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Baggio
& Buddhism

EPL
Season Review

The Legend
of Breslau-Elf

Sudden Death



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June 2012 Edition

Ludo Ergo Sum



GOALDEN TIMES

DECLARATION

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FIRST WHISTLE

Sixteen teams, eight venues, 31 matches and finally on July 1 we had one winner at the Stadion NSK Olimpiyskiy, Kiev. La Roja saved their best for the last to win what was one of the most one-sided final in any international tournament ever. As the world witnessed Europe's top teams battling it out over the span of 24 days, our correspondents from across the globe got busy penning down stories of Euro 2012. Hope you have enjoyed reading them as much as we did in bringing them to you.

While the Euro-phoria persisted and the red-and-yellow fans continued to revel in the joy, Goalden Times took a moment to step back and savour the flavour....to present the June 2012 issue, with a vibrant new look. Download our PDF to bask in this whole new experience.

The transfer market is already in motion and will keep gaining momentum before the domestic football leagues in Europe start in August and September. Follow our **Scouting Network** to know which youngsters are sure to hit the headlines in the coming months. After all, most of our Euro stars did shine in Poland and Ukraine.

In transfer news from India, the Indian captain Sunil Chhetri has joined the Sporting Clube de Portugal B in the Liga Orangina. The club is planning to do some work in Indian football with the All India Football Federation (AIFF). We shall bring you more news from Indian football this season along with football stories from all possible corners of the planet.

Corinthians, the Brazilian club, won their first Copa Libertadores beating the six-time champion Boca Juniors from Argentina 3-1 in aggregate. We congratulate them and hope for an intriguing final against Chelsea in the 2012 Club World Cup final.

We also congratulate Ashvin Kumar for winning the National Award for the film '**Inshallah, Football**'. Goalden Times takes immense inspiration from the Argentinian-Brazilian couple, Juan and Prisca, who came to Srinagar, India to set up a football academy to engage the Kashmiri youth in the art form we call football. We share the vision of Juan and Prisca that football can and will make a better society with a stronger sense of friendship and fraternity.

Follow football, follow us!

BRAIN KICK

THE FOOTBALL QUIZ BY GOALDEN TIMES

An account of Goalden Times' first offline event by our staff reporter

Goalden Times, our own voluntary non-profit online magazine which is free for all to read and has contributions by writers from Italy, Trinidad, England and Senegal apart from the group

The quiz was a three-member team affair and 26 teams had registered for it. These teams undertook a rigorous written preliminary round which covered a wide variety of questions on the game ranging from standard



Participants looking focussed at the screen for the prelim questions

of home-grown writers, organised their first live event Brain Kick - a football quiz - in Kolkata, India on June 3, 2012. The event turned out to be a great success with over 150 people gathering at the YMCA (Chowringhee Branch).

Participants looking focussed at the screen for the prelim questions

football fundamentals to facts of cinema and literature on the game. Eight teams made it to the final with the scores ranging from 13.5 to 20.5 out of 30. A question in the prelims was a visual of a pea pod which had to be connected to a current active footballer with a single word. Answer was Chicharito, the nickname of Javier Hernandez which means little pea. The teams had very imaginative names like Dirty Rotten Scoundrels, Invic-

tus and 3-Idiots.

The finals had 74 questions - 10 written and 64 others,

1950 World Cup finals where they did not play eventually? Answer was 'nobody' as Burma, Philippines and



The winners with the guest of honour and the quiz masters

a mix of visual and video questions. The best sports quizzers of the city had turned up and they cracked the trickiest of questions, much to the amazement of the audience and the quizmasters. Dirty Rotten Scoundrels (DRS) were running away with the quiz in the first half but Quiz Lovers of Kolkata caught up with them and took the lead in the second half. However, DRS prevailed and won the quiz quite comfortably in the end. 3-Idiots and Invictus tied for the third position but the former won it on the tie-break. The winning team was made up of three persons from different walks of life- a senior civil servant, a software engineer and a student.

The winners with the guest of honour and the quiz masters

A typical question from the final: Which team did India beat to qualify for the

Indonesia, the opponents in the group, had all withdrawn as they were ravaged by war. The questions set by Kinshuk Biswas and Indranath Mukherjee of team Goalden Times covered all aspects of the game including Indian football.

Famous Indian footballer of yesteryears, Surajit Sengupta was the guest of honour at the event. While giving away the prizes to the top three teams, Sengupta said he was very impressed with the standard of questions and the quizzing. He wished that there could be more such events in the city to promote the game. We shall try to make it an annual event in the city and perhaps take it to other cities as well.

To commemorate our first live event, Goalden Times launched its own football jerseys. In case you'd like to own one of our jerseys do get in touch with us. Your encouragement and support will help us keep going and bring you more interesting football stories.



Goalden Times' jersey launch

Follow football, follow us at goaldentimes.org

The legend of Breslau-Elf

Germany 1936–41

Forgotten Trinkets Vol: 2



In the second episode of this series, Subhodip Basu follows the fortunes of the German national team through the late 30s

The Bloom in Defeat

Football in Germany, though immensely popular from the turn of the 20th century, took time to reach world-class levels. This was not helped by the virtual ostracising of Germany from international sport post World War I. It was also not amongst Adolf Hitler's favourite sporting disciplines, allegedly due to its English origins and professional stature. The prevailing German zeitgeist was more aligned to participative and amateur disciplines. Sport was considered a tool for physical development and character building, and Gymnastics sat at the centre of this line of thinking, widely promoted by the Nazi hierarchy as well.

ment. He understood and lived just one thing, football. Thus began the most attractive phase in German football {till the (Franz) Beckenbauer and (Günter) Netzer inspired 1972 team} under Sepp, who in later years became an embodiment of the German 'functional' style of football. What's more, it was made possible by a team which was almost entirely crafted by Nerz himself.

Making of the Legend

On the afternoon of May 16, 1937, Germany took on a decent Denmark team in Breslau (now Wroclow in Poland). After an opening goal by Ernst Lehner, a stunning volley, Otto Siffling scored five in 32 minutes, a sort of



Breslau Elf before the Denmark Match, 16.05.1937

To make things worse, Germany suffered a defeat to lowly Norway in the Berlin Olympics, with Hitler watching. This was unpardonable, especially in an event which was used as a propaganda tool. Hence, off went Otto Nerz, the German trainer, to be replaced by his protégé Sepp Herberger. Fortunately, along with Nerz, German football's obsession with English style of play also came to a happy end and a football philosophy inspired by a bunch of footballers with highly left wing backgrounds from Gelsenkirchen took shape in a right wing Third Reich.

Sepp, of course, was a man with no real political align-

record in a match between two established footballing nations. Left wing Adolf Urban scored the seventh and sentimental favourite Fritz Szepan rounded off the tally. The legend

of Breslau-Elf (Breslau eleven) was born. The team went on to win 10 of 11 matches, the most successful run by any European team against continental opposition in that decade. It was too good to last.

What made the Breslau-Elf different? For one, they completely abandoned the traditional English obsession of German teams and adopted a more fluid and

skill-intensive strategy. The strategy itself was a mesh of the Austro/ Danubian passing game, fondly named as 'Schieberl' and the 'Kreisel' or 'Spinning Top' tactics by Schalke 04. Schalke 04 was the strongest German club at the time, winning five titles in 7 years. Their key inspiration was the duo of Fritz Szepan and Ernest Kuzorra. Herberger built his forward line around the Schalke 04 players, with three of them – Rudolf Gellesch, Urban and Szepan playing together in most matches. It also gave a fresh lease of life to Szepan himself, who was known to underperform internationally. Kuzorra, the genius, was sadly considered too old. However, trouble was on the horizon.

The Destruction in Victory

In early 1938, Germany annexed Austria under Fuhrer's 'recommended' policy of Anschluss. Part of the package was a visible display of solidarity with annexed territories. Hence, Herberger was 'advised' that the national

team should have five or six Austrians with the balance being German. It was a strategy doomed for disaster.

The omens were borne out in April '38, in the last 'official' game between Germany and Austria. After a boring first half, where the players were allegedly asked not to score, the Austrians broke free with goals by Karl Sesta and Matthias Sindelar. Sindelar, no lover of anything German, and arguably the greatest player of his generation, followed up his goal with a victory jig in front of the Nazi box for good measure. Herberger was harbouring no illusions.

However, this was still Nazi Germany and he was just the Geschäftsführer (manager), not the Führer himself. He duly obliged in the opening game of the 1938 World Cup against Switzerland. Although the first game was drawn, there was inevitability about the ultimate result. The Austrians would not pass the Germans and perhaps even rejoiced the loss in private. The Germans, long tired of the big headedness of the Austrians, and

Paul Janes, Germany's best defender before Beckenbauer



perhaps even peeved that their high performing team had been broken up, would be no angels either. So Switzerland, the perfect opponent, both politically, due to their neutral stance, and in football

terms, as the Germans hardly lost to them, ended up eliminating them in replay. This remains the worst German performance in a World Cup.

The Players

Like all great teams, they had both class and depth in each position. Hans Jakob who typically kept goal, was a worthy successor to Fritz Herkenrath. Jakob kept 11 clean sheets in his 38 games, not a mean feat in those days, with Germany having just eight

defeats in those games. Rudolfg Raftl was an able ally.

In defence, there was Paul Janes, Germany's best defender before Beckenbauer, and perhaps the best full-back in his era. Unlike his contemporaries, he was an outstanding dead ball shooter who frequently scored. Janes formed a very effective partnership with Reinhold Munzenburg, who was equally at ease at both full-back and centre-half and was one of the best athletes amongst footballers in his era.

At half-back, were the Schweinfurt twins, Andreas Kupfer and Albin Kitzinger. Kupfer was the more elegant of the two while latter was a box-to-box dynamo. Between them was Ludwig Goldbrunner, the first Bayern superstar. Rudi Gramlich, their captain in 1936, was a skilful half-back who perhaps bore the brunt of the Olympic disaster. All defenders and half-backs were frequently chosen in representative teams for Europe, though due to politics of the time, they rarely participated.

For most of the 30s, their best forward was Ernst Lehner, extremely fast, modern winger of his time with a great goal-scoring record. He was often referred to as the best amateur player in Europe. On the left side there was equally prolific Adolf Urban, of Schalke 04. Urban was soon to be drafted and died a lonely death like many of his comrades, in Russia.

The classy Kuzorra missed out on the Breslau-Elf stretch of 10 wins but was picked off and on till '38 while continuing to shine for Schalke 04. He was still there to take Schalke 04 to their customary national title even in 1940. His brother-in-law Fritz Szepan, was arguably Germany's greatest player before the war and one of the global greats of all time. Szepan was versatile enough to play more than 20 internationals as a centre-half. He was at his best, however, at inside-left. The other inside was another Schalke 04 man, Gellesch.

The team had a surplus of classy strikers. There was Otto Siffling of Mannheim, a mobile inside-forward who ab-

horred physical play. Tragically he died within two years of his 5-goal performance, of pleurisy, when just 27. Josef Gauchel was slightly older and a more classical no. 9 than Siffling but with an equally good

strike rate. There was also, Karl Hohmann, the third high-scoring forward who perhaps lost his place to Siffling. Edmund Conen, their top-scorer in 1934 World Cup, played off and on till 1940.

Until Better Days

Despite the crushing defeat in 1938, Herberger thankfully remained at the helm. Also, with Austrian clubs getting more success in the unified national championships, the tensions between the two sets of players were beginning to reduce to a more manageable level. So, skilful Austrians like inside Wilhelm Hahnemann, winger Hans Pesser, full-back Sesta and most notably

the legendary Franz Binder (of the 1000-goal fame) began to form the core of the German team. However, Germany mostly played weaker football nations as the established powers were beginning to shun sporting contact with Germany. So the strength of the team remained untested post the '38 World Cup.

As the new decade kicked in, the trickle of football players to the army turned to a torrent. Herberger, a football man through and through, tried his best to keep a tab of his stars and by some accounts even succeeded in influencing the authorities to keep some from the deadly eastern front. Within this mayhem, two fresh high-scoring inside-forwards debuted and managed to play a clutch of games before being drafted. One, a classy thinking ballplayer from an aristocratic family

in Dresden, called Helmut Schoen, who scored 16 goals in seventeen games. The other, a proletarian from Kaiserslautern, called **Fritz Walter**. Between them and Herberger himself, they introduced such an era of consistent German dominance that the Breslau-Elf soon faded as a forgotten relic in German conscience.

“The other, a proletarian from Kaiserslautern, called Fritz Walter. Between them and Herberger himself, they introduced such an era of consistent German dominance that the Breslau-Elf soon faded as a forgotten relic in German conscience.”

VINTAGE VIGNETTES

UNLUCKIEST MAN IN EURO HISTORY

Vintage Vignettes is about tracing the antecedents of an event from the past. This special Euro season, we look back to find the unluckiest man in the history of Euros and the referee who decided his fate

Who is the unluckiest man in the history of Euro? There can be a few contenders like Michael Ballack who has been the runner-up in all major competitions in the world and European football and can aptly be termed as the Nearly Man. However, one man who stands out is Albert Alekseyevich Shesternyov. This Russian footballer was one of the all-time greats of the famous Soviet Union team of the 60s. Played his entire career for CSKA Moscow, he was one of the early exponents of the libero position. He was courted by many European clubs but chose to remain with the club he started playing for. Shesternyov captained the Soviet national team 62 times in his 90 career appearances. Then why was he unlucky? We have to turn back the clock to the 1968 UEFA European Championships to know the reason.

The format of the tournament was that the host nation would only host four matches - the semi-finals, final and the third place match. The quarter-final knock-out matches were played on a home and away basis with the



Albert Shesternyov

aggregate score determining the winner. The hosts Italy were rebuilding after the disaster of their 1966 World Cup defeat to North Korea and their subsequent elimination in the group stage. They had overcome the Bulgarians 4-3 in aggregate by winning 2-0 at home after

losing 3-2 away. The Soviets entered the tournament as one of the favourites having reached the finals in the previous two editions. They also had lost the first match 2-0 away but then qualified after an impressive 3-0 win at Moscow to clinch the tie 3-2. The stage was set for the semi-final at the San Paolo stadium at Naples between the two sides on June 5.

The stadium was packed with nearly 70,000 people creating an amazing atmosphere. Italians were on the back-foot early with Gianni Rivera getting injured. This tournament had no substitutes so they were effectively playing with 10 men for the rest of the game. The Azzurri immediately went to their defensive shell and the rest of the match was a boring grind of robust midfields of both sides cancelling out each other. The Soviets had slightly better possession which was understandable with their numerical advantage but created very little. After 120 minutes of such bland football the referee Kurt Tschenscher blew the final whistle. As per rules, the match would be decided on a toss of the coin.



Tschenscher led the captains Giancinto Facchetti and Shesternyov to the dressing rooms for the toss. The other players and the crowd remained with bated breath

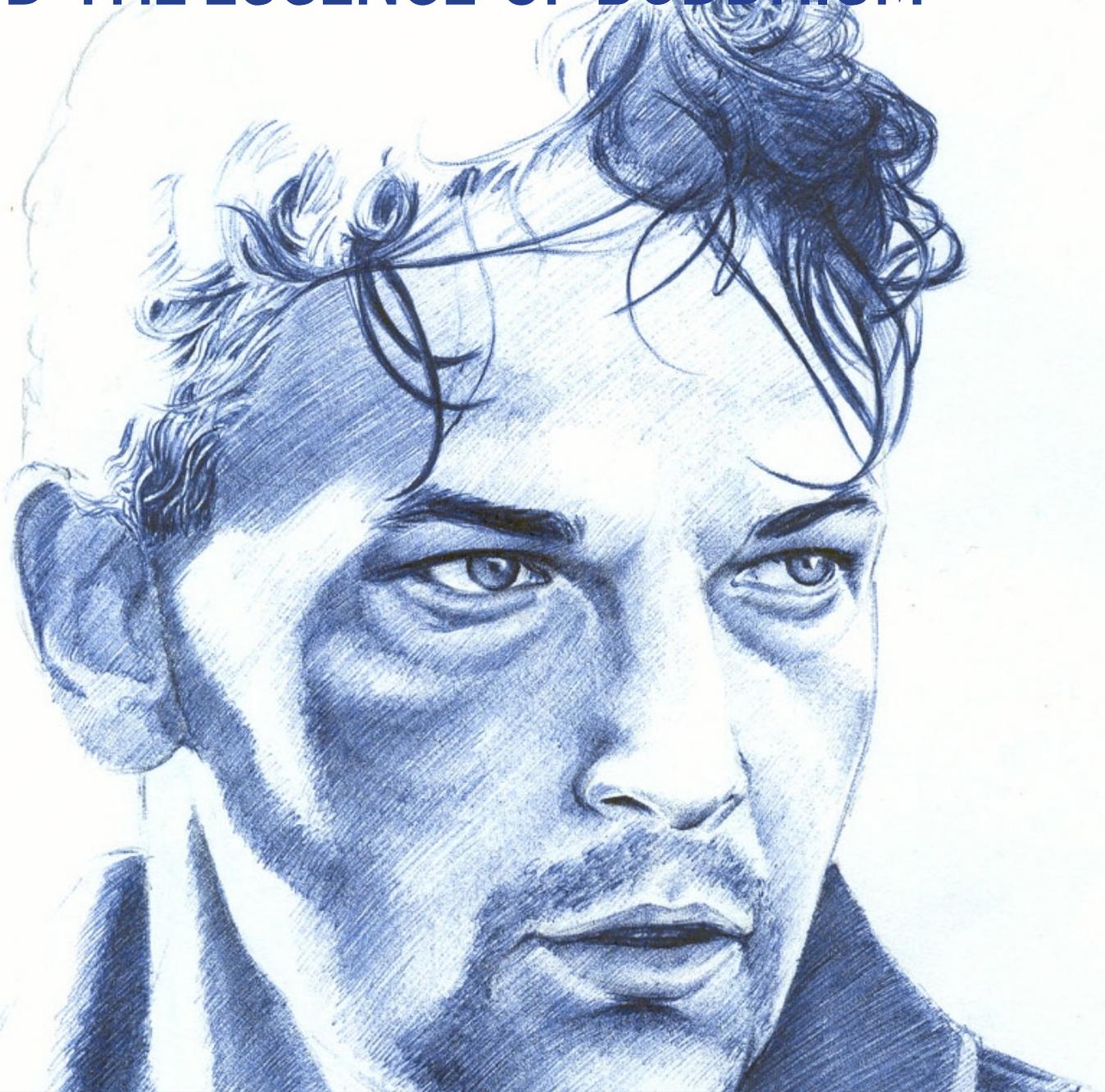
for the result of the toss. Shesternyov called and did so wrongly and Facchetti ran out to the delight of the crowd and the Italian team. Shesternyov was disappointed and with his team had to swallow the bitter pill of defeat. It was after this match FIFA started thinking about the idea of a tie-breaker with penalty kicks. The Soviet team would have been the first team to play four consecutive Euro finals had Shesternyov won that toss as the team reached the final in 1972 as well. But sheer bad luck robbed them of that glory. Shesternyov was made to ponder the rest of his life - what if he had called it correctly!

Footnote

Shesternyov and the referee Tschenscher created history again in the 1970 World Cup opening match featuring Soviet Union and the hosts Mexico. The former became the first player to be substituted and the latter was the referee in that match as well.

Roberto Baggio

AND THE ESSENCE OF BUDDHISM



There are a few footballers who transcend the boundaries of victory and defeat with the sheer joy of their skill. Il Divin Codino was one of them. Deepanjan Deb pays his homage

Date: July 17, 1994

Place: Rosebowl Stadium, Pasadena, California, USA

Occasion: World Cup Final

Competing Teams: Brazil vs Italy

At Stake: Being the first team to win the most coveted trophy in World football four times

At the heart of two of the world's finest teams were two players who had almost single-handedly been responsible for both their teams reaching the final; Romario for

spirational performance from their talismanic striker, the then incumbent World Player of the Year was the reason Italy progressed to the finals beating some magnificent teams on the way. And as fate would have promised, the world's biggest tournament was rather harshly to be decided by a penalty shootout - for the first time in the history of the tournament - as 120 minutes of football could not separate the two best teams on the planet. With Brazil leading 3-2 after four shots each, it was left to Baggio to force a Brazilian player to take the fifth shot and win the World Cup for Brazil. And then came the moment: the world's most celebrated footballer shot the ball into the sky which handed Brazil the coveted World Cup for the fourth time in their glorious history. The man who was the reason for Italy playing the



Brazil and Roberto Baggio for Italy. In Romario's case he was blessed with a magical Brazilian team that had flair and effectiveness spread all over their squad, not pretty much different from the Brazilian teams of the past. Contrariwise, without Baggio, Italy pretty much would have been knocked out early in the tournament. An in-

World Cup final suddenly became "the player who cost Italy the World Cup final". It just took a kick to change a life.....the life of Roberto Baggio was never the same after that eternal shot at the Rosebowl.

The story of Roberto Baggio is not the story of a failed

penalty kick but is the story of perhaps Italy's most celebrated footballer, a global superstar whose rise and fall from grace can echo the behavioural pattern of a sinusoidal curve. He was one of the finest attacking players to have come out of Italy and remains the only Italian player ever to score in three different World Cups. Yet amidst all the hoopla surrounding his increasing fan base, Baggio managed to retain a halo of calmness which was attributed to his Buddhist background. The only Buddhist in a team of Catholics, Baggio practised Buddhism with so much devotion that it earned him his nickname The Divine Ponytail.

Born to a family of eight brothers, Baggio showed passion for the beautiful game very early in his childhood. Having progressed through the Italian junior national team, Baggio was developing into a world class talent at Fiorentina. However, hit by injury in 1987, his outlook towards life changed when a touch of fate introduced him to the world of Buddhism. One fine morning, he went to his friend Morrichio and told him of his intentions to turn a Buddhist. Against vehement protests from his religiously catholic family, Baggio became a practising Buddhist and was never the same person again. As Buddhism entails calmness into his life, Baggio became involved in the deeper inner meanings of life which his family members slowly started to understand and more importantly, accept. Meditation became a part and parcel of his life and despite his hectic playing schedules, Baggio never forgot to meditate.

The lives of many great men and women like Steven Seagal, Richard Gere, Tiger Woods and Tina Turner among many other global celebrities have been influenced by the Buddhist philosophy which is why we see an increasing number of people turning to meditation to seek divine peace - something that always seems to be missing from the perils of a fast-paced modern life. The essence of Buddhism is a path that alters an in-

dividual's thinking process to experience reality silently: deep into the subconscious mind one becomes aware of the inner meaning of life, the ground reality of life where experience and the experienced share the same sound of music - that of harmony and peace. Roberto Baggio's love and devotion towards Buddhism became stronger with time. Buddhism taught him life and its inner meaning: "Life is a struggle and its truths are not always pleasant". His attitude towards pain and struggle changed. Buddhism increased his level of tolerance and he began to take up challenges rather than run away from them. At one point of time, injuries became a synchronized series of progression in his life and he contemplated giving up football, but his Buddhist inner-self told him to not accept failure, rather realise that life is a challenge. This gave him the strength to face sterner challenges as he became the star of Juventus and the future of Italian football.

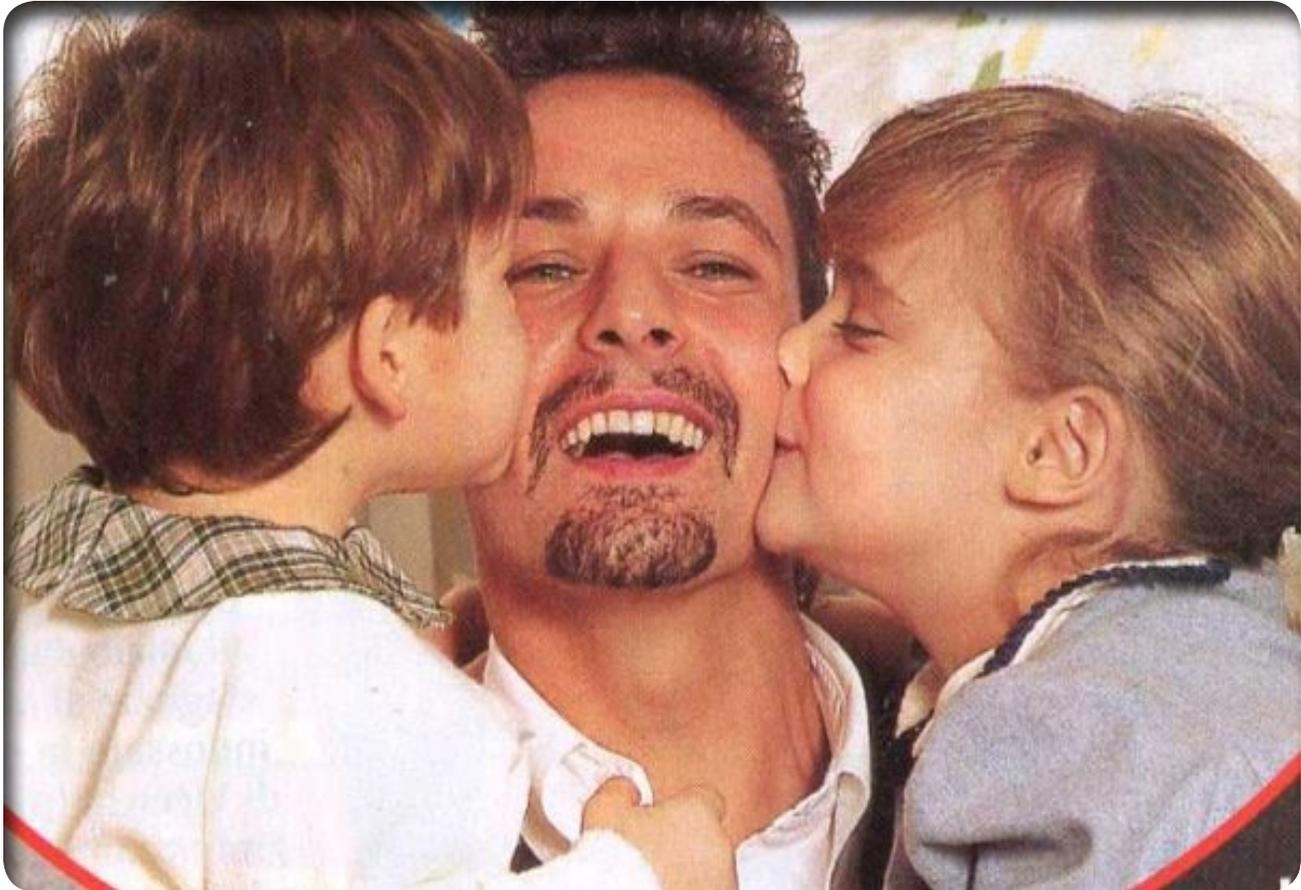
Since his high profile transfer to Juventus from Fiorentina post the 1990 World Cup, Baggio went on to become the toast of world football winning the Scudetto and the UEFA Cup and being named the World Player of the Year in 1993. But the world turned upside down for the mercurial genius with one penalty kick that virtually transformed him to an anti-hero from a superhero. There were even talks that if he would have been a Christian he would not have missed that penalty. Baggio took



all that in his stride silently and he later said that his Buddhist values had made him handle his toughest days with serenity. He was saddened by the fact that before him two of his other team-mates had also missed penalties in

the shoot-out and even if he had scored, an Italian victory was not assured as a Brazilian was supposed to take the next kick. Yet he was tagged as “The Man who cost Italy the World Cup”. Sadly, very few failed to even think for a minute that without Baggio, Italy would not have ever reached the finals. Such is life: it takes a second to

penalty but Italy did not win the World Cup. Cesare Maldini preferred Alessandro Del Piero over Baggio in most of the matches which led to severe criticism. That was virtually the last act the world would witness of the most gifted Italian footballer of our generation in a national t-shirt. He played for Brescia till 2004 before fading gloriously into a retired life where his wife and his two children form the fulcrum of his daily existence. And of course, what has remained with him is his tryst with Buddhism - the reason he cites for his faithfulness to his wife Andreina and his non-involvement in any kind of scandal.



wipe out years of earned respect, pride and prestige.

As a young 9-year-old watching his favourite footballer miss a penalty, I remember crying alone at 3 a.m. in the night India time, and my parents getting up to console me, assuring me that Baggio will score again in the next World Cup. I asked them, “But that is four years later. Will he play? Will Italy win?” He played, he scored a

penalty but Italy did not win the World Cup. What also remains with him is the memory of a shot which is probably the reason he named his autobiography “Una Porta Nel Cielo” (A Goal in the Sky). No one can take away the pain of that moment from him but his Buddhist self will help him maintain his composure and regain poise whenever the pain haunts him.

SCOUTING NETWORK

MARCO VERRATTI

GoalDen Times brings you the stars of tomorrow – 20 years or under, promising players from across the world

With Italy being inspired to a third ever European final by a 33-year-old Andrea Pirlo, the talk focussed on how Italy will do once the midfield metronome retires. Riccardo Montolivo, once called the heir apparent to Pirlo, has not lived upto his potential but here comes a 19-year-old who possibly can get into those shoes. Growing up in the Pescara youth, Marco Verratti was a marked man. He had joined Pescara youth team in 2008, and later that year, Milan came scouting. His intelligent passing and decision-making as well as dead ball skills reminded them of Pirlo immediately. Milan had offered to co-own the boy - then all of 16, but Pescara wanted to keep him. Four years on, Pirlo has moved on from Milan to Juventus and Pescara, after a 19-year absence had been promoted to Serie A under maverick Czech manager Zdenek Zeman. At the forefront of this revival was a 19-year-old Verratti, whom Zeman played in the role that defines Pirlo - deep-lying playmaker.

Verratti was a great success as a deep-lying playmaker - assisting nine goals in 31 matches for Pescara, one of them being the great retrieve and assist against Sampdoria. Verratti's strength is

his great technique and passing abilities. With his frail frame, he didn't quite succeed in the attacking midfield role that he initially played. But Zeman pushed him back in the field and helped make his defensive play

DATE OF BIRTH: NOV 5, 1992

HEIGHT: 1.65M

POSITION: MIDFIELDER

NATIONALITY: ITALIAN

CLUB: PESCARA

MARKET VALUE: € 12MN

tight enough to play as the regista. The other notable feature is his deadball skills. Verratti is the designated corner specialist for Pescara. In one aspect thought he would need to emulate his idol, Pirlo a bit more. For a man of his talent and skills, he has seen a few red cards. One hopes that he would be able to control his play and emotions better as he grows.

Verratti made his debut for the Italy U-21 team in a February 2012 friendly against France and did not look out of place in it in a central midfield spot. In his third match, in the U21 team, he was played as a deep-lying defensive midfield role and he scored his first goal for the national team. But in a subsequent U21 European qualifier against Ireland, Verratti saw red in a heated match that finished 2-2. His skills and position and nature of play, makes him a suitable candidate - especially in the Italian league. All the top clubs - Milan, Juventus, Inter and even foreign ones - PSG and Man City among them, were thought to be courting Verratti. That he was

included in Italy manager Cesare Prandelli's 32-man roster for the European Cup, must have also weighed in his favour. On June 23, Pescara officially took him off the market. The official communiqué read, "This morning the top management of Pescara met with Marco Verratti and his agent. The player has reiterated his desire to remain with the club. The player, among other things, renewed his contract last year and is tied to the club for another four years."

Fresh from the oven: It is no surprise that the prized Verratti is all set to bid adieu to the biancoazzurri colours of Pescara and close in on a deal with the French giants Paris Saint-Germain.





EPL SEASON REVIEW

A look back at the 2011-12 season of the EPL where drama found a new home. Debojyoti Chakraborty relives the season with the top flight teams' performances

So, we have witnessed yet another dramatic season of English Premier League. Is it the best ever? Pundits will keep on arguing but surely this edition will feature right up amongst the top contenders in terms of drama, excitement and performances. From the abysmal start of the campaign by Arsenal to their 3rd spot finish, from enthralling performances of Premier League newbies Swansea and Norwich to the usual scramble of a bunch of teams to fight out relegation, from Liverpool's wooden love to the Manchester City's last kick of the match sealing the title in the extremes of Fergie Times – this season had it all. Goaldden Times would like to bask in the spirit of this glorious past nine months and review each team's performance.

Arsenal

The season started with a humiliating 8-2 loss by bitter rivals Manchester United. Everyone feared for one of the worst seasons following the summer sale of Cesc Fabregas, Samir Nasri and Gael Clichy. There were very few in and around the Emirates who were not asking for the head of Arsene Wenger.

Yet, The Professor managed to march on with a very young squad and achieved a remarkable third spot ensuring a direct entry to Champions League next season.

One of the unsung heroes for Arsenal this season has

been
Mikel

Arteta. The ex-Tuffey man arrived in summer and quickly established himself as the lynchpin in midfield.

But his contributions have been overshadowed by the talismanic Dutchman Robin van Persie. Top scorer with 30 goals, he found the net against seventeen different teams during the campaign. Only a close offside call and a couple of shots striking the woodwork prevented him from scoring against Manchester City while a last gasp goal line clearance against Fulham denied him an entry in the score sheet. There have been other strong performances throughout the season with the likes of Alex duo – Song and Oxlade-Chamberlain – and Theo Walcott making good progress, but none have been able to match their influential skipper.

Aston Villa

Alex McLeish joined the Midlands club from rival club Birmingham City in summer. Fans were sceptical and the man at the helm had not done any favours to himself. A poor run of form towards the end of the campaign saw Aston Villa languishing at the bottom, only two points clear of relegation. The team lacked ideas going forward and lapses in concentration cost them dearly at the back. Seven wins – better than only the bottom placed Wolves – in the league should see a new manager for the forthcoming season.

Darren Bent is their only prized possession. A busy summer seems on the cards mainly in the form of some young and fresh talents. A complete overhaul may just change their fortunes. One also hopes that their stalwart captain Stiliyan Petrov, who was diagnosed with leukaemia during this disappointing season, comes out victorious through this turbulent time.

Blackburn Rovers

It is really strange – and inexplicable – that Steve Kean has survived the season even after the ever growing wrath of the club faithful. Blackburn did not have such luck and they were relegated eventually, a fate many predicted within barely a few weeks of the campaign. They spent most of the torrid campaign in the relegation zone. The sale of Phil Jones in the summer and Christopher Samba in January, following his differences with the management, have hit them hard as they succumbed to defeat a record 23 times this term.

There were very few bright spots in the form of striker Junior Hoilett giving an impressive string of performances while Yakubu showed some sparks reminiscent



of his past. With the former's contract expiring this summer and Blackburn no more in the top flight, it is time for him to move on.

Bolton Wanderers

It was surprising to see the usual tenacity missing from a Bolton side. Throughout the campaign they seemed lost for ideas and eventually they succumbed on the final day of the season. The Trotters lacked the quality to remain afloat in the top division and it will be a good opportunity for Owen Coyle to harness a new team in the Championships. They might have to do away with a lot of their most valuable players but fresh faces would be more than welcome.

Bolton's highlight of the season was rather a tragic as well as inspirational one. They were stunned by the on-field collapse of Fabrice Muamba due to cardiac arrest in March. Prompt medical attention ensured he somehow survived after being medically dead for minutes.

Chelsea

The first casualty occurred in the form of much-hyped Andre Villas-Boas – AVB, as he is popularly known – when he was sacked ruthlessly by the billionaire owner Roman Abramovich barely months into the job. A dramatic turnaround under the supervision of interim caretaker boss Roberto Di Matteo saw them competing for the top four finish but they eventually ensured a Champions League entry next season through their Cup winning heroics. Chelsea should feel more than satisfied after their seemingly dismal campaign ended with another Cup glory as they lifted the FA Cup at Wembley.

There has been growing debate over the influence of senior players in the Chelsea dressing room. It is going to be an acid test for the newly appointed manager Roberto Di Matteo in his first season in the permanent role. Nonetheless a string of summer exits looks inevitable - with the likes of Didier Drogba, Salomon Kalou, Jose Bosingwa topping the list - in the wake of a dismal league campaign.

Everton

It has been long argued that David Moyes is the best manager in England as he has managed to deliver with-in a shoe-string budget. This time they finished seventh in the table, even above their bitter Merseyside rivals. Following a poor start to the season, David Moyes and his troops have turned things round since January to mark his first decade in premiership with yet another top half finish.

The turn of events was sparked by the arrival of Serbian Nikica Jelavic in January who has shown a good knack for scoring goals. If he continues to shine this time round, Everton can surely hope for finishing higher in the table.

“Chelsea should feel more than satisfied after their seemingly dismal campaign ended with another cup glory as they lifted the FA cup at Wembley”

Fulham

Fulham finished strongly with a top half finish, level on points with Liverpool. They have played some good football throughout the year and their form especially at Craven Cottage was exceptional. Martin Jol would love to build on after an impressive season in 2012.

Much of Fulham's good showing is due to the USA international star Clint Dempsey. After an excellent season where he topped the club's goal-scoring chart with 17 goals and openly admitted his desire to play in Champions League, Dempsey is all set to leave. It will be interesting to see how much Fulham can get out of the sale of their star performer and how wisely they can use the cash.

Liverpool

Miserable. The one word to describe The Reds' season. A lowly eighth place finish, a defeat in the final of the FA Cup and a (Carling) Cup win which failed to make any kind of headlines – Liverpool is certainly happy that the season has finally ended. Kenny Dalglish brought in some really average players who have failed to deliver and as a result have upset a settled side which was trying hard to climb up.

Matters worsened with an eight-match ban on Luis Suarez due to his alleged racial scandal. Liverpool was the unluckiest side as they hit the woodwork a record 33 times during the campaign but this cannot be counted

as even a consolation. With the appointment of Brendan Rodgers, the Kops would like to see an attacking flair of football which would propel them to Champions League once again.

Manchester City

It took the last kick of the match to seal the title for them. Goalden Times, however, had long back predicted the silverware for them in the midseason review. Their first title since 1968 would surely inspire them for bigger things in the next season. And yes, they could do with a little less footage of Sunderland due to their off-the-field problems.

Roberto Mancini has successfully marshalled a troop which has looked invincible at times. They should have won the league rather convincingly but there is no denying the fact they were by far the best team in England. A star-studded line-up featuring Joe Hart, David Silva and Sergio Aguero was ably led by Vincent Kompany. No one will be surprised to see a few more big names joining them next season.

Manchester United

With an eight-point lead in April, everyone thought it was United's title to lose. And lose they did. Squandering a two-goal advantage twice at home against Everton proved to be decisive as they had to see drama on the final day of the season taking the Cup to the Blue side of Manchester, albeit on goal difference. Sir Alex Ferguson must be credited for fighting it out till the very last with a below par squad, but the shrewd tactician knew deep inside that he had

blown it off this time.

A midfield featuring Ryan Giggs and coming-out-of-retirement Paul Scholes with a combined age of 77 would be too much to fathom next season. The Red Devils badly need some creative spark in the midfield and it remains to be seen whether they splash the cash to do so.

Newcastle United

For many pundits, not the team of the season. Nor was it for us at Goalden Times at the start of the season,

but we had forecast a strong finish for them and they did oblige. At the start of the season no one had predicted a fifth place finish and they did push for a Champions League spot for a considerable time in the campaign. Alan Pardew should be lauded for his vision. He has not hesitated to iron out trouble between star players and has struck some good bargains to build a really strong squad.

A settled team, the Magpies were led by Demba Ba in the first half of the campaign. It speaks volumes for his teammanship when he sacrificed his striking role to the January signing fellow countryman Papiss Cisse. The Senegalese star went on to become the new

sensation in the league with 13 goals in fourteen appearances.

Norwich City

Promoted to the top flight, Norwich never looked out of place. A mid-table finish gives them great hope for the next season and what is the most exciting factor is



The veteran red devils

that they rarely relied on a single or couple of players to deliver the goods. Their work ethic and team game has been applauded by all.

Paul Lambert presented the viewers with some excellent football and they were never really in danger of going back to the Championships. It is a blow for the Canaries to lose him to Aston Villa but they should hold on to their star striker Grant Holt and influential Anthony Pilkington if they are to catch the eyes once more next season.

Queens Park Rangers

In spite of breaking the hearts of the millions of Red Devils' fans, Mark Hughes's side just about held on to the top flight. But it is not ideal when one has to wait for other results to go their way to guarantee survival on the last day of the season. They have looked vulnerable during their away trips and major reinforcements are needed for next term's survival.

QPR has looked better under the astute Mark Hughes. But their summer recruits – Bobby Zamora, Djibril Cisse – have all been tested and tried in English football and may not have much more to offer. With a temperamental and self-destructing Joey Barton leading the troop, the Hoops should count themselves fortunate to be still in the top flight.

Stoke City

Stoke City had an average season. They were quite physical, they dug in and remained in the comfort of mid-table for the entire campaign – nothing exceptional about their journey. They had the privilege of playing in Europe but that could have cost them couple of places in the league table.

Peter Crouch has had a decent season at the Britannia stadium but his lack of goals proved critical to his omission in the Euro 2012 squad. Dead ball specialist Jonathan Walters did show some spark at times but nothing much to write home about.

Sunderland

A poor start to the season saw Steve Bruce being re-

placed by Martin O'Neill who did a commendable job especially in organizing a tight defensive unit. They did have their good days during this campaign but the bad days far outweighed them.

Only bright point for them was the arrival of Stephane Sessegnon. He sparkled in his first full season for the Black Cats with the most number of assists (9) and a decent number of goals (7). O'Neill may look to strengthen his defence this summer by stamping his authority over the club.

“Only bright point for them was the arrival of Stephane Sessegnon. He sparkled in his first full season for the Black Cats with the most number of assists (9) and a decent number of goals (7)”

Swansea City

The surprise package. Unlike any other newly promoted team, Brendan Rodgers opted for a refreshingly attacking brand of football. Naturally their fan base increased many a fold worldwide. It does not mean that they were vulnerable at the back as their shot-stopper Michel Vorm kept an impressive 14 clean sheets.

The Swans played a high tempo open passing game, that spoke well of the excellent team they are, but one player stood out tall amidst them all – loan signee from Hoffenheim, Gylfi Sigurdsson. Arriving in the January transfer window, the playmaker produced an incredible five goals and 7 assists. Swansea will be disappointed that they have been unable to make him permanent and they have to bid adieu to their star manager too.

Tottenham Hotspur

It was a heartbreaking season for the Spurs. For the large part before Christmas they looked like the only team to realistically challenge the Manchester sides for the title. Then came January and Harry Redknapp's distraction for the national team.



Spurs slipped out of the title race but looked certain to hang on to the third spot for an automatic Champions League place. Then came a series of disastrous results in February which ensured they could only get a fourth place. Then a certain RDM masterminded Blues' victory in the Champions League final to leave Tottenham lamenting outside the top tier competition in Europe.

Redknapp has been sacked and the search for a new manager is underway with the likes of David Moyes tipped heavily to take over. Whoever it is, without the prospect of Champions League, it will be very hard to hold on to their star performers like Luka Modric and Gareth Bale. And with Chelsea, Newcastle, Liverpool and others looking to get stronger, a top four finish will be an even bigger challenge.

West Bromwich Albion

Roy Hodgson has been in an ideal club with no pressure of winning day in and day out. This is also proved by the fact that they have fared far better on their away matches this season. With a comfortable top 10 finish, Hodgson has shown that he knows how to get the most out of limited resources and this quality has landed him England's top post.

The Hawthorns club has made some good progress for the last few seasons and it will be a challenge for them to carry on in the similar fashion. They need to find a manager first and then some solidity at the back. Also the services of Peter Odemwingie, the star performer amongst a bunch of enthusiastic and young players, must be ensured before he is snatched away by some other club.

Wigan Athletic



A dejected spurs journey

Critics and pundits had written them off but the Latics rose like a Phoenix and Roberto Martinez should be applauded for how he turned the fortunes of a club that looked certain for relegation. Scalping for the likes of Manchester United, Newcastle United and Arsenal, they have finished at a respectable 15th place against all odds.

Shane Long has had an injury-prone season but he rose to the occasion when it mattered the most by scoring against the big boys. Victor Moses is another player who made good progress this season. Their strategy will be simple – look for some cheap buys and fight again against the odds.

Wolverhampton Wanderers

Their fate was sealed way back in April. After the sacking of Mick McCarthy, they failed to win a single league match and they might find even the Championships too hot to handle. The squad looked down and out, dispirited for the major part of the season which saw only five wins for them.

It will be no surprise to see the better players – Steven Fletcher, Kevin Doyle – leaving very soon and a rebuilding phase start for the Molineux outfit. Stale Solbakken, the new manager will have a tough season ahead and it may take them some time to get back into the top flight once again.

Team of the Season



Michel Vorm



Kyle Walker



Vincent Kompany



Fabricio Coloccini



Leighton Baines



Yaya Touré



Clint Dempsey



Antonio Valencia



David Silva



Robin van Persie



Sergio Agüero

TRIVIELA

The Trivela is a Portuguese term to denote the art of kicking the football with the outside of one's foot. It is used to hide one's weaker foot and also to suddenly fool the opposition with a wickedly swerving ball from a difficult angle. In Triviela, we will attempt to find some football feats/facts which would make you sit up and take note, like it happens when you see Ricardo Quaresma try these

This triviela is dedicated to the wonderful group of Spanish footballers and their achievement in winning three consecutive major trophies that they entered - the 2008 and 2012 European champi-

fore them....or maybe do better than them.

Now the simple fact is that, to win three major trophies, one has to win a World Cup in between, since most major trophies happen with a duration of four (sometimes two) years in between. Hence all nations, which haven't won a World Cup, but may have monopolised their continental competition like Mexico - winners '93, '96, '98 of CONCACAF Gold Cup or Iran - '68, '72, '76 winners AFC Asian Cup or Egypt - '06, '08, '10 winner of Africa Cup of Nations, would not feature in this discussion.

Close Misses

Brazil won the '94 and '02 World Cups but only finished runner-up in '98. They had won the Copa America in both '97 and '99 and lost to Uruguay in penalties in the '95 championship. So starting from the '94 World Cup, Brazil reached the finals of every major championship till the '99 Copa America. That's a staggering five world and continental competitions. This sequence was broken when they lost shockingly to Honduras in the '01 Copa. They then proceeded to win the next World Cup as well as the next two Copa Americas, but without a



Spain with their third consecutive title

onship and the 2010 FIFA World Cup. It is a unique achievement in the annals of football and most observers would place them in a group of ONE, to have achieved that unique feat. In this edition, we try and see which other teams came close to achieving what Spain has achieved and if any team had managed to do it be-

World Cup win in 2006, it again denied them the opportunity to grab a three-peat.

Germany, or West Germany as they were called, would also suffer the same fate - winning the '72 European Cup and '74 World Cup but missing out on the '76 European Cup by losing to Czechoslovakia on penalties in

the finals (when Antonin Panenka first showed his penalty skills baffling the great Sepp Maier). They would win the '90 World Cup and '96 European championship (beating the Czechs), but would miss out on the '92 European Cup and '94 World Cup to be denied this legacy.

South American Connection

Brazil's two great South American rivals - Argentina and Uruguay though can claim something to this but in both cases, there was no World Cup being held and hence only the existing major championships can be taken into account. The World Cup was not held due to World War II between '38 and '50, but the Copa America was still going on. Argentina, led by players of the great River Plate team of the 40s won three consecutive Copa America - '45, '46, '47. Add the runner-up in the '42 and champion in the '41 editions, and you again get



a run of five consecutive finals with defeat in only the second one for a truly great Argentine side.

Uruguay was the earliest footballing South American giant. They won the '24 and '28 Olympics gold - at that point with no World Cup, the Olympics were the pinnacle of global football championship. Uruguay also won the '23 and '24 Copa America, thus recording the earliest sequence of three major championship wins.

Argentina and Uruguay thus won three in a row, but didn't win the World Cup and that was not due to their fault. The World Cup was simply not conceived or was not being held when they won their championship.

Parting Shot Uno

There is one more instance of a team winning three consecutive major championships, which included the World Cup. And that team is Italy. They were the first European team to win the FIFA World Cup in '34. They were also the first team to retain their World Cup crown (that no European team has ever done) in 1938. In between, they also won the '36 Olympic Gold at Berlin. The first great Italian team of Vittorio Pozzo, thus won everything that they entered between '34 and '38.

Parting Shot Deux

Is every team that won that threesome a latin one? Well not quite. But you have to turn from the men to the ladies to find probably the most dominating team of all in history. Germany (or West Germany) has won seven of the last eight European competitions for ladies. This has

included a frankly unbelievable five consecutive wins in the UEFA European Women's Championship from '95 to '09. They also won two FIFA Women's World Cup in '03 and '07. They had lost in the quarter-final stages of both the '99 and '11 World Cups. So if we look at a stretch - they won all the major championships that they entered in the first decade of the millennium - three European championships and two World Cups for an unprecedented 5 trophies and one decade long reign. Surely the Spanish now know, they still have some way to go.



Indian National League

2011-12 SEASON REVIEW

With the Indian domestic football season having come to a close in May, Debojyoti Chakraborty summarizes the nation's top-tier football league

The top-tier football league in India, known as the I-League, came to a close in May and Dempo Sports Club won the 16th edition leaving behind 13 others vying for the honour. The tournament started in 1996-97 as the National Football League to bring in professionalism in an age-old and dying Indian football system. It may seem contrasting but the national team was at its highest ever FIFA ranking of 94 at the start of 1996 but has seen an all-time low of 165 in April, 2012. However, football remains a hugely popular sport in India, more so in Kolkata, capital of West Bengal, where it is treated as a religion. Let



from Kolkata, the eternal capital of the game in India, East Bengal and Mohun Bagan were favourites along with the two teams from Goa, the new power centre of Indian football, Dempo and Churchill Brothers. Dempo set the pace early with an all-win record in their first seven matches which included a 5-0 thrashing of Mohun Bagan. They were first beaten by another club from Goa - Churchill Brothers who put up some fine performances - they defeated Shillong Lajong FC 6-0 and Sporting Club de Goa 5-0 - but lacked consistency. On the other hand, East Bengal looked to follow the leaders closely until they were held to a scoreless draw by the lowly Pailan Arrows. This started a patchy stage for the men in Red and Gold as they could only manage four victories in their next 10 encounters. Their archrival Mohun Bagan had a roller coaster ride.

Salt Lake Stadium in Kolkata can host over a hundred thousand spectators



us start our journey showcasing a recap of the season that just got over.

At the start of the league in the fag end of October last year, the big boys grabbed all the headlines. Two clubs

After being humiliated by Dempo they themselves netted five against Mumbai FC in an away match. They defeated title contenders East Bengal and Churchill and

followed that up by dropping points against mid-table Prayag United and struggling Shillong Lajong FC.

As the second half of the fixtures started, teams settled down rather well. Teams vying for the championship got

de Goa thumped HAL (Hindustan Aeronautics Limited Sporting Club) 7-0.

The league was a classic example of a bunch of teams fighting it out. There was not much difference between



Dempo FC - worthy winners

the results they wanted as the relatively smaller teams started to run out of gas. But there was too much of a gap at the top created by now and Dempo maintained the pole position throughout the second half with their superb squad. They are an example of a settled side, the team management and to officials have been there for some time now and their core group of players have remained more or less the same too. This is so rare in this part of the world, but manager Armando Colaco might have to say something to this as he went on to win a record five League titles with Dempo. There was a small hiccup when they lost to Pune FC in Round 19 but Dempo ensured neither of their competitors can get a sniff in by quickly regaining the composure.

By the time Dempo faced East Bengal in Round 23, other contenders had already faded away. Dempo maintained their 6-point gap over the Red and Gold brigade with a scoreless draw and were almost certain of the title with only three matches to play. Results elsewhere became meaningless even though Mohun Bagan thrashed Shillong Lajong FC 6-1 in the return leg and Sporting Clube

them as all the top half teams lost nearly equal number of matches (5 or 6). What set Dempo apart is their incredible ability to get a result when the game was all set for a draw. They could not enforce a result in only three of their matches – this number is twice better than any of their challengers. On the other end of the table Pailan Arrows and HAL were easy hunting grounds for others as both the teams struggled to get a win under their belt. HAL was nothing more than a punching bag as they finished rock bottom with eight points in 26 games and a negative goal difference of 49. Pailan Arrows, the U-19 team fielded by All India Football Federation (AIFF), is probably the only team across all the domestic leagues worldwide to be guaranteed a stay in the top flight irrespective of their league standing. So, even though they finished 13th, they stayed up and poor Chirag United Kerala, finishing 12th, was relegated.

The league produced over 500 goals, close to an impressive average of three goals per match. But with the modern era icon Baichung Bhutia in the twilights of his career and no other players showing that much promise, the top goal-scoring chart was dominated by the

foreign recruits. In I-League a team can field four foreign players which should include one player from the AFC region. There is a strong influence of Africa in Indian football as they are the main supply line for foreign

performer in the absence of their star man, India number one Subrata Paul. Uga Okapara from Nigeria of East Bengal and Mahesh Gowli of Dempo put up some brave displays at the heart of their teams' defence. And in the



Ranti Martins - Head and Shoulder above others

players. Ranti Martins from Nigeria topped the charts with 32 goals playing for Dempo. Following him was his country man Odafa Okolie of Mohun Bagan with 26 goals. Tolgey Ozbey from Australia netted 18 for East Bengal to finish third. C.S. Sabeeth of Pailan Arrows was the top Indian goal scorer with only nine goals who could feature even in the overall top 10 list.

On the other end of the field, Indian shot stoppers put up a decent fight and Pune FC goalkeeper Abhra Mondal, who was let go by East Bengal, emerged as the top

midfield area, the honour goes to Pierre Douhou from Ivory Coast of Pune FC.

The I-league has grown in numbers over the years – be it in terms of number of teams participating or the money spent by the sponsors. But the standard of football very rarely lives up to expectations. Still in this millennium, some players have started showing their aspirations for trying their luck abroad in more prestigious European leagues. This will only help the Sleeping Giant of Asia to come into its own in the football world.



In the face of multiple unfortunate incidents of deaths on the pitch, sports medicine expert Dr. Tapas Francis Biswas investigates the causes and remedies

SUDDEN DEATH

Twenty-seven-year-old D. Venkatesh played for a Division A small club Bangalore Mars. Twenty-Six-year-old Piermario Morosini played for Livorno (on loan from Udinese). Destiny brought them together, in a heart-wrenching way. Both of them died on field playing their favourite sport, our favourite sport, football. Cause of death was cardiac arrest. In English Premier League, Fabrice Muamba escaped miraculously though. He was 'clinically dead' for 78 minutes following a cardiac arrest on pitch. Let us analyse the medical reasons behind these sad incidents.

“In English Premier League, Fabrice Muamba escaped miraculously though. He was ‘clinically dead’ for 78 minutes following a cardiac arrest on pitch”

matter in any sport is tragic. Fortunately, it is rare. It is important to be aware of the remote possibility and the need for shared responsibility for sports safety among athletes, parents, coaches, sports medicine specialists and sport organisations.

Non-traumatic sudden death in a footballer inevitably stirs public concern as front-page headlines question what more could have been done to identify the risk. Parents may wonder - if this could happen to a young star footballer, could it also strike their child, who participates in recreational football? It might also be natural to ask whether the benefits of sports and exercise are worth the apparent risk.

Cardiovascular causes attribute to most of the cases of



Football, by its very nature, includes inherent risks, including the risk of death. Death in football or for that

sudden death amongst footballers. Sudden Cardiac Arrest (SCA) is the cause of most on-field mishaps. There

is a preponderance of such deaths in males compared to females.

The four most common causes are:

1. Hypertrophic cardiomyopathy (HCM)

It is a condition in which the heart muscle becomes thick. The thickening makes it harder for blood to leave the heart, forcing the heart to work harder to pump blood. HCM is often asymmetrical; meaning one part of the heart is thicker than the other parts. The condition is usually passed down through families (inherited). It is believed to be a result of several problems (defects) with the genes that control heart muscle growth. Younger people are likely to have a more severe form of hypertrophic cardiomyopathy. However, the condition is seen in people of all ages.



D. Venkatesh playing for a Division A small club Bangalore Mars

2. Coronary artery anomalies (CAA)

It is a congenital defect in one or more of the coronary arteries of the heart.

3. Atherosclerotic coronary artery disease (ACAD)

There is a build-up of lipids, cholesterol, calcium, and cellular debris within the intima of the vessel wall, which leads to plaque formation leading to narrowing of the artery and subsequently diminished oxygen supply to the heart.

4. Myocarditis

It is inflammation of the heart muscle, can be caused by bacteria or viruses, although rare it can lead to fatal consequences in footballers.

Other less significant/ not-so-much life threatening causes are right ventricular dysplasia, Marfan's syndrome, conduction system abnormalities, idiopathic concentric left ventricular hypertrophy, substance abuse (e.g., cocaine, steroids), aortic stenosis and mitral valve prolapse.

Opinion is divided amongst cardiologists whether or not to perform routine cardiovascular

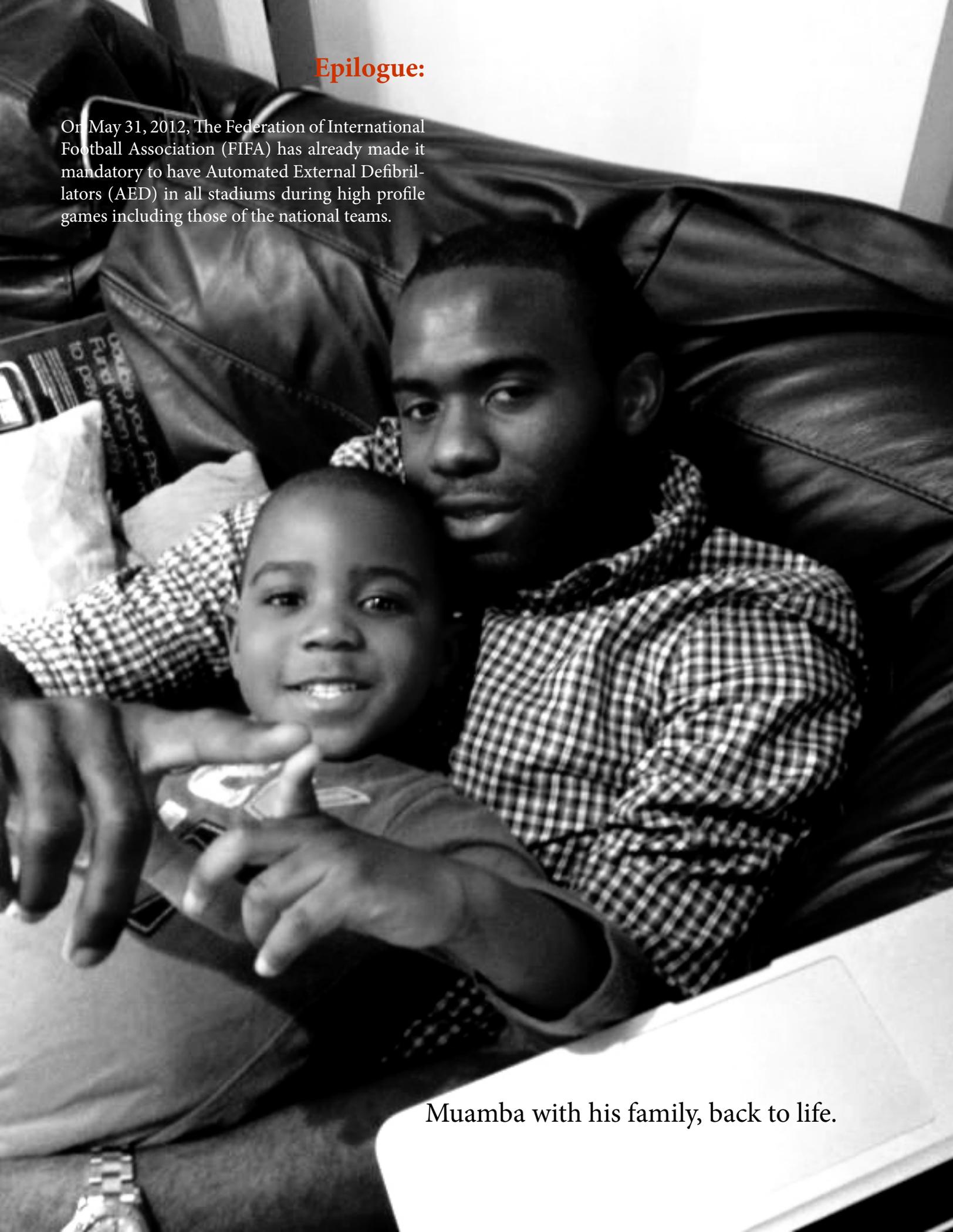
testing to prevent exercise-related sudden death in footballers because of its limited usefulness, rarity of such events, the cost of screening and poor predictive accuracy of exercise testing for such events.

There are various measures taken in different levels of internal tournaments e.g. according to UEFA guidelines, every player should have at least one electrocardiography (ECG) and echocardiography result in their personal records before 21st birthday. And in my opinion, sports medicine specialists should take a proper detailed history, perform a thorough clinical examination, organise some basic investigations including routine blood test, ECG, stress test, echocardiography and try and detect any cardiovascular complications that the footballer might have and take appropriate corrective measures. The clubs and the FA need to ensure this and also need to perform these on a regular basis. One must remember it might not be cost effective in a massive population but when it comes to elite professional footballers who are earning in millions it is worth the price.

“One must remember it might not be cost effective in a massive population but when it comes to elite professional footballers who are earning in millions it is worth the price”

Epilogue:

On May 31, 2012, The Federation of International Football Association (FIFA) has already made it mandatory to have Automated External Defibrillators (AED) in all stadiums during high profile games including those of the national teams.



Muamba with his family, back to life.

WHAT'S THE GOALDEN WORD?

We football fanatics often come across terms and phrases that we start using without knowing its meaning. We hear them on television or read them in magazines wondering what the word is all about. WTGW will endeavour to focus on such terms and their usages helping us create our very own footballpedia. If you would like to know about any such word associated with the football world, do toss in a mail at editor@goaldentimes.org

Makélélé Role: (Swahili word Makelele means "noise")
: [Noun-Plural]

It is not very often that a football term is named after a footballer himself, that too during his playing career. This is exactly what happened with Claude Makélélé when his destructive style of play earned him

he decided to hang up his boots.

Makélélé is a pure modern day footballer – an era where more and more emphasis has been given for shielding the back four with a defensive midfielder. The basic responsibilities of the player deployed in that position would be to protect his centre halves by breaking down any opposition attack. If he happens to be a good passer of the ball, then nothing like it as he can then initiate



accolades worldwide and critics have termed the defensive midfield position as the Makélélé role. Goalden Times looks back at his playing days in the month when

an attack after getting hold of the ball. However, more often than not, he would be instructed not to be too adventurous and sit back even if others are joining an at-

tacking move. Makélélé had it all and another key skill – he was highly disciplined. With his good positional sense and clean tackling, he rarely got ticked off by the match officials, a treat so rare for defensive midfielders.



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