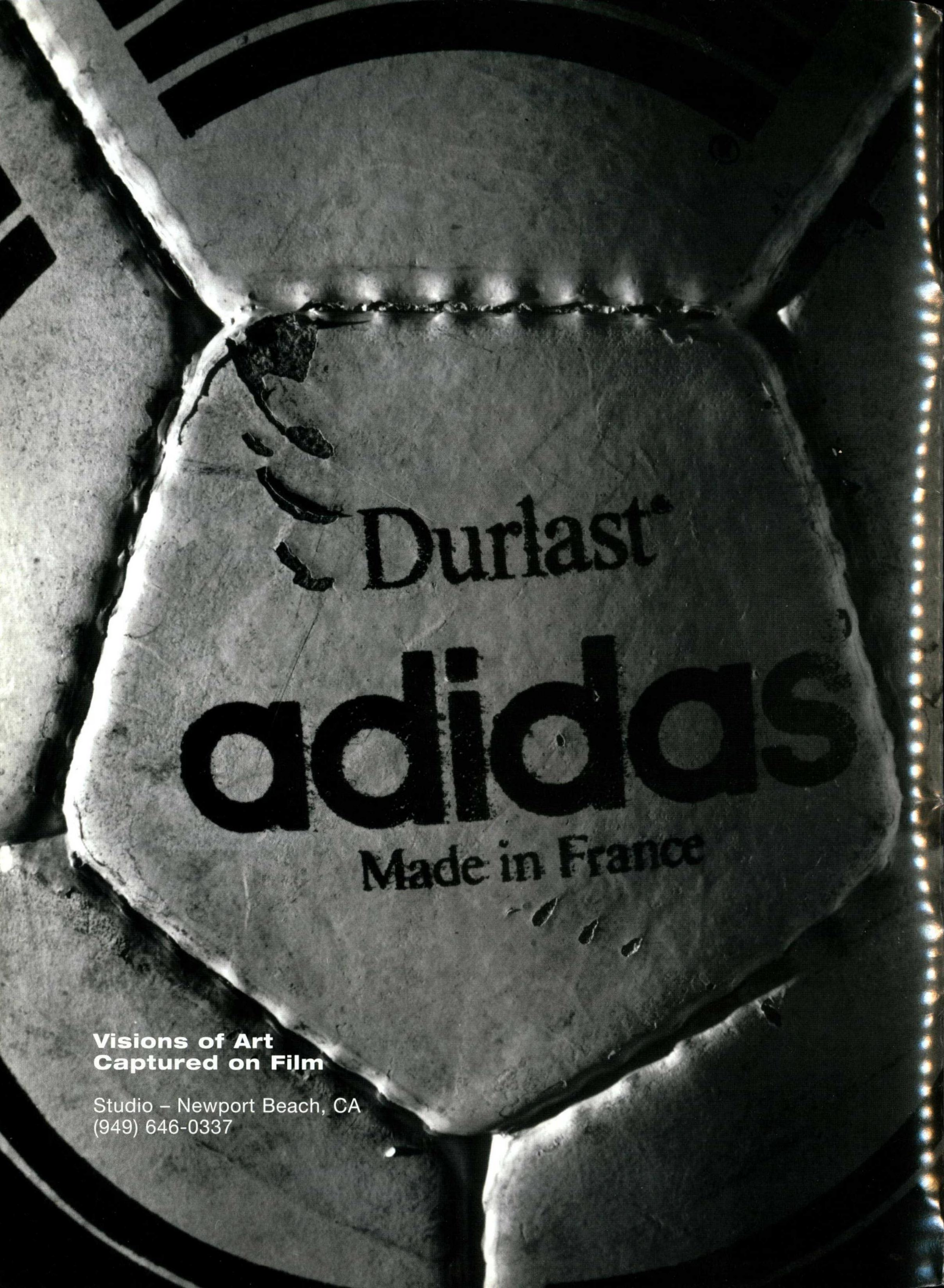
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VOLUME 1 - NUMBER 2

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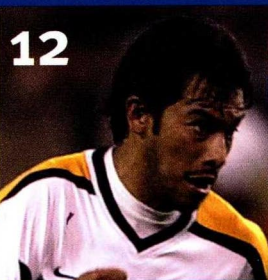
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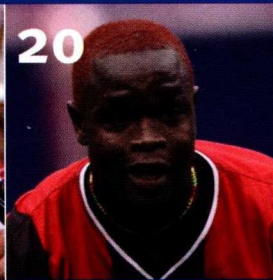
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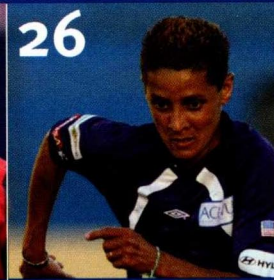
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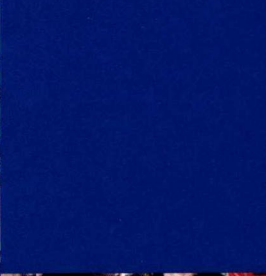
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WELCOME TO 90:00 MINUTES SOCCER MAGAZINE.

Dear Readers,

The response to our first two issues of The New Voice of Soccer – 90:00 Minutes Soccer Magazine has been overwhelming! eMails and letters continue to pour in with encouragement and praise. Our sincere thanks for your enthusiastic support. Here are some excerpts from the correspondence we received.

Sincerely,



Yan Skwara,
Publisher

I put my hands on the premiere issue of your magazine at the World Cup in South Korea and it made me proud to be an American. What a publication! Where did you guys come from? No matter, I'm just glad you're here! The quality of writing is superb. The articles are just the right length – not too long, not too short, just a perfect, easy read, yet deeper than any other magazine out there. I subscribed right away. Can't wait for my next issue...


P. Burke
Los Angeles, CA

Thank you for a most exceptional looking magazine that I would put on par with National Geographic and Architectural Digest... The layout is clean, open and easy to follow and the photography is very exciting. It certainly raises the bar for soccer publications everywhere...

S. Giolitti
Oklahoma City, OK

From what I've gleaned from your last issue, it appears that 90:00 Minutes Soccer Magazine will, indeed, be "The New Voice of Soccer," and, I might add, it comes none too soon... The sport deserves a sleek, forward-thinking publication that is willing to take a risk on soccer fans, serving up fare that, for once, is intellectually and artistically arresting. How refreshing!

T. Chandler
Greenville, SC

Thanks. And keep all your questions and comments coming to info@90soccer.com 

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“Inside



RONALDO “PINING” FOR REAL

After dazzling World Cup audiences with eight goals, famed striker Ronaldo started his first season with Real Madrid the way he spent most of his five years with Inter Milan — sidelined with an injury.

Granted, this year's thigh muscle strain cannot be compared to the shredded right knee that robbed the Brazilian wunderkind of more than two seasons, and Real coach Vicente del Bosque is a patient man. Ronaldo, he told reporters, “is a player who has been signed for many years and not for the day of his debut.”

Real Madrid officials, however, did hedge their \$44 million bet just a little, insisting on a clause in the transfer agreement requiring Inter to cover Ronaldo's \$9.7 million per year salary in the event that he reinjures his knee.

The two-time FIFA World Player of the Year took a pay cut (from \$12.2 million/year) to leave Inter Milan. He said the Spanish league is “more fun” for a striker, with its wide-open play and abundant scoring oppor-

tunities, but the root of his desire to leave Italy reportedly was poor relations with Inter's Argentine coach Hector Cuper. He admitted that he, along with Turkish midfielders Emre Bolozoglu and Okan Buruk, formed “a sort of anti-Cuper club” within the Inter ranks.

Certainly, a healthy Ronaldo, teamed with existing superstars Zinedine Zidane, Luis Figo, Raul Gonzalez and Roberto Carlos, makes Real Madrid a formidable opponent in Spanish League and Champions League competition, but at least one high-profile opponent is not intimidated. Bayern Munich Chairman Karl-Heinz Rummenigge reportedly said the team's money would have been better spent on “a good central defender and a goalie.”

MAYTAG REPAIRMAN NOT SO LONELY

“Ol' Lonely” Had Plenty of Company at the Recent WUSA Founders Cup.

In addition to being instantly recognized at the headquarters hotel, Ol' Lonely was surrounded by fans at the WUSA Fan Fest, and

the Touchline™

by some pretty impressive soccer moms at halftime, when Maytag awarded the Soccer Mom of the Year Award to Diane Barbera, a mother of four from Lafayette, Calif.

As grand prize winner, Barbera received a suite of Maytag appliances, a new Hyundai Santa Fe sports utility vehicle, a free trip for four to the WUSA championship game and a luxurious spa makeover.

The judges — moms of WUSA stars Brandi Chastain, Carla Overbeck, Joy Fawcett, Danielle Fotopoulos and Keri Sanchez — sifted through more than 1,600 nominations from across the country before selecting Barbera to be Maytag's Outstanding Soccer Mom.

The judges selected three other finalists — Barbara Scoles of Bayport, Calif., first runner-up; Sherill Kinder of Princeton, W. Va., second runner-up; and Cynthia Safrit of Beaufort, N.C., third runner-up — who were flown to the game along with three guests each. The finalists were treated to spa makeovers and will receive at least one Maytag appliance of their choice.

LENGTHY PARTNERSHIP EXTENDED

One of the longest running commercial partnerships in the English Premiership has been extended for another three years. Carlsberg Breweries' new three-year sponsorship contract with Liverpool Football Club is the largest financial package in the club's history. Carlsberg has sponsored the famed Reds for the past decade.

"Carlsberg has demonstrated a tremendous level of commitment and consistency to Liverpool" said Liverpool FC Team Manager Gerard Houllier. "Their renewed sponsorship will help us invest in the infrastructure of the club and build upon the success of the team."

The Carlsberg logo will remain on Liverpool's famous red shirts.


U.S. U-19 GIRLS GOLDEN IN CANADA

As expected, the U.S. U-19 Women's National Team ran roughshod over the rest of the world in the recent FIFA World Championships, outscoring their opponents 26-2 and taking the title with a 1-0 overtime victory over host Canada in front of a world-class crowd of 47,784 at Commonwealth Stadium in Edmonton.

Lindsay Tarpley, now a freshman at the University of North Carolina, collected her own rebound and wrapped up the U-19 crown with a golden goal — fittingly enough — 19 minutes after the end of regulation. The winning shot was only the fifth of the game for the normally torrid US offense, which was frustrated as the Canadians packed five defenders onto the back line.

To set the stage for Tarpley's heroics, the U.S. defense had to shut down tournament MVP and Golden Boot winner Christine Sinclair, who racked up 10 goals in Canada's first five games. The championship game-winner was Tarpley's seventh goal of the competition, good for the Bronze Boot as third-leading scorer. Wilson took the Silver Boot with nine tallies, including a quarterfinal hat trick against Denmark.

The championship match was the Americans' fourth shutout of the competition, also including a 4-0 decision over Australia and 6-0 wins over Chinese Taipei in group play and Denmark in the quarterfinals. England and Germany were the only teams to score against the U.S., the former in the Americans' 5-1 Group C opener, and the latter in a 4-1 semifinal decision.

Overall, some 200,000 fans attended the U-19 Women's World Championships, prompting Canada to mount a bid for the 2007 Women's World Cup. 

FINAL 2002 MLS REGULAR SEASON STATISTICS

FINAL LEAGUE STANDINGS - Monday, September 23, 2002

Eastern Conference

| TEAM | GP | W | L | T | PTS | GF | GA | STREAKS | LAST 10 |
|--------------------|----|----|----|---|-----|----|----|---------|---------|
| xy N.E. Revolution | 28 | 12 | 14 | 2 | 38 | 49 | 49 | Won 3 | 6-3-1 |
| x Columbus Crew | 28 | 11 | 12 | 5 | 38 | 44 | 43 | Lost 1 | 5-4-1 |
| x Chicago Fire | 28 | 11 | 13 | 4 | 37 | 43 | 38 | Won 1 | 4-5-1 |
| z MetroStars | 28 | 11 | 15 | 2 | 35 | 41 | 47 | Lost 3 | 3-7-0 |
| z D.C. United | 28 | 9 | 14 | 5 | 32 | 31 | 40 | Lost 1 | 3-4-3 |

Western Conference

| TEAM | GP | W | L | T | PTS | GF | GA | STREAKS | LAST 10 |
|-----------------------|----|----|----|---|-----|----|----|---------|---------|
| xy L.A. Galaxy | 28 | 16 | 9 | 3 | 51 | 44 | 33 | Won 4 | 8-2-0 |
| x S.J. Earthquakes | 28 | 14 | 11 | 3 | 45 | 45 | 35 | Lost 2 | 4-5-1 |
| x Dallas Burn | 28 | 12 | 9 | 7 | 43 | 44 | 43 | Won 1 | 4-5-1 |
| x Colorado Rapids | 28 | 13 | 11 | 4 | 43 | 43 | 48 | Tied 1 | 5-2-3 |
| x Kansas City Wizards | 28 | 9 | 10 | 9 | 36 | 37 | 45 | Tied 1 | 3-5-2 |

x = Clinched playoff berth
y = Conference Champion
z = Eliminated from playoff contention

Notes:

NE wins first tiebreaker vs. CLB (head-to-head: 2-1-1)
DAL wins first tiebreaker vs. COL (head-to-head: 2-1-1)

PLAYOFF BRACKET

Bracket 1

Quarterfinals

- (1) Los Angeles Galaxy vs. (8) Kansas City Wizards
- (4) Dallas Burn vs.
- (5) Colorado Burn

Bracket 2

Quarterfinals

- (2) New England Revolution vs. (7) Chicago Fire
- (3) San Jose Earthquakes vs. (6) Columbus Crew

Semifinals

- Winner of (1-8) vs. Winner of (4-5)
- Winner of (2-7) vs. Winner of (3-6)

Saturday, October 5 - Game 1

Wednesday, October 9 - Game 2

Saturday, October 12 - Game 3 (if necessary)

* Played for more than one team - Most Recent Team Listed

BUDWEISER LEADING SCORERS

| NAME | TEAM(S) | GAMES | GOALS | ASSISTS | POINTS |
|-------------------|---------|-------|-------|---------|--------|
| 1 Taylor Twellman | NE | 28 | 23 | 6 | 52 |
| 2 Carlos Ruiz | LA | 26 | 24 | 1 | 49 |
| 3 Jeff Cunningham | CLB | 27 | 16 | 5 | 37 |
| 4 Ante Razov | CHI | 25 | 14 | 8 | 36 |
| 5 Ariel Graziani | SJ | 28 | 14 | 5 | 33 |
| 6 Mark Chung | COL | 27 | 11 | 10 | 32 |
| 7 Jason Kreis | DAL | 27 | 13 | 4 | 30 |
| 8 Mamadou Diallo | MET* | 24 | 12 | 5 | 29 |
| Steve Ralston | NE | 7 | 5 | 19 | 29 |
| Rodrigo Faria | MET | 28 | 12 | 5 | 29 |
| Chris Henderson | COL | 28 | 11 | 7 | 29 |

MLS CUP PLAYOFF TABLE - September 23, 2002

Overall Standings (top 8 teams qualify)

| SD TEAM | GP | W | L | T | PTS | GF | GA |
|---------------------------|----|----|----|---|-----|----|----|
| 1. xy Los Angeles Galaxy | 28 | 16 | 9 | 3 | 51 | 44 | 33 |
| 2. xy N.E. Revolution | 28 | 12 | 14 | 2 | 38 | 49 | 49 |
| 3. x San Jose Earthquakes | 28 | 14 | 11 | 3 | 45 | 45 | 35 |
| 4. x Dallas Burn | 28 | 12 | 9 | 7 | 43 | 44 | 43 |
| 5. x Colorado Rapids | 28 | 13 | 11 | 4 | 43 | 43 | 48 |
| 6. x Columbus Crew | 28 | 11 | 12 | 5 | 38 | 44 | 43 |
| 7. x Chicago Fire | 28 | 11 | 13 | 4 | 37 | 43 | 38 |
| 8. x Kansas City Wizards | 28 | 9 | 10 | 9 | 36 | 37 | 45 |
| z MetroStars | 28 | 11 | 15 | 2 | 35 | 41 | 47 |
| z D.C. United | 28 | 9 | 14 | 5 | 32 | 31 | 40 |

x = Clinched playoff berth
y = Conference Champion
z = Eliminated from playoff contention

Notes:

NE wins first tiebreaker vs. CLB (head-to-head: 2-1-1)
DAL wins first tiebreaker vs. COL (head-to-head: 2-1-1)

Sunday, October 20, 2002

MLS Cup 2002, FoxBoro, MA, 1:30 pm - ABC

UPCOMING MLS CUP PLAYOFF SCHEDULE (all times ET)

Wednesday, September 25

(5) Colorado at (4) Dallas, 8:30 PM

(6) Columbus at (3) San Jose, 10:00 PM

(8) Kansas City at (1) Los Angeles, 10:30 PM

Thursday, September 26, 2002

(7) Chicago at (2) New England, 7:30 PM — ESPN2

Saturday, September 28

(3) San Jose at (6) Columbus, 7:30 PM

(1) Los Angeles at (8) Kansas City, 8:00 PM

(4) Dallas at (5) Colorado, 9:00 PM

Sunday, September 29

(2) New England at (7) Chicago, 7:00 PM

Wednesday, October 2

Game Three (if necessary) for all series

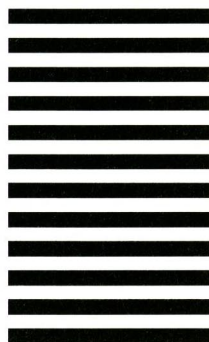


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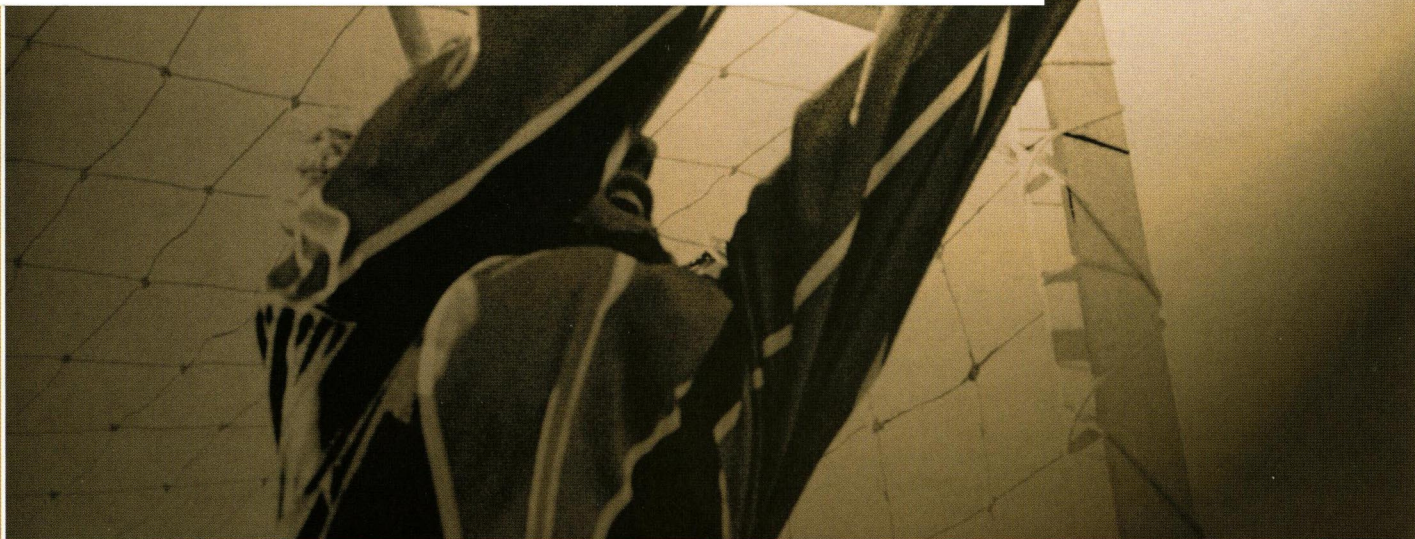


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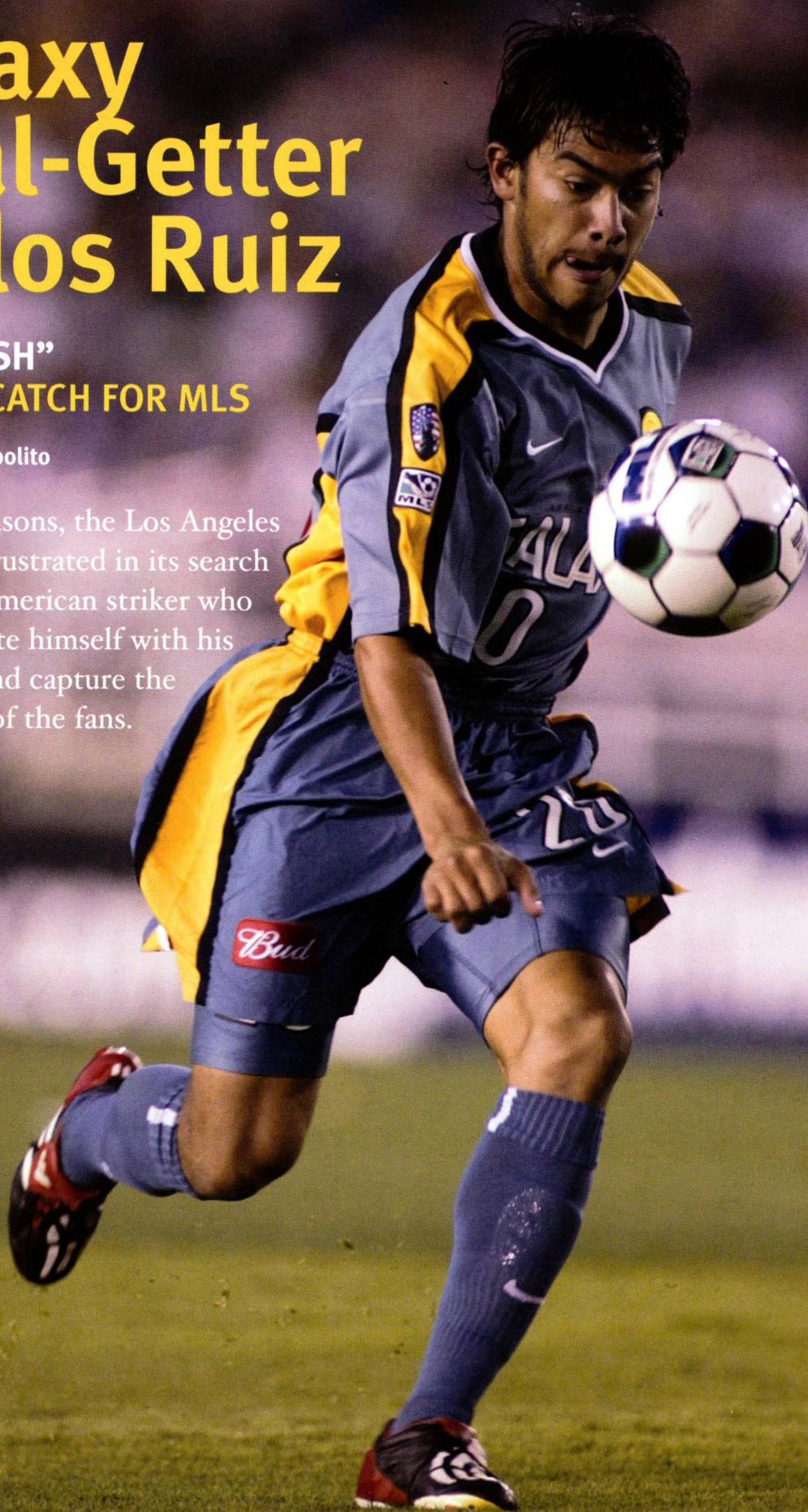


Galaxy Goal-Getter Carlos Ruiz

"LITTLE FISH"
A MAJOR CATCH FOR MLS

By Joseph D'Hippolito

For six seasons, the Los Angeles Galaxy was frustrated in its search for a Latin American striker who could integrate himself with his teammates and capture the imagination of the fans.



Eduardo Hurtado arrived from Ecuador and scored a team-record 21 goals in 1996, but laziness hastened his departure early in 1998. Carlos Hermosillo, who has more goals than any Mexican in Mexico's first division, joined the Galaxy later that year, but scored just 14 times in two seasons and never meshed as a target man with the team's style.

Then came Luis Hernandez, one of the stars of the 1998 World Cup and the Mexican national team's all-time leading scorer. Major League Soccer spent \$4 million in transfer fees to sign "El Matador" to a three-year contract worth \$4.5 million - the league's most expensive investment in any player. But Hernandez proved so disappointing that MLS terminated his contract with one year left after Hernandez scored only 12 goals in two seasons and remained aloof from his teammates.

This year, however, a young, unknown Guatemalan succeeded where more experienced, noteworthy performers failed.

Rookie Carlos Ruiz, 22, quickly established himself as one of the league's most dangerous goal scorers. He finished the season second in the MLS scoring race behind New England's Taylor Twellman, and led the league in goals with a franchise-record 24 in 26 games.

"He's a very dynamic player," Galaxy coach Sigi Schmid said. "He's very quick, he's very strong on the ball and he gets up in the air very well for a guy his size. He's the kind of guy who'll sacrifice his body and roll up his sleeves when he gets in the box. Carlos likes to finish what other guys start, and we haven't always had that here."

Ruiz demonstrated his dynamism immediately. He scored the tying and winning goals in each of his first two games, and struck his first five goals either in the final 10 minutes of regulation or in overtime - all in different ways.

Against D.C. United in the season opener, Ruiz earned his first goal in the 85th minute. He shielded the ball while marked tightly from behind by Eddie Pope, pivoted and fired an 18-yard line drive inside the right post. That goal forced a 1-1 tie that Ruiz broke in overtime with a penalty kick.

"I saw a young Jaime Moreno out there," United coach Ray Hudson said afterward. "He's an exciting, volatile, brave player."

Against Chicago two weeks later, Ruiz scored twice while unmarked. In the 81st minute, he played Billy Sleeth's bad clearance



Carlos Ruiz led MLS with 24 regular-season goals in 26 games.



Ruiz has a knack for scoring clutch goals, including the stoppage time tally that gave the Galaxy this season's MLS Western Conference crown.

off his chest and scored the tying goal on a 7-yard volley. Then in overtime, Ruiz sneaked behind Sleeth to convert a cross for the winning goal.

In the next game against Dallas, the 5-foot-9 Ruiz scored on a header while marked by three defenders in the 85th minute to forge another tie. By contrast, Hernandez struck just four times in his first MLS season — and needed 10 games to earn his first goal.

"Luis is a different player," Schmid said. "Luis is very active and runs off the ball a lot but his movement took him away from the goal, at times." Even in his good run with the Mexican national team, he was always playing with players who were around the goal, and he picked up goals off of them. Here, he was asked to be the focal point of the attack and that really wasn't as conducive to Luis' style.

"The other aspect that factors in is Carlos' mentality," Schmid continued. "Carlos came here with the attitude of 'I'm going to make my reputation by scoring goals in this league.'"

To reinforce that mentality, Ruiz kept in stride with another rookie, New England's Taylor Twellman, in their race for the MLS scoring championship.

"This is a fight that we goal scorers love," Ruiz said. "If I'm collecting all these goals, that's quite welcome. But when I step on the field, I'm trying to help the Galaxy win. I'm not worried as much about being the best goal scorer. I'd rather win a championship."

That attitude has endeared him to his teammates, who felt quite differently about Hernandez and Hermosillo.

"Carlos has fit in with the team better," said midfielder Cobi Jones, who played with both Mexican stars. "He's coming here with no preconceived notions of what the team's going to be like or his position on the team. He just came here to work and do a good job. He's accepted a lot easier by the players and he accepted the players a lot easier."

According to defender Alexi Lalas, Ruiz has done a lot more than just accept his new teammates.

"He's been wonderful," Lalas said. "He's gone out of his way to make friends and to try to speak a mixture of everything. I speak Greek, Italian, Spanish and English to him, and I eventually get my point across."

For Ruiz, the feeling is more than mutual.

"They're all my brothers," he said. "It's important to have that kind of camaraderie. When you extend your hand and you're not in your own country, the most important thing you need is friendship. I feel very comfortable here in Los Angeles."

Ruiz grew up in a poor section of Guatemala City with three sisters. His father died when he was two, so his mother had to work 14 hours a day in a toothpaste factory. Like most poor Guatemalan boys, Ruiz first learned his soccer on the streets — where, ironically enough, he began as a goalkeeper.

But when Ruiz was 12, his life changed. A friend showed him a newspaper article announcing tryouts for the youth teams run by Municipal, a perennial club power. Ruiz attended the tryout and became one of the few among the almost 1,500 hopefuls to survive.

Ruiz made his professional debut with Municipal in 1995. Except for a six-month stint two years ago in Greece's first division, Ruiz played seven years with Municipal, winning won two league titles and the Central American club championship. In the process, he received his nickname of "Pescadillo," which means "little fish."

"In Guatemala, it's customary for the players to have a nickname because the people in the stands sing lots of songs using that nickname," Ruiz said. "But I don't know why they gave it to me."

Ruiz also excelled in international competition. Before scoring 12 goals in 24 games for Guatemala's full national team, he served as the captain for the under-23 squad that barely missed qualifying for the 2000 Olympics.

But when Ruiz came to the United States, he had to adapt to what he called a "more competitive, more physical" style.

"This style is hard because there are very good players here," he said. "Guatemalan soccer is slower, more deliberate because in Guatemala, we don't have the infrastructure to develop players that the United States has."

Nevertheless, two things have helped Ruiz. The first is his brief experience in Europe, which included a failed tryout with a Norwegian club.

"In Norway, I learned more than anything else how to see soccer from a different point of view," he said. "In Greece, there are many excellent players. I played against great players such as Ze Elias and Geovanni. Little by little, I've been learning what soccer around the world is like."

Second, Los Angeles' large Guatemalan community has eased the cultural transition for Ruiz, his wife Laura and his daughter Andrea Michelle.

"The culture is practically the same," Ruiz said. "I don't know English so there are language barriers. But there are lots of Latinos here and the food, the customs don't change."


"You can feel more at home in Los Angeles than in any other Latino community. When I see people I recognize in the stands supporting me, that's something positive. I don't feel alone in this country."

Galaxy fans express their support through large Guatemalan flags in the stands and a small cardboard fish marked "Pescadillo" that hangs over the railing above the players' entrance to the field. Back in Guatemala, Ruiz's success has electrified his countrymen. Sports sections publish his exploits on the front page. Reporters have called him at all hours for interviews. Even the Guatemalan consulate held a reception for him.

"It's not very common in Guatemala," Ruiz said of the attention he's receiving. "You have to keep your feet on the ground because

"He's coming here with no preconceived notions of what the team's going to be like or his position on the team. He just came here to work and do a good job. He's accepted a lot easier by the players and he accepted the players a lot easier."

it's so easy to lose them. You have to be humble, maintain a low profile and try to work hard."

It also helps to have a sense of humor, as Ruiz and Lalas demonstrated through an early-season bet: If Ruiz could score 15 goals, then Lalas would buy him a watch. "If that's all it costs us to get a 15- or 20-goal scorer," Lalas said with a smile, "it's an incredible deal for us." 



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DaMarcus Beasley:

CLIMBING TO THE TOP ONE GOAL AT A TIME

By Kathryn L. Knapp

For 20-year-old Chicago Fire and U.S. National Team midfielder DaMarcus Beasley, success comes down to one thing — setting one goal after another.

“My first goal was to play soccer professionally,” Beasley said. “My next goal was to score a goal. Then came playing for the National Team and going to the World Cup. My next goal is playing in the Olympics in 2004 in Greece. I haven’t played in the Olympics yet.”

Setting goals is one thing, but actually following through with them takes focus and determination. Beasley prides himself on having both qualities, and those around him see those qualities on a daily basis.

“He’s extremely focused,” DaMarcus’s father Henry Beasley said. “He focuses on something and doesn’t let it go. He knows what he needs to work on and he does it. It’s awesome to watch.”

Fire teammate C.J. Brown agrees.

“His attitude of wanting to be at the highest level is what drives him,” Brown said. “He’s had it from the start. He stays focused on his goals. And at the same time, he still realizes he needs to get out there and be with the kids. His success has not gone to his head.”

Beasley started playing soccer as a young boy in Fort Wayne, Indiana. He said he did it for fun. Dad Henry brought home a soccer ball one day and DaMarcus’ older brother Jamar began playing with it. DaMarcus joined in because he wanted to do what his big brother was doing.

Soon the fun of playing soccer turned into a passion for perfecting his skills and doing what the professionals did.

“We would eat our cereal in the morning and then, instead of playing, we would watch tapes of soccer,” Beasley said. “Later we’d go outside and perfect the moves we saw on television. We lived and breathed soccer.”

While growing up he dabbled in other sports, but soccer was the one he excelled in. Henry said that when DaMarcus was about 10 or 12 he made up his mind that soccer was the sport for him. DaMarcus agreed.

“Basketball is my second love,” Beasley said. “Soccer’s been good to me. Basically it’s a God-given talent.”

That talent shines on the field.

“My speed and quickness allows me to get behind defenders,” Beasley said. “I’m a dribbler. I love to dribble. But I’d have to say my best attribute is being a two-way player.”

Fire head coach Bob Bradley agrees with Beasley. “DaMarcus is strong on both attack and defense. The ground he covers in a game is incredible.”

In five years, Beasley has achieved more than most soccer players dream of. He started living out his soccer dreams at age 15. Beasley had been training with the Under-17 National Team. The team decided they wanted to train together on a daily basis. So DaMarcus packed his bags and moved to Bradenton, Florida where the team attended school and trained together at the Bradenton Academy as part of the U-17 National Team Bollettieri Residential Program.

“The decision was easy for me,” Beasley said. “I wanted to make it to the next level. I knew I had to make sacrifices along the way. The turning point for me was definitely going to Bradenton.”

It wasn’t exactly an easy transition for Beasley to make. For the first two months, he traveled home every weekend to spend time with those he left behind. He said he always planned on returning to Fort Wayne to graduate with his friends at South Side High School. However, that day never came. Beasley established solid relationships in Bradenton and went on to graduate with his teammates.

“It’s tough,” Beasley said. “You want to be with your friends and even be obnoxious, but you have to mature fast. The Bradenton community opened their arms to me and helped me make the transition.”

Beasley (right) took the field for the USA against the MLS All-Stars.



Beasley's parents, Henry and Joetta, were torn with the decision. But they let him go and hoped for the best.

"They started traveling around the U.S. when the kids were just 14," Henry Beasley said. "Then the coaches came to us and asked what we thought about him going overseas and he was only 14. It was very hard because he was so young. A lot of things can happen. Fortunately, nothing happened."

In March 1999 Beasley became the youngest player to sign with Major League Soccer at 16 years and 10 months. After graduating, he spent the 1999 season playing with Project-40. He became a full-fledged member of the Fire in 2000 and earned a place in the starting lineup. Since then, Beasley has appeared in 61 Chicago Fire regular season games, with 54 starts, seven goals and twelve assists, including three and four in 2002. He also has played in 10 playoff games, with nine starts, one goal and four assists.

Teammates welcomed the young addition to the squad without thinking twice.

"He has a different perspective than most young kids," Brown said. "He is very responsible. He lives on his own and pays his own bills. Not too many 20-year-olds can say that."

In 2001, the Fire acquired DaMarcus's older brother Jamar from the New England Revolution. The two played on the same team together for the first time in years.

Jamar is now playing in Italy.

"It was a dream come true for us," Henry said. "We always hoped they would play together on the same team, but for it to happen, even for a short while, was incredible."

DaMarcus said the next team he hopes they play on together is the U.S. National Team.

"My brother and I have always played together. It's always been our dream to make it to the World Cup. I look forward to him being with me for the next one."

In 2002, Beasley reached one of his top goals, making his first World Cup appearance. One of the youngest and smallest players on the field (5'7", 126 pounds), Beasley had a few obstacles to face.

"I was nervous when I waited for the first game to begin," Beasley said. "But when the whistle blew I was fine."

He dazzled on the international stage, running around defenders and making his presence felt in three games for the USA.

"I always thought I'd make the team in 2006 or 2010. I never thought I'd make it for 2002," Beasley said. "For me personally, it's shown me a light on the world's stage. It's one thing to be a fan, but another to play. And we definitely have something to be proud of."

As for his parents, they could not believe it. They traveled overseas and watched their son take the field for the USA.

Beasley celebrates his game-winning golden goal against the MetroStars.





"I've watched World Cup games for years," Henry Beasley said. "But to be in the stadium and have my son participate . . . there are no words that can express it."

Beasley made his U.S. debut on January 27th 2001, and has made 15 total appearances, with three goals (all scored in 2002). He was named U.S. Soccer Young Male Athlete of the Year for 2001 after a stellar appearance in helping the National Team qualify for the 2002 World Cup.

All of Beasley's accolades come with respect from those around him.

"He leads by his play," Brown said. "He's not a guy that you have to hound. You give him a responsibility and he handles it. His skills speak for themselves."

At the end of the day, Beasley still finds time to be a 20-year-old. He visits his childhood friends in Fort Wayne and spends time with his teammates just being him. When it comes to family, Beasley is the first to admit the importance.

"My father has been there for me since day one," Beasley said. "He's always encouraging me to be the best at whatever I do in soc-

cer and life in general. He's always there for me to talk to and to give me advice. He picks me up on the bad days. We're just one big happy family."

Henry and Joetta make it to a number of Fire home games. They support their son from the stands or from a distance.

"Despite his success, he doesn't lose focus as far as respect for where he came from and who his family is," Henry Beasley said. "We still try to be parents even though DaMarcus is on his way to being a superstar. We're always there. He knows where we sit in the stands and is always waving to us. We have a good rapport. And through it all we are a family."

With father time on his side, Beasley has a long and promising soccer future ahead of him. For now he takes it one goal at a time, but he's pleased with the path he has taken so far.

"I know I was young when I signed, but I have zero regrets," Beasley said. "I like how my life is going. I wouldn't trade it for anything. It's not every day you get to do what you love and get paid for it." ⚽

Beasley of the U.S. National Team looks on while on his stomach against the MLS All Stars.



Big Mama Takes the Big Apple

By Michael Lewis

Let's face it. No one in their right mind ever expected to witness these improbable scenes:

Mamadou Diallo wearing the red and black of the MetroStars, shaking hands with one-time nemesis Mike Petke and receiving hearty cheers from the hardened New York-New Jersey soccer supporters after scoring a goal.

Heck, Diallo sounds like he could do an "I Love New York" commercial.

"New York is a great place to play soccer," he said. "If you do well, you're going to get famous. You're going to get a lot of good things."

Not bad for someone who was, less than a year ago, public enemy No. 1 with MetroStars fans, media and several players.

What was behind the great transformation of the man nicknamed Big Mama from pariah to hero in a matter of games?

It all goes back to May 24, and the biggest trade in MLS history — when the MetroStars and New England Revolution swapped seven players.

At a bruising 6-4 and 210 pounds, Diallo might look like the ultimate attacking player, but he admitted he was anxious about coming to the MetroStars.

Animosity toward Diallo was born in 2000, when Diallo slammed into then MetroStars goalkeeper Mike Ammann, sending him to the hospital with a punctured lung and broken ribs. Petke promised retribution, displaying that famous T-shirt threatening "Revenge is Coming."

Not surprisingly, Diallo wound up in separate scuffles with Petke and defender Steve Jolley near the end of a Tampa Bay victory last season.

Diallo was supposed to be the focal point of the attack on a revamped team that many MLS observers felt could go a long way. Both the Revs and Diallo (one goal in seven games) struggled.

"Things weren't going so well for me," he said at his West New York, N.J. apartment after a recent practice. "I didn't score enough. That had never happened to me. I don't know if the team fit me. I needed to get a change."

Diallo got his wish as he was sent packing to the last team in the world he expected to go to.

"I was a little shocked because me and New York, we were always fighting," he said.

"The fans, Petke and stuff like that. It was a little bit tough when I came here."

That's because the Giants Stadium crowd, long time Diallo-haters, booed the Senegalese striker.

"I thought things were going to be so difficult for me," he said.

But he scored a goal in his MetroStars' debut, a 1-1 draw with the Kansas City Wizards.

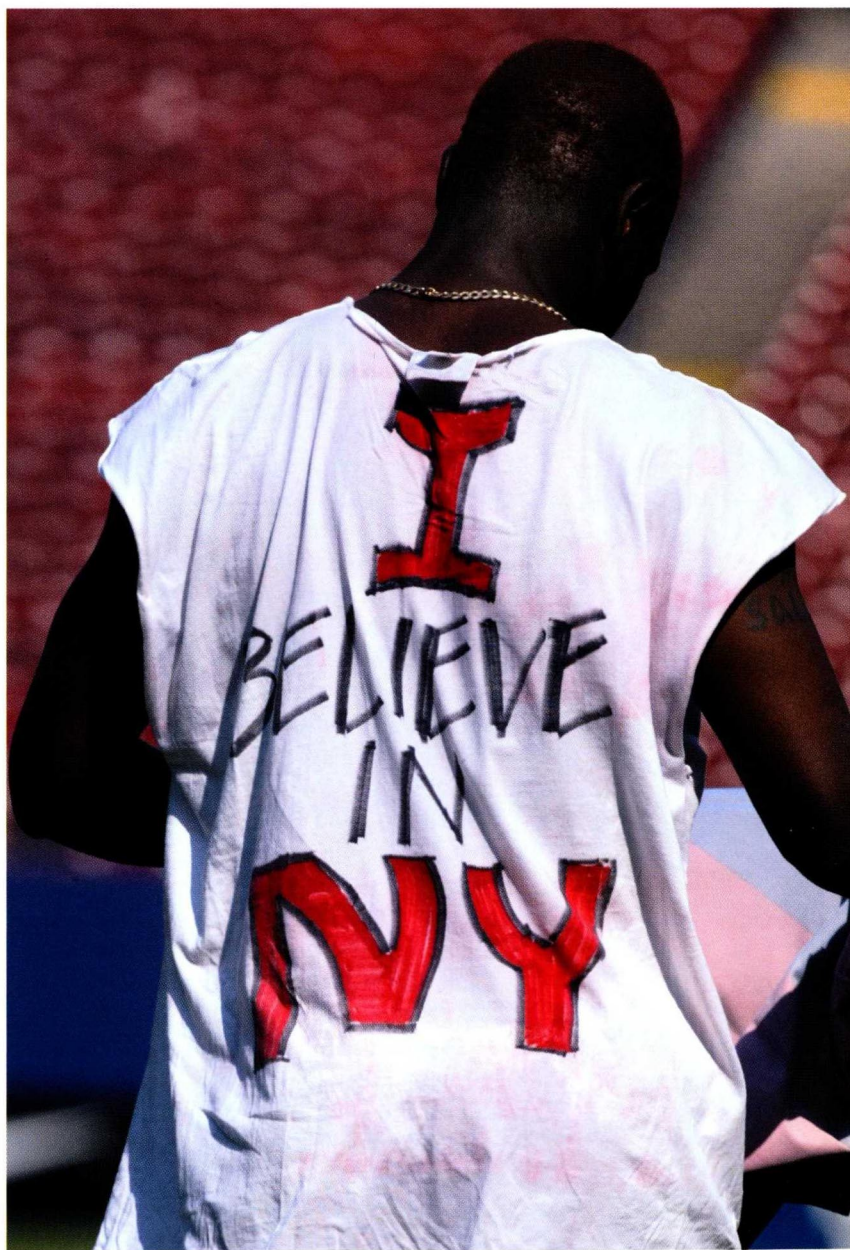
Ironically, Diallo went as far as wearing a shirt to give the fans his message:

New York believe in me

I believe in New York

Add a fabulous four-goal performance vs. the Los Angeles Galaxy and it would be difficult for the fans not to come around.

Diallo celebrated a goal against the Chicago Fire by ripping off his jersey to reveal a double-sided message to fans in his new hometown.



“Things weren’t going so well for me,” he said at his West New York, N.J. apartment after a recent practice. “I didn’t score enough. That had never happened to me. I don’t know if the team fit me. I needed to get a change.”

“I felt I had the fans in my hands,” he said.

“The fans are like that,” Diallo added. “If you start to do well, they’ll start to love you. If you do bad, you get a lot of bad things. That’s why I work hard. The fans help me a lot. It’s more motivation for me”.

“I have played [10] games and scored 11 goals. That’s not bad.”

After the Kansas City game, Petke, whose locker is only a couple of steps from Diallo’s, went out of his way to let the media know the feud was over. He shook his hand.

Diallo agreed. “Me and Petke are history,” he said. “He loves me and I love him.”

“I think it took him to score a few goals to erase those memories from the fans,” MetroStars coach Octavio Zambrano said. “It’s not the first time in sports that a player goes from a rival team to another and he actually winds up being an idol. He was persona non grata at the time. But now fans know he’s an important part of our team.”

General manager Nick Sakiewicz quickly added: “He’s our Roger Clemens.”

So far, so good. In fact, besides running at goal, Diallo added another dimension to his game — running wide down the left or right wings, taking his man or men with him, to stretch out the defense for Rodrigo Faria or Clint Mathis, when he is healthy.

“I need to get better still,” Diallo said. “I am not here just to score goals. I have to help the team 100 percent and act like a leader on the field. I am not worried about scoring goals. I am worried about getting three points.”

Zambrano hasn’t had a problem, saying

Diallo has a “work ethic second to none. Always early in the locker room. Always working hard after practice, during practice.”

“He’s just a bundle of emotions. And for anybody who is emotional, sometimes that can get the best of you, sometimes that can get the worst of you. I would rather have an emotional player than have a player without a pulse.”

Things got the worst of Diallo last season when he tried to go after an opposing fan who hurled a racial epithet at him.

“Everything you do in life, you get experience,” he said. “I’ve had some bad experiences. Fans called me [a curse word]. ‘Go back to Africa.’ Sometimes things hurt you. You have to get some control.”

Of course, if that fan called him a Big Mama, Diallo certainly wouldn’t have minded.

About that nickname. Diallo didn’t pick it up until he came to the United States, before he forged his reputation with the Tampa Bay Mutiny.

Diallo, who turned 31 on Aug. 28, went to the movies with then Mutiny goalkeeper Scott Garlick, now with the Colorado Rapids, and Dominic Kinnear, currently an assistant coach with the San Jose Earthquakes.

“They didn’t want to watch *Big Mama’s House*,” Diallo said. “I said OK, I want to watch this one. They started to call me Big Mama.

“It gave me a lot of luck.”

Indeed it did. Diallo captured the MLS scoring championship with 26 goals in 2000, but fell off to only nine goals last season.

“The next year was a little tough,” Diallo said. “I had two guys in front of me and behind me.”

Growing up in Dakar, Diallo played soccer on the streets.

“You don’t have any goals,” he said. “You put one shoe here and the other shoe here. The ground was warm. They said if the ground was warm, it was good to a player with no shoes because you’re going to have strong legs.”

There is little doubt he got some strong legs. Diallo has put together an amazing strike record for eight clubs in five countries, finding the back of the net an amazing 130 times in 222 matches. He starred for Marrakesh (Morocco), St. Gallen (Switzerland), Zeytinburu (Turkey), Lillestrom and Valergenga (Norway) before finding his way to the Mutiny in 1999.

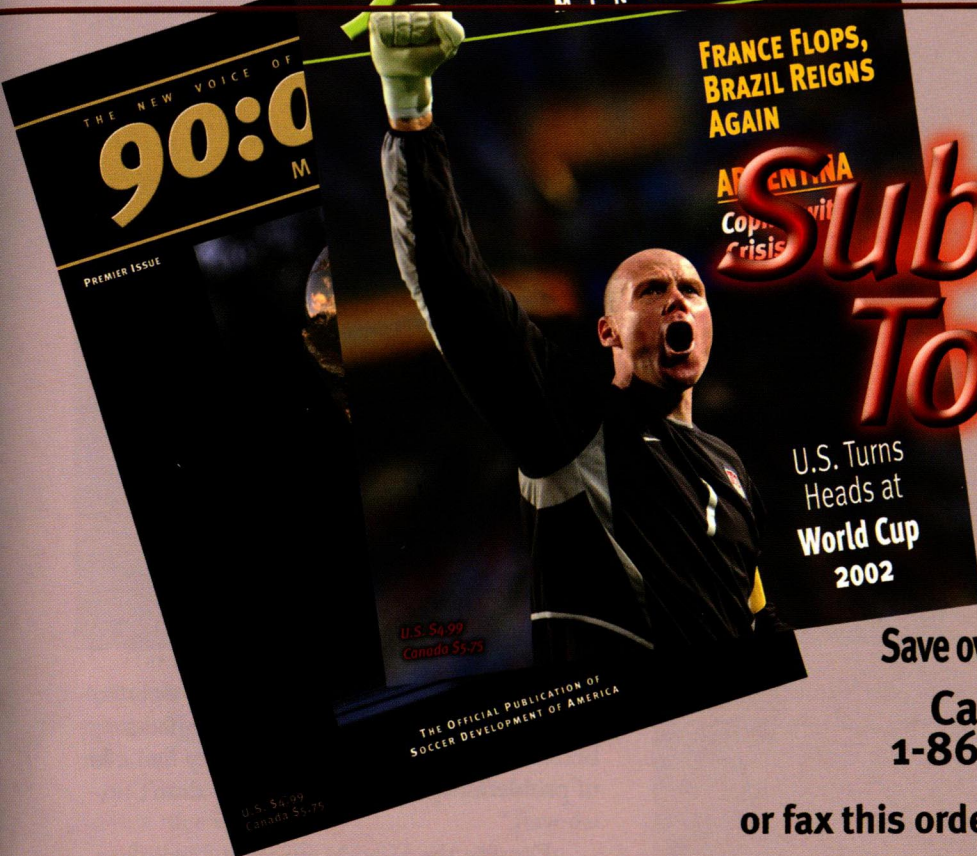
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Diallo got off to a torrid start with the MetroStars, but was hobbled late in the season by an ankle sprain.



"His production in this league overall in his career is probably the best in minutes played to goals scored," Zambrano said. "It's really remarkable. You can't argue with those numbers. He is a guy who produces, no doubt."

Diallo's favorite goal wasn't from one of those power runs or shots for which he is famous, but from a time he chipped the goalkeeper from midfield while playing for Lillestrom in the Norwegian First Division from 1997-99.

"It was the greatest goal in my career," he said with a smile.

Between all his traveling, Diallo found time to play for Senegal, connecting 21 times in 46 appearances. He played in a few World Cup qualifiers and admitted he was "very disappointed" he didn't make the final cut for Korea/Japan.

Diallo said that he "was sure if I went to the World Cup" Senegal would have had a better chance to score because "they had a lot of problems up front because they didn't finish well."

Despite the World Cup snub, Diallo hasn't forgotten his roots. He has bought a house for his mother in Dakar. "They didn't have so much stuff," he said. "I work very hard for my family."

He also established the Mamadou Diallo Soccer School in Senegal, for 30 players between 10 and 17 who learn to play the game with the proper equipment. Instead of taking money from Puma, his sponsor, Diallo has asked the company to donate equipment — shoes, jerseys and balls — to his school.

"I am very happy to do that," he said. "I don't have so much money. I hope to help the young people."

"When I played I played with a plastic ball," he said, pointing to the green one his young son Salif was throwing and kicking around the living room.

"Now they have a very good ball. they can become a better player than me. I hope they get more money than I get in my career and help their family. I always advise them that helping your family is very important."

It certainly is to Diallo, who spends a lot of time with his wife Fatou and son. His favorite activities? Listening to music, watching movies or taking a dip in the pool.

He also finds time to pray.

"Sometimes you have to believe God," he said. "I am a very good Muslim. I pray every day, telling God, 'Do what is best for me.' I believe things are going to go well for me. Sometimes as a player you want to go somewhere but it's not good for you."

That faith helped Diallo get through the trade.

"I told my wife, 'Please trust me. Don't worry about me.' She was totally worried. I'm going to do well. I'm going to score goals."

Instead of displaying his trophies, Diallo has three special mementos from his MLS career framed on his dining room and living room walls. One is his jersey from the 2000 all-star game in Columbus, in which he earned MVP honors.

The other two are photos taken at the MLS gala awards ceremony that year, one with former Tampa Bay teammate Carlos Valderrama, the other by himself.

Take a left from the entrance of his apartment front door, walk about two minutes and you will see a strikingly up-close and personal view of Manhattan.

"I love it here very much," Diallo said. "I have a nice view here."

Even home — Senegal — doesn't seem that far away these days because all he has to do is pop into his car and drive through the Lincoln Tunnel to be around his countrymen in the most cosmopolitan city in the world.

"I am in Senegal," he said of his down-town trips.

He wants to sign a three-year contract with the league after his current one expires in 2003.

"I love the U.S.," he said. "I love the fans here. It's a good life, a good country to live in."

"If they gave me a good deal, I would finish my career here. I am tired of traveling everywhere. I want to settle down some-

where with my family."

Diallo also wants to play in the next World Cup, although he will be 34 when Germany 2006 rolls around, a rather advanced age for a forward in the planet's ultimate soccer tournament.

"If I work hard . . . that kind of thing could happen and I'll go to the World Cup," he said.

A far-fetched idea?

Perhaps.

But then again, as we have learned this year, what was thought to be impossible can happen. After all, whoever thought we'd see Mamadou Diallo wear the red and black of the MetroStars and be cheered by their fans? ⚽

Although he'll be 34 in 2006, Mamadou Diallo wants to represent Senegal at the next World Cup.





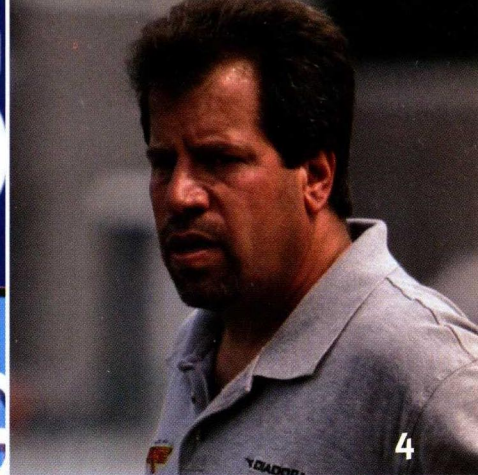
WUSA 2002 Award Winners



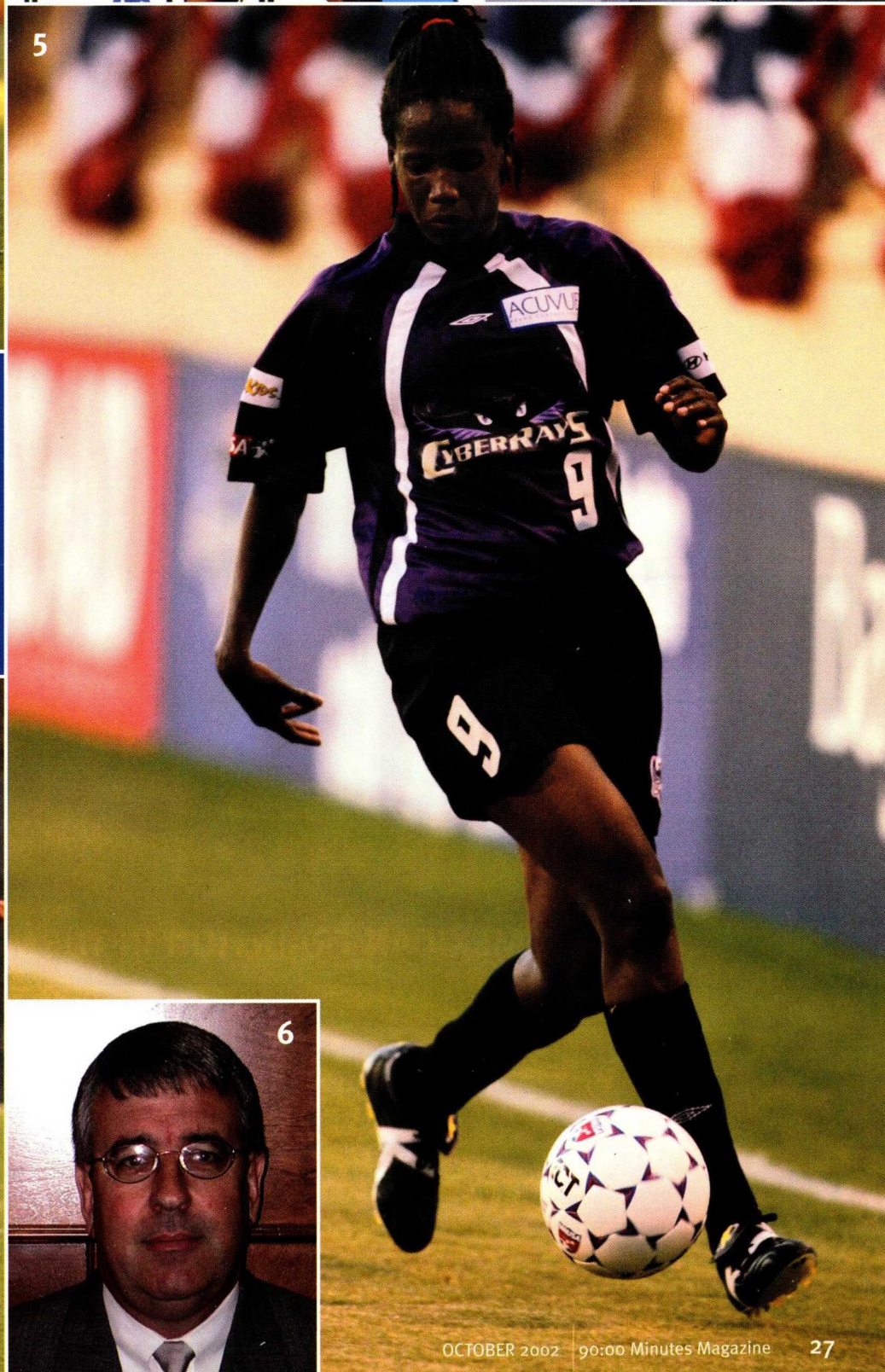
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YEAR: Marinette Pichon (Philadelphia Charge) #1
 MARINETTE PICHON (Philadelphia Charge) #1
 YEAR: Sissi (San Jose CyberRays) #2
 YEAR: Danielle Slaton (Carolina Courage) #3
 KRIKORIAN (Philadelphia Charge) #4
 (San Jose CyberRays) #5
 JOE CUMMINGS (GM, Boston Breakers) #6
 ROBY WAMBACH (Washington Freedom) #7
 KRISTIN LUCKENBILL (Carolina Courage) #8





Chivas hoped Argentine World Cup star Oscar Ruggeri (here shown hoisting the 1993 Copa America) could coach the team back to the Mexican League elite. He failed, and was fired at the end of last season.

Chivas

A MEXICAN TRADITION IN TURMOIL

By M.W. Gonzalez

Many traditionalists in Mexico will argue that if Club Chivas of Guadalajara City is not doing well, the whole Mexican Torneo is not doing well.

Founded in 1908, the perennial powerhouse became popular in the sixties after winning seven titles, including six in a row, to

become the favorite of Guadalajara's very knowledgeable and demanding fan base.

To followers, Chivas represents tradition, heart, pride and the very essence of what the Mexican soccer fan desires in a team, good *futbol*.

Chivas is the only Mexican First Division team that allows no foreign players on its roster. While rivals, such as Mexico City's Club America, load up by starting up to five internationals in their matches, the Guadalajara team has always taken pride in nationalism.

But in the last four years the team has gone through a period of poor performances in the Mexican League. Last season, the club finished in 14th place, prompting the firing of coach Oscar Ruggeri, a member of Argentina's 1986 World Cup championship team.

For the recently inaugurated Torneo de Apertura, the Guadalajara team has hired as a coach former scorer Daniel Guzman, who had success coaching in the Mexican lower divisions since his retirement.

The club is entering its last year of a contract with Promotora Guadalajara, an association of local promoters that paid a fee to take over the reigns of the club for ten years, promising to make it more visible nationally as well as internationally. The first years under the Promotora looked very promising. New players were brought in and for the first time in years Chivas looked to contend for the Mexican title.

It did not take long for success to arrive.

In 1997, under the reigns of Brazilian coach Ricardo "Tuca" Ferreti, the club won its first Mexican tournament in ten years. As the team's onfield fortunes skyrocketed and profit margin increased to an all time high, the Promotora tried to extend its contract. The club's 197 shareholders rejected the overture as they looked forward to regaining control of the team and its unlimited earning and marketing power.

After the rejection of the partners, the Promotora decided to significantly decrease their investment in the club over the remaining term of the contract, and to generate extra profit by selling some of the more popular players for premium prices to other clubs.

"They (the Promotora) felt they needed to [recoup] their investment on the team. The lease was going to run out very soon and money became the top priority for the group," said Francisco Cardenas, the current president of the shareholders.

The aftermath was turbulent and immediate. However, the club's vast fan base has endured. After seasons of losing and little promise of becoming a contender, Chivas remains the most popular team in the country.

TURNING POINT

Just before the beginning of this year's Torneo de Apertura, nutritional supplement magnate Jose Vergara approached Chivas with an elaborate plan to buy the franchise and rebuild it by signing the best available Mexican players. The millionaire also promised to build a new stadium to replace aging Estadio Jalisco, home of both Chivas and the Atlas club.

The shareholders received the extensive proposal with mixed feelings. Some saw the proposed sale as a positive step for a club with Chivas' history of incompetent management and corruption. Others, mostly long-time members of the club, were wary of Vergara's intentions to become the majority partner within the organization.

"In his proposal he states that he wants to control at least 51% of Chivas," Cardenas explained, "meaning that the final decision will always be his."

"Say he wanted to relocate the team to Mexico City [where the team is very popular], or even sell the team to somebody else. We would be helpless," the official continued.

Francisco Cardenas has become Vergara's main adversary. Cardenas bleeds Chivas's red and white colors. He, along with many of his allies, inherited his shares of the organization.



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"Chivas is not for sale. Our constitution does not allow us to sell the team. I don't know what Vergara is thinking by trying to lie to some of our shareholders," said Cardenas in a recent interview with Mexican media giant Televisa.

Vergara, widely known as a crafty businessman who loves a good challenge, has been in active communication with the club, but stays away from the local media. In only ten years, his company, Omnilife, has become the leader in Mexico's growing nutritional supplements market. In his quest to win over the Chivas shareholders, he has promised two and a half million pesos to each for their shares of the club, plus lifetime membership as minority partners.

Through documents presented to the club, Vergara also stated his desire to change the status of the franchise from a social entity to a corporation.

The proposed deal has triggered a division between groups of partners who need the money, others who want to see a dominating team and finally, the more traditionalist groups that do not want to see any change in administration.

Many, an estimated 80 of 197 shareholders, already have accepted the idea and sold their shares. Vergara has said that he needs at least 51% of the total shares, and if he fails to accumulate that percentage he will return the shares to the original owners.

Aurelio Martinez is the former president of the Promotora Guadalajara, along with his father, Clodomiro Martinez. They are convinced that the franchise needs new leadership to become a powerhouse again.

"The current management does not have many plans for the future of the franchise. It is imperative that we invest time and money in our future, in the future of all the fans that want to see Chivas dominate the league," stated the younger Martinez.

"The club needs to maintain its policy of only allowing Mexican born players to play for the club. There are many kids out there that would love to come up through our youth reserve. One of our biggest problems is that we are not actively scouting and those kids go to other teams like, local rival Atlas, something that needs to stop."

The controversy extends well beyond the club officials. Jalisco Governor Francisco Ramirez Acuña, a self-professed Chivas follower, has come out in support of the current

administration. "Chivas is an institution that belongs to all Mexicans," the politician declared. "The franchise cannot be treated like currency, this is not something that we can trade or sell to any millionaire that wants to buy it."

STILL AN ATTRACTION

Regardless of their play, Chivas is still an attraction anywhere the team travels. A few weeks before the Mexican league started, the club played a friendly with fellow Mexican team Pumas at Cal State Fullerton's Titan Stadium. Despite the Wednesday night date and a charge of \$30 per person, fans were turned away from the sold-out stadium after long trips just to see their team play.

In the U.S., bringing Chivas to a town with a significant Mexican population means guaranteed revenue for the promoters. "Some of these fans that come out to the stadium never attend a concert or an MLS game, but they will be there for a Chivas game, no matter the cost," said Damian Secore, soccer writer for Riverside County's *Press Enterprise*.

In Mexico, Televisa just paid \$52 million for television rights to Guadalajara's home games for the next five years, an ironic number compared with the \$40 million dollars the Mexican National Team received from the same network for a four-year contract.

In the United States, the Anschutz Entertainment Group has a marketing deal with Chivas that is said to be worth millions of dollars for the club.

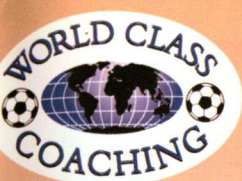
It is estimated that the franchise is worth somewhere around \$300 million, a price tag that places the Mexican team in the same economic bracket with some franchises in Major League Baseball and the National Basketball Association.

CAUGHT IN THE CROSSFIRE

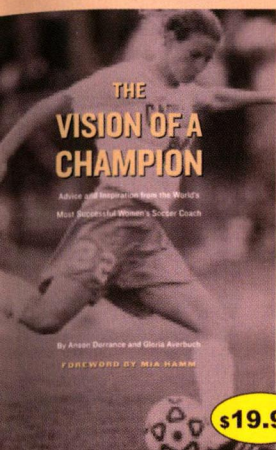
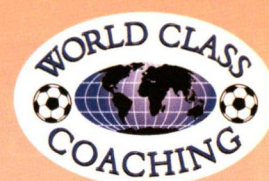
Amid swirling rumors of the possible sale, Chivas players struggle with uncertainty and prefer to stick to playing soccer.

Starting goalie Oswaldo Sanchez states that it is not his place to give his opinion, since he is just another employee with the organization. "I'll talk about soccer. Don't ask me about shares or business transactions. That is why I have a financial advisor," said the 'keeper, who is also a member of the Mexican National Team.

As is, the team has enough to worry about on the field. Their play is at times

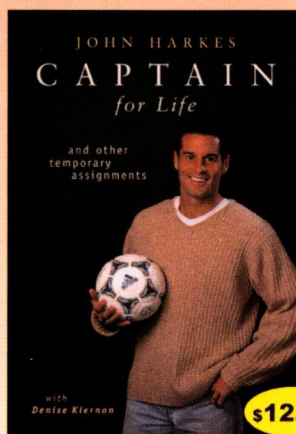


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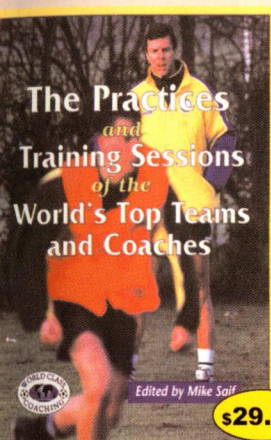
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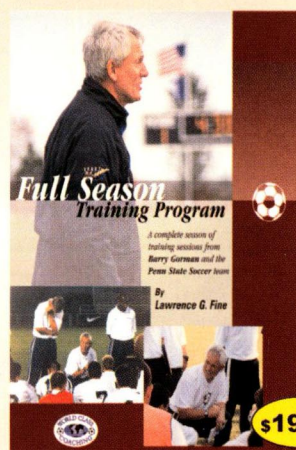
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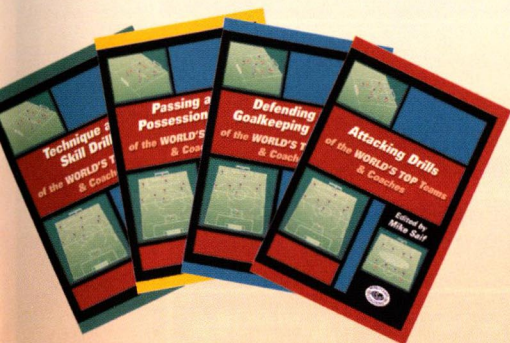
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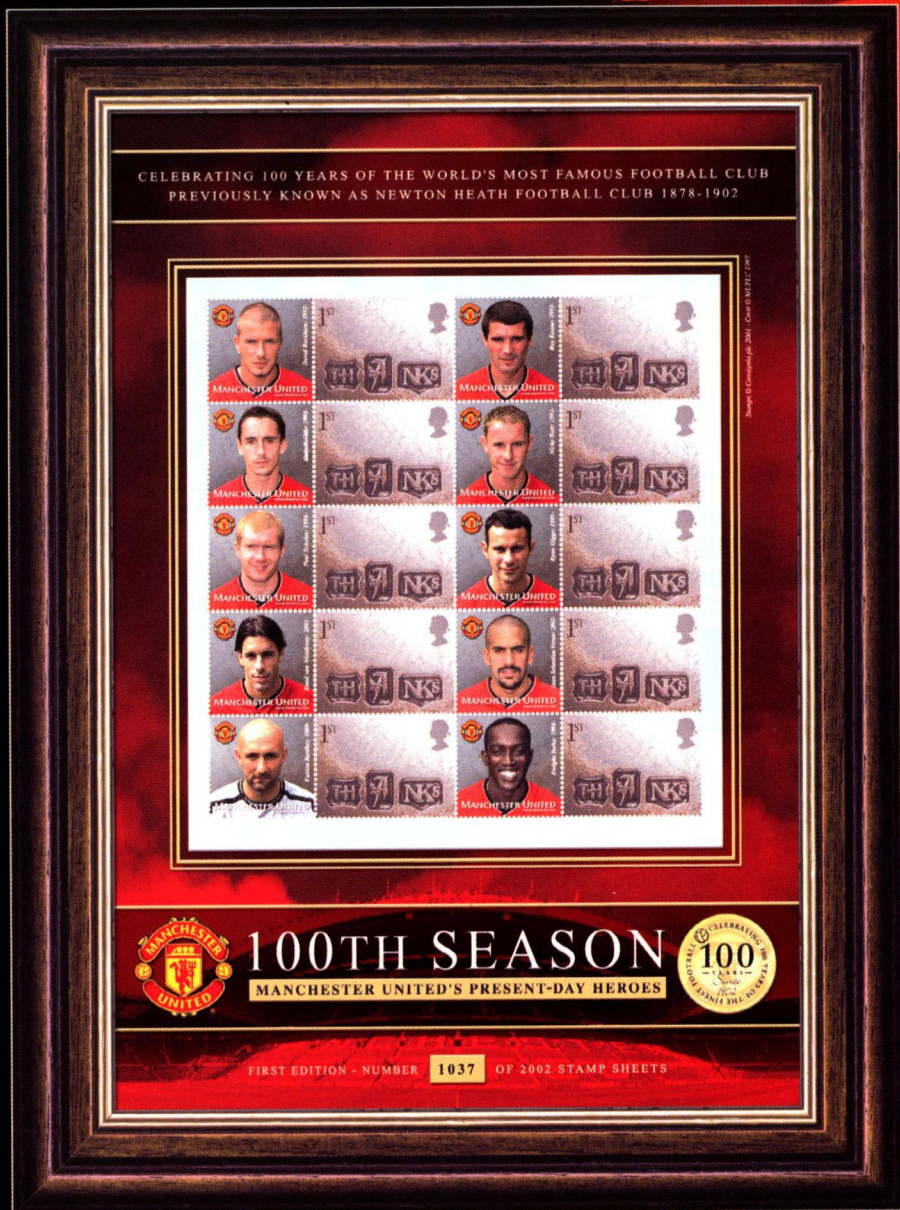
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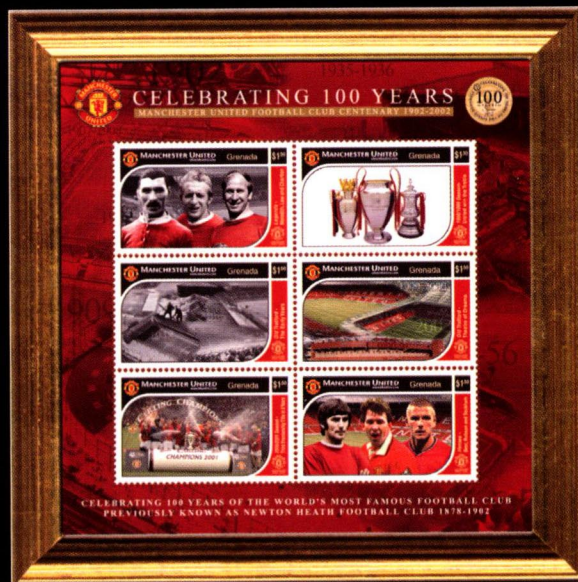
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erratic and lacks chemistry within the mid-field. Many already have predicted that current coach Daniel Guzman will be among the first coaches to be fired in the Torneo de Apertura.

While no Chivas player has publicly stated an opinion on the possible transaction, many close observers say the players wouldn't dislike the idea of a new owner willing to dish out bigger contracts. "Mexican soccer is very attractive to many foreigners because of how well it pays. That's the same reason why Mexican players do not emigrate to Europe. But Chivas has had recent problems paying their players and offering their stars substantial contracts," said Guadalupe Trewartha, sports editor for *El Informador*, one of the city's most influential newspapers.

Problems indeed.

Goalkeeper Sanchez held out in contract negotiations until the deadline for player registration. In the end, Mexico City club Necaxa bought Sanchez's contract and loaned him to Chivas.

The idea of Vergara taking over and building a new practice facility and state of the art stadium motivates many players who have close ties to some of the shareholders.

LEGAL WARS

The legality of whether Vergara, even as a majority owner, can change the status of Chivas from a social entity to a more business oriented corporation has lawyers from both groups researching the bylaws of the Club Guadalajara constitution. Many experts caught in the middle of the dispute have stated that the case could go to litigation and spend an undetermined amount of time in the slow Mexican court system.

"If the shareholders fear that Vergara will have sufficient shares to take over as majority owner, they have the option to drag this case in court. Many businesses and organizations practice this procedure for as long as they want, without anything the other party can do about it," said Trewartha.

Many members of the Mexican media expect this legal fight to drag out for a long time. Both parties are very eager to prove the other wrong, and armies of lawyers have been hired to settle the dispute.

Alberto Agnessi, one of the lead lawyers litigating on Vergara's behalf, dismissed recent comments by the Chivas group claiming that sale of a social entity would violate Mexican law. "I'll be the first one to admit that the

To followers, Chivas represents tradition, heart, pride and the very essence of what the Mexican soccer fan desires in a team, good *futbol*.

process is very slow," Agnessi acknowledged, "but if Jose Vergara were to take over Chivas and his desire was to change its status, it could be done.

"[The current owners] will say anything to keep control of Chivas. I have researched the law and it is not prohibited. In Mexico that makes it legal," stated the lawyer.

In contrast, Arturo Zamora, who represents the current social entity of Chivas, says Vergara faces long odds against having his way with the team. "For a social entity to make the change to a corporation type, a vote has to take place and there has to be a 100% agreement. If just one member votes against the proposition, the transformation cannot occur," Zamora claimed.

While the rival groups publicly contradict each other and legal briefs are prepared, Chivas remains one of the worst teams in the current tournament.

But, at least for Chivas fan and Los Angeles resident Porfirio Castro, the future looks bright. "Regardless of whether there is a sale or not in the organization, the fans are going to be the real winners in this matter. If Vergara takes over the team, I see positive. If the team stays as a social entity, the current shareholders have acquired new appreciation for what they have in their hands and that will certainly help to return the team back to its glory days." ⚽





If You Build it, *Will They Come?*

MLS SEES STADIUMS AS KEY TO SUCCESS

By Frank Dell'Apa

In 1922, a Fall River, Mass., promoter named Samuel Mark built a stadium exclusively for soccer in North Tiverton, just over the Rhode Island border. Historians depict Mark's Stadium as a utilitarian wooden structure with capacity for about 15,500 spectators, but it must have been considered state of the art for the sport since it was home for the Fall River Marksmen, the Cosmos of their day.

The Marksmen consistently drew good crowds, winning five American Soccer League championships before the league folded, victim of internecine disputes and, even more devastating, the Great Depression. Soccer crowds rivaled baseball crowds in New England in the '20s, and soccer was emerging as the most important professional sport in the country from September to May. The Northeast's top industrialists backed the ASL and the future seemed bright. Europe's best players were attracted by the ASL's wages and the opportunity to escape political oppression. Nearly the entire Hakoah Vienna team transferred to New York two years after winning the Austrian championship and a decade before Hitler annexed their soccer league

along with the rest of the country.

Soccer in the '20s was every bit a working man's sport. The factories and mills sponsored dozens of teams. In Fall River, the loom operators and winders from Britain and Portugal were both the players and spectators. They labored 12-hour shifts from Monday to Saturday. If Sam Mark had built his stadium in Massachusetts, it would have been empty, since blue laws prohibited charging admission for Sunday events.

Mark and his fellow ASL owners were decades ahead of their time. They showed that quality professional soccer could be a successful enterprise in the U.S., but only if major internal conflicts could be resolved and economic downturns avoided. The ASL did not have the safety net of Major League Baseball's exemption from the Sherman Anti-Trust Act, so it disappeared despite having stadia and developing a regular following.

Where Mark's Stadium stood is now an empty field in between the decrepit Bourne Mill and the Ponta Delgada club. There is a retirement home where J&P Coats built its Lonsdale Avenue Ground and won the 1923 ASL title. A plaque affixed to the covered

bleachers at Moravian College is the only evidence of Bethlehem Steel's five-time U.S. Open Cup championship team.

Harrison FC finished fourth in the 1922 ASL standings, led by U.S. national team stars Davie Brown, a 5-foot-3-inch forward from Newark who would score 52 goals in a season for New York five years later, when the ASL was reaching its prime; John (Rabbit) Heminsley; and goalkeeper James Douglas, who would start for the U.S. semifinalists in the first World Cup in 1930. Memories of that team have been obliterated along with its home field.

METROSTARS MAKE STADIUM CASE

Today, the MetroStars are attempting to reclaim Harrison's home. The situation is more complex than in the days of Harrison FC, though. The stadium must be part of a greater plan, which includes housing, office space, and retail business.

The land is covered by abandoned warehouses and weeds. It would seem any coherent development plan would be welcome.

But, though very few people are aware that Harrison FC is buried on this site, along with the toxic residue of long-gone industry, the fact is that there are many soccer graveyards, and this works against the sport.

Things are seldom easy for soccer in a country where one of its most popular sports is widely considered to be unpopular. Baseball, once the most popular sport but now becoming a cultural anachronism, recently built minor league stadia in Brooklyn and Staten Island with grants and public funds. Surveys might indicate soccer's popularity rivals baseball, but things do not go as smoothly when Major League Soccer seeks stadia of similar cost.

"We are proposing spending \$70-\$80 million for a project which will spark \$1 billion in investment," MetroStars general manager Nick Sakiewicz said. "And we are proposing it for a decrepit environment which is not producing anything for the town or the state."

"Why this is so critical is that, if we succeed in what we are doing here, it sets a feasible model for other cities to emulate."

The modern standard for soccer-specific stadia is in Columbus, Ohio, where Lamar Hunt invested \$28 million in a home for the Columbus Crew. Another such structure is being constructed by Anschutz Entertainment Group, which is spending \$200 million for the Los Angeles Galaxy sta-

dium in Carson, Calif. The Home Depot Center will emphasize soccer, including a training facility for the U.S. national team, and also have a velodrome.

MLS officials contend "if you build it they will come." More than \$500 million of league money — most provided by Anschutz — will be going into new stadia, should Chicago and Dallas also come through.

However, though the capital commitment is reasonable compared to other sporting venues, there are questions about the league's priorities. What would the effect be of committing a good part of that \$500 million construction budget to the transfer market? You could attract a Roberto Baggio, Henri Camara, Hasan Sas, Carlos Tenorio, plus the entire soccer-playing population of some Brazilian states.

"I would rather spend those types of dollars on building new stadiums than I would on international players," MLS deputy commissioner Ivan Gazidis said. "We feel the quality of the league is improving every year and the quality of American players is improving. I don't think there is a shortcut. You have to position yourself over the long-term and continue to develop players and present the right arenas so our fans can experience the game in a great atmosphere."

"Our focus is on developing players and building stadiums, not necessarily in that order. These will be the cathedrals in which we play our sport, with a great atmosphere and priority for our game that will leave so many lasting benefits. These will essentially be fixtures which will be around for decades to come."

But wouldn't investing several hundred million in player acquisitions and salaries increase interest by fans, sponsors, and television, generating more revenue?

"We are proposing spending \$70-\$80 million for a project which will spark \$1 billion in investment," MetroStars general manager Nick Sakiewicz said.



MLS Deputy Commissioner Ivan Gazidis says the league's priority is "developing players," like D.C. United's Bobby Convey, "and building stadiums, not necessarily in that order."

"It's not a comparison I can make," Gazidis said. "If I spend \$50 million on a player or on 10 players, every dollar would be out the door and the only way to recoup that money is through ticket sales. With a stadium, you immediately recoup that investment in an understandable and predictable way. Dipping into the transfer market is very speculative and the benefits are dubious."

"If you told me I could spend an extra \$5 million (per team) on players I might look at that," Gazidis continued, "but I would still question it. I did not see players at the World Cup who are significantly more exciting than the ones we are developing. And I see the next group being even better, with Santino Quaranta, Bobby Convey, Joselito Vaca, Eddie Johnson, Kyle Martino. I see better players coming through." The U.S. is far from becoming a production line for talent, though. With economies struggling in Argentina and Brazil, there are literally hundreds of potential bargains awaiting. And there could be more as European clubs struggle to compensate for lost television revenue.

PRODUCT VS PACKAGING

The North American Soccer League was the spiritual successor to the ASL. The NASL was ambitious, zealously promoted. The NASL imported some of Europe's best players, who were attracted by the NASL's wages and the opportunity to escape the sometimes oppressive atmosphere of the Old World. Huge crowds arrived in Minnesota, New York, Tampa. The Cosmos, for a time, outdrew the Yankees.

The professional sports world was expanding in the 1970s, discretionary income and leisure time were increasing. Telecasts of the World Cup were very popular in the U.S., so why not a soccer league? The NASL's idea was that if you provide a quality product they will come. And they were right, at least until cross-ownership issues and overspending led to ruin. Stadia were retrofitted for soccer, pitcher's mounds leveled, NFL lines blotted out. The game was played on AstroTurf, a nightmare not only for knee ligaments but also for the aesthetics of the game. Forget about concession and parking revenue. Sometimes, the only dates available were Monday nights in May. Fans then had to brave an obstacle course of often hostile or indifferent stadium personnel.

But it must have been worth the hassle. On the field were European Footballers of the Year, World Cup stars from Argentina and Brazil, African Balon D'Or recipients, future Pichichi scoring leaders, unknown talent from the Caribbean, Asia's best.

Giants Stadium, Spartan Stadium, the Silverdome seemed like soccer homes. But that notion became as ephemeral as the teams. Would not a sense of permanence have been better?

"If you are renting a fancy apartment you can afford to dress it up better than if you buy a house," said Francisco Marcos, among the prime movers of the NASL. "But if you buy the house you can do anything you want for a long time to come. Of course, if you can't afford either one you are left out in the rain sleeping in a tent."

Despite the recent demise of some of their companies, MLS investors apparently have enough capital to buy the house and furnish it with top-notch players. But their soccer tastes are apparently more Bauhaus than Gaudi. There is little interest in exotic decoration or anything other than domestic design.

"Now, at least we can say we have in fact got a base in terms of the American player," Marcos said. "And we need to make sure those guys have a house that is going to be there for a long time so they can be reasonably sure that if they make soccer their career, they've got something that they can touch and believe will be around."

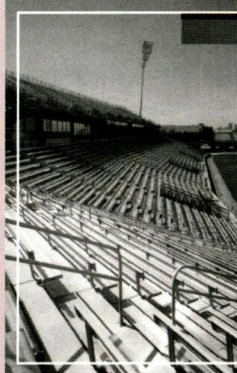
This is a balancing act, though, because it presumes interest will increase without adding the Marco Etcheverrys, Hristo Stoichkovs and Carlos Valderramas who have made the MLS interesting. And if the league disappears, the stadia will eventually degenerate into emptiness, a plaque marking their grave, if they are lucky.

But the league has made a value judgment and its mindset appears to be on promoting home-grown players to the point of xenophobia. Accomplished imports such as Luis Hernandez and Lothar Matthaus are being portrayed as failures, though even if this characterization is accepted it is more a condemnation of whoever recruited them to the MLS. Instead of Luis Hernandez, the MLS might have purchased Rafa Marquez, Paco Palencia, Gerardo Torrado and a young prospect such as El Rambo Sosa. You don't attract Latinos by patronizing them, by turning a perfectly good player such as Hernandez into the token Mexican.

"In a perfect world it makes perfect sense to build stadia," said Steve Gans, a Boston-based attorney and former successful executive with the Baltimore Blast. "But the notion that you can't have a good atmosphere without going to a 22,000-seat stadium built on the English model has been proven wrong. In the NASL, the peak average attendance was 15,000 but you had great atmospheres at a lot of stadia. You go to Foxboro now and there

are 15-20,000 people in a big stadium but there is great atmosphere. There is this notion that they are committing to multi-million dollar stadiums while ignoring the style of play. They are pursuing the idea of new stadium projects to distraction, and they will never get the proud ethnics to come until they concentrate on quality.

"The World Cup was a joyous aberration and the U.S. would not have done what it did without the Europe-based players. My barometer for the league is that during the NASL days when people had doubts about soccer I would tell them to sit down and watch a game, and 90 percent of the time they would see a good game. With the MLS, unless it is a playoff game or the top teams are playing, there is less than a 50 percent chance it is going to be a good game. What made the NASL interesting is the foreign players provided the underpinnings, and even if they were journeymen they were better than the American players who provide the underpinnings now. Then, there might not have been enough American players but now there are too many American players. There are a lot of English Second Division players who would love to come here. The Portland Timbers proved those players can become really popular if they are inculcated into the



Pictured:
Columbus Crew and
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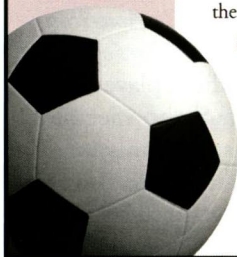
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In the NASL's boom times, the Cosmos and other teams regularly filled NFL size stadiums.

culture, and they might be better than an unpolished American. It's not true in every case, but you have to make the quality of the product better. They need to increase the minimum salary — \$24,000 is not enough to live in New York — because that will also improve the perception of the league. Stadiums are not the panacea. It's not build it and they will come — you have to have a good product out there.”

Until recently, soccer has been outside the mainstream, unsheltered from the elements. Since Sam Mark's time, few people seriously considered building a home for the sport until the MLS came along.

1922 WOULD BE A VERY GOOD YEAR FOR SOCCER.

“There was a very favorable treasurer's report,” according to Colin Jose's *American Soccer League 1921-31/The Golden Years of American Soccer*. Mark's Stadium played host to 19 games, averaged some 8,000 spectators and charged about 75 cents for admission. But the seeds for the ASI's demise were also being sown. That year, Congress granted baseball

owners an antitrust exemption, which would allow them to endure the coming economic disaster, their stadia essentially preserved and protected by an economic version of cryogenics.

Eight years later, the U.S. would finish third in the World Cup in Uruguay. But as the mills closed and business executives jumped out of windows, Sam Mark moved the Marksmen out of Mark's Stadium to New York. Less than 100 miles to the north of Fall River, Fenway Park, home of the Boston Red Sox, would attract only 182,150 fans, an average of 2,165 per game, for the 1932 season.

Baseball would survive and, eventually, move to Los Angeles, to be followed by basketball and ice hockey.

“Walter O'Malley and Jack Kent Cooke found real estate no one thought would be worth much,” said Peter Wilt, general manager of the Chicago Fire. “But by virtue of developing it, they generated further development.”

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The Master of Her Fate

**WUSA ROOKIE OF THE YEAR ABBY WAMBACH
TAKES CONTROL OF HER GAME AND HER LIFE**

Although the afternoon may be extended by the occasional promotional appearance or film session, the members of the Washington Freedom can call an end to the tough part of their day when head coach Jim Gabarra dismisses them from practice. A shower, perhaps some time with the team trainer or a quick bite to eat inside the club's RFK Stadium offices, and the athletes' exodus from Lot 5 begins. Such is the life of a professional - sweat, strive and struggle before lunch and the rest of the day is yours.

WUSA Rookie of the Year Abby Wambach heads home alone. She lives in a one-bedroom basement apartment in Arlington, Va., a few miles across the Potomac from the District of Columbia. There she is the master of her fate. There could be errands to run, video games to conquer or naps to take. She calls it "chilling with yourself."

Wambach has been a revelation for the Freedom this year, tallying 10 goals and nine assists for a resurgent team that rode her imposing 5-foot-10, 170-pound frame to the WUSA's Founders Cup final. Yet she is one of only three Washington players who can command her own living space. The others reside in group homes, with roommates, boyfriends or host families.

The loners are Mia Hamm, who as one of the world's most famous sportswomen can afford some decent accommodations; Ann

Cook, a 27-year-old midfielder known for a maturity beyond her years; and Wambach, who pays her \$900 monthly rent from her relatively meager rookie salary. A native of Rochester, N.Y., Wambach is the youngest of seven children and is on her own for the first time. She is 22 years old.

"I think I got to the point where I was really sick of getting everything paid for by my parents," Wambach said. "To be on the other side, this is a great life. I needed to feel I did something on my own and by myself. I got the place on my own, bought all the furniture on my own. My parents helped me get started, took me shopping, then I was set."

"The toughest thing was just getting used to doing my own thing, not having to tell anyone first. At first it was a little lonely but you find a sense of freedom and independence with it. I think once everything is said and done, I just think there's a point in a person's life where you have to stop being a kid."

Abby Wambach stopped being a kid in the spring of 2001. Until that point she had rarely demanded much from herself. Whether it was relying on her family for sustenance or her natural athletic ability for success on the soccer field, Wambach was laid back and on cruise control. She was good enough to star at the University of Florida, one of women's soccer's elite programs, yet she failed to excel in the classroom or in the eyes of U.S. Soccer staff coaches, who saw so

much unrealized potential. She scored 65 goals in her first three years in Gainesville. She won a national championship. Yet she was uninspired.

"I think the whole homework and going to class thing definitely wasn't my claim to fame," said Wambach, who possesses the sort of pragmatic insight and logical clarity that belies her disdain for compulsory booklearning. "Everybody has their issues in college and that was mine. What can you say? I would rather just play soccer than go to school. That was my mentality. I would do things to get by, not to the liking of my parents. You've got to be a brat somehow. That just wasn't for me."

To some extent, she went through the motions on the field as well. Wambach and Florida coach Becky Burleigh occasionally disagreed on tactics, which the latter tailored to a side that was more athletic than technical. Wambach continued to be a team player and did her best to involve her fellow Gators, but there clearly was something missing from the mind and heart of an athlete searching for a new challenge.

"The whole college scene in general was not necessarily a great environment for Abby," Burleigh said. "I don't think she ever really enjoyed the whole college experience in terms of how it impacted her soccer career... She provided good leadership. Let me say she was a positive. Our program would not be where it is today without her. But I think what she needed was players to chase instead of being chased."

Wambach found her motivation and her inspiration during that spring of 2001 at an under-21 national team camp in Chula Vista, Calif. Santa Clara coach Jerry Smith, newly hired by April Heinrichs to prepare the juniors for that summer's Nordic Cup tournament, was putting his pool through its paces alongside the Women's United Soccer Association teams gathered for their inaugural preseason tournament. Wambach, a member of the under-16 team in 1996, was a step slow. He let her know it in a meeting.

"She was a prototypical target forward, everything you could want in a target-type player," Smith said. "But if she played in a system where she had to cover ground or beat people with speed, you were playing into her weaknesses... I said 'I like your game. I like you. But at the Nordic Cup I need players who can play 90 minutes and I need players who are going to help us as much on the

defensive side as the offensive side.' I said to her 'It's such a shame that I won't be able to take you to the Nordic Cup.'

"She looked at me surprised."

Nothing surprises like brutal honesty. For Wambach, it was a revelation.

"Any coach is going to try to get to know their players off the field and to figure them out, figure out what motivates them. Becky was frustrated with me because she never could figure me out," Wambach said. "What people need to know is when you want to figure me out, I won't let you. I'm stubborn like that. I think [the meeting with Smith] was where it all changed for me. It was player to coach, but it was more person to person, people who saw the game of soccer similarly. He didn't try to psychologize me. He told me straight up the way it was."

"You have to come to a point where you choose to do it or not."

The bar was set and Wambach, always the star but now in danger of being left behind, met the challenge. She returned to Florida and committed herself to becoming a well-rounded, 90-minute player. She swore off junk food and started working with a personal trainer. She found ways to challenge herself at practice, even if that required inventing her own penalties for play that failed to meet her standards. By the time the Nordic Cup rolled around four months later

Santa Clara coach Terry Smith helped Wambach add speed to her offensive arsenal. Here she chases down Philadelphia's Erica Iverson.



Wambach was as fit as she had ever been. Smith took her to Norway, where she scored three goals in four games. Wambach's potential had been unleashed.

"I found this new love for the game that made me want to play for myself and nobody else," she said. "So many times in the past coaches got me to play for them and that's the opposite of the way it should be."

Wambach's roll continued through her senior season, when she scored an astonishing 31 goals and led the Gators to the final four. She took her spring semester off — she said she intends to return to Gainesville eventually and finish her degree in leisure management — to concentrate on maintaining her fitness for last February's WUSA draft. There she was selected by Gabarra, who was desperate to find a reliable striker and who was willing to wait until Wambach's game rounded into professional form.

No wait was required. Intoxicated by her own improvement and the myriad ways she could contribute on the field, Wambach confidently seized control of her rookie season and made an immediate impact. She had three goals and three assists in her first five games and kept the Freedom within striking distance of the playoffs through Hamm's early-season absence.

Abby Wambach roughed up WUSA defenders, like Philadelphia's Heather Mitts, for 10 goals on her way to the league's Rookie of the Year award.



Success bred more confidence, and despite a midseason lull Wambach embraced her new life, her teammates, her fans and the endless possibilities. Surely the player who now so traumatizes opponents with a surprising grace on the ball, a playmaker's vision and a tireless commitment to full-field defending was a far cry from the limited and unmotivated athlete who forced Smith's hand one year before. Soon she had impressed April Heinrichs, who brought Wambach up for friendlies with Finland (where she scored the first goal of a 3-0 victory) and Norway, and saw in the young forward a significant change in her approach to the game. "What we've seen in Abby over the past six years is her commitment and focus waiver," Heinrichs said. "It's part of the maturing process. This is where someone like Jerry comes in. You pick a player who has talent like her and you hang on and you hold on and you believe in them. We just hope that switch stays on. Her psychological dimension is very strong. Her self esteem is very good... She's not afraid. She has the appropriate nervousness about her but she's eager. She's challenged. A sign of maturity is when it's internalized. Younger players rely too much on external forces."

Those external prospects are tantalizing for sure. A Founders Cup championship. A spot on the national team for this fall's Women's World Cup qualifiers. Stardom. Wambach admitted to "drooling from the mouth," at the thought. But such carrots are no longer the end for a player and woman who has made a commitment to a complete and well-rounded approach to her game and her life. She loves going to practice. She will continue to work hard, challenge herself and stay fit. She will make it to the grocery store regularly and pay her rent on time. She will balance her professional life with her personal life. She will adhere to her own standard of excellence.

"Now it's my career and I'm very stubborn. I'll never go back to the way it was," Wambach said. "I would never tell anyone I did it the wrong way. I think if I have to back and ask my parents for money I've got a big problem. The thing is, I know that what I've built and what I've grown to become in the past year of my life. I have this love of this game and I want to do better. That's the internal motivation April is talking about. You have to do it for yourself on a daily basis. The best athletes do it." 🏃‍♀️



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WUSA's Courage Cap a Cinderella Season

By Charles Cuttone

Carolina Courage players Katie Barnes (left) and Brooke O'Hanley raise the Founder's Cup trophy after the team's 3-2 championship win over the Washington Freedom.

The second edition of the WUSA Founders Cup might well have been called Cinderella's ball, with last year's two worst teams competing for the title. Only the Carolina Courage experienced a fairy tale finish, however, edging the Washington Freedom 3-2 at Atlanta's Herndon Stadium.

The contest, decided by game MVP Birgit Prinz's artful 58th-minute steal from Washington's Jen Grubb and subsequent game-winning goal, provided a crowd-pleasing finish to the league's sophomore season.

FOUNDER'S CUP RECAP

Hege Riise gave the Courage a 20th minute lead, finishing a near field-length scoring play. After a through ball from midfield, Staci Burt sent a cross from the right wing to Danielle Fotopoulos at the top of the

box. Fotopoulos sent a header to Riise, who easily finished past Washington goalkeeper Siri Mullinix.

Washington, whose season was punctuated by a series of comeback victories, equalized in the 31st minute on an own goal by Fotopoulos. A long free kick into the box caromed off WUSA Rookie of the Year Abby Wambach and Fotopoulos, then into the net.

"That's our target area," said Freedom coach Jim Gabarra of where the ball was played. "The only thing you can do wrong is not serve it there."

Carolina all but put the game away in the opening minutes of the second half. Fotopoulos redeemed herself by scoring on the rebound of a Prinz shot that was stopped by Mullinix.

"I know when Birgit shoots her shot is going someplace," said Fotopoulos, "so I just followed it."

In the 58th minute, Prinz made the score 3-1, stripping the ball from Grubb and slotting the ball left as Mullinix dove in the opposite direction.

Despite trailing by two, the Freedom did not let up, especially with "super sub" Mia Hamm in the game for the second half.

Hamm, who led the Freedom to a season-ending ten-game unbeaten streak and a five-game winning streak despite playing only 506 regular season minutes, almost single-handedly changed the character of the championship game. Running onto a through ball from midfield near the top of the box, Hamm made a few touches to elude her defender before cutting in toward the goal and sending a laser of a shot to the far post to put the Freedom back in the game.

After Hamm's goal, the game was all Freedom, but despite several great chances, the equalizer never came. WUSA goalkeeper Kristin Luckenbill stopped Bai Jie's 67th-minute header, and Hamm forced another save before Skylar Little came up with a pair of great chances in the 76th and 77th minutes. Luckenbill stopped Little's first shot, and the second went wide.

WUSA TEAM-BY-TEAM

ATLANTA BEAT

After making it to the inaugural Founders Cup in 2001, the Beat were favorites to win it all in 2002, but those expectations were cut short by the eventual champions Carolina Courage in a 2-1 overtime semifinal.

Canadian Charmaine Hooper led the Beat in scoring (11g, 3a, 25pts) for the second year in a row, and Japanese national team standout Homare Sawa more than doubled her 2001 goal production, with seven. U.S. National Teamer Cindy Parlow was a bit of a disappointment with only five goals and four assists, but the big forward was also one of the league's most fouled players, getting hit by opponents 50 times.

U.S. standout Briana Scurry was among the league's top goalkeepers, finishing third in goals against average, fourth in winning percentage and third in wins.

BOSTON BREAKERS

Perhaps the biggest disappointment of the 2002 WUSA season, the Breakers finished out of the running for a playoff spot despite going undefeated at home. The inability to make the postseason for the second straight year cost coach Jay Hoffman his job.

Even with a 14-18-10 record, there were some bright spots in the Breakers season. International superstar Kristine Lilly was again the team's leader. Her 8 goals and 13 assists for 29 points tied her with Maren Meinert (78, 15a, 29 pts) for the team lead. Lilly also dished up four game-winning assists, and ended the season with a league record ten-game point scoring streak.

Despite their poor showing on the field, the Breakers proved to be one of the league's model franchises. General Manager Joe Cummings was named WUSA Executive of the Year, and the team received the league's Community Service Award.

Carolina playmaker Hege Riise tees up a shot against Washington's Ann Cook.



CAROLINA COURAGE

The Courage completed one of the most stunning turnarounds in pro sports history, going from having the worst record in the WUSA in 2001 to winning both the regular season championship (12-5-4) and the Founders Cup title (3-2 over Washington).

The team accomplished the turnaround with a tremendous offensive line of Danielle Fotopoulos (11g, 10a, 32 pts), the first player in the WUSA to hit double digits in goals and assists; Birgit Prinz (12g, 8a 32pts), who finished second in the league in scoring despite playing only 14 games; and Hege Riise, whose creative playmaking accounted for 13 assists, tied for second in the WUSA. The great offense was supported by a stellar defense anchored by WUSA Defender of the Year Danielle Slaton and Goalkeeper of the Year Kristin Luckenbill.

NEW YORK POWER

The league's cellar dwellers managed to win only three games, and tie one, while

losing a league record 17. The Power fired Head Coach Pat Farmer after 12 games, replacing him with assistant Coach Charlie Ducilli, but the change had little effect and the Power were the first team eliminated from playoff contention. Tiffeny Milbrett (10g, 8a, 28pts) and Emily Janss (8g, 1a, 17pts) were two of New York's few bright spots.

PHILADELPHIA CHARGE

The Charge finished the regular season with the league's second best record (1-4-6, 39pts), but were eliminated in the semifinals for the second time, this time by the Washington Freedom, 3-2. Head Coach Mark Krikorian was named the league's coach of the year, and French newcomer Marinette Pichon collected a number of accolades, including Most Valuable Player and Offensive Player of the Year. Pichon finished in a tie for fourth in league scoring, with 14 goals and 1 assist for 29 points, almost single handedly carrying the Charge offense after workhorse English striker Kelly Smith went down with a season-ending knee injury on June 1. Goalkeeper Melissa Moore had the best goals-against average in the league, 1.00, as well as the highest winning percentage (70.00), while posting 11 wins.

SAN DIEGO SPIRIT

A slow start cost Head Coach Carlos Juarez his job, but General Manager Kevin Crow could not turn his club's fortunes around after taking over the coaching duties on an interim basis. The Spirit missed the playoffs for the second straight year, with a 5-11-5 record. Offensively, Shannon MacMillan (5g, 8a 18pts) and Julie Foudy (5g, 4a, 14pts) shone for the Spirit.

SAN JOSE CYBERRAYS

The defending champions missed making the playoffs by five points, despite a tremendous offensive showing by Brazilian stars Katia and Sissi. In addition to scoring the goal of the year, Katia led the league in scoring with 15 goals and 5 assists for 35 points, and was the top goal producer as well. Sissi was one of the league's top playmakers with 9 assists, including three on game winning goals, and was honored for her off-field activities with the league's Humanitarian of the Year award. Tisha Venturini Hoch also chipped in with 6 goals and 1 assist.

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WASHINGTON FREEDOM

The Freedom almost pulled off a miracle, going from one of the league's worst teams in 2001 to a near champion in 2002, only to lose the Founders Cup to Carolina 3-2. Not surprisingly, the Freedom's biggest catalyst was Mia Hamm. What was surprising was the way Hamm turned the team around. After missing the early part of the season following

knee surgery, Hamm became the Freedom's super sub, often coming into the game at halftime and performing heroics either by setting up or scoring game winning goals. In only 506 minutes played, Hamm scored eight times, a rate of one goal per 63 minutes. The Freedom won all six games in which Hamm scored a goal during the regular season. In addition to Hamm, Rookie of the Year Abby Wambach was a major cog in the team's turnaround (see story on page 40). Wambach was tied for fourth among the league's leading scorers (10g, 9a, 19pts) and proved to be a lethal combination with Hamm on the Freedom front line. ⚽

2002 WUSA AWARD WINNERS

Most Valuable Player: Marinette Pichon
(Philadelphia Charge)

Rookie of the Year: Abby Wambach
(Washington Freedom)

Offensive Player of the Year: Marinette Pichon
(Philadelphia Charge)

Defensive Player of the Year: Danielle Slaton
(Carolina Courage)

Goalkeeper of the Year: Kristin Luckenbill
(Carolina Courage)

Coach of the Year: Mark Krikorian
(Philadelphia Charge)

Goal of the Year: Katia
(San Jose CyberRays)

Humanitarian of the Year: Sissi
(San Jose CyberRays)

Executive of the Year: Joe Cummings
(GM, Boston Breakers)

ALL-WUSA FIRST TEAM

Forwards: Marinette Pichon (Philadelphia),
Katia (San Jose), Birgit Prinz (Carolina)

Midfielders: Kristine Lilly (Boston), Hege Riise
(Carolina), Sissi (San Jose), Homare Sawa
(Atlanta)

Defenders: Danielle Slaton (Carolina),
Jennifer Tietjen (Philadelphia), Erica Iverson
(Philadelphia)

Goalkeeper: Kristin Luckenbill (Carolina)

ALL-WUSA SECOND TEAM

Forwards: Tiffeny Milbrett (New York),
Abby Wambach (Washington),
Danielle Fotopoulos (Carolina)

Midfielders: Maren Meinert (Boston), Mia Hamm
(Washington), Zhao Lihong (Philadelphia),
Julie Foudy (San Diego)

Defenders: Jennifer Grubb (Washington),
Jenny Benson (Philadelphia), Brandi Chastain
(San Jose CyberRays)

Goalkeeper: Briana Scurry (Atlanta)

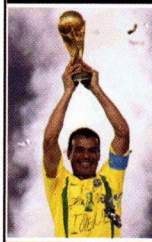


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