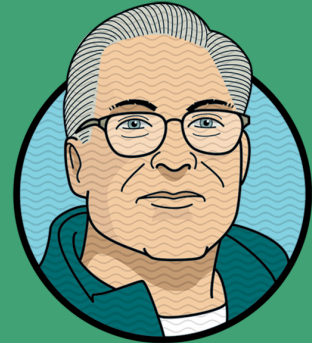


Insights into the World Cup

BY CHARLES O'BRIEN

Most fans follow the score. Fewer notice the speed, tactics and moments that actually shape a match. Self-professed “sports nut” **Nick Semaca '80**, an investor in professional football clubs in England, Germany and the U.S., shares insights to better understand a World Cup match.



IN FOOTBALL, ONE MISTAKE OR ONE BOUNCE CAN UNDO DOMINANCE - A STRONGER TEAM CAN LOSE ON A FLUKE PLAY.

PASSES THAT CROSS THE LINES ARE KEY. AVOID CHECKING POSSESSION STATS. LOOK FOR PASSES OR RUNS THAT ADVANCE THE BALL DOWN THE FIELD WHILE MAINTAINING POSSESSION.

GOOD THING I'VE BEEN PRACTICING!

THE STADIUM CLOCK NEVER STOPS, BUT THE REFEREE STOPS THEIR WATCH DURING PLAY AND MAKES UP THE DIFFERENCE. STOPPAGE TIME COULD BE ONE OR TWO MINUTES - EVEN 10 MINUTES OR MORE!

IN THE EVENT OF A TIE IN THE KNOCKOUT ROUNDS, EVEN AFTER 30 MINUTES OF "ADDED TIME," THE MATCH IS DECIDED BY PENALTY KICKS. EVERYTHING COMES DOWN TO ONE MISSED KICK OR ONE GREAT SAVE.

FOR MANY FANS, FOOTBALL IS "A RELIGION" AND THE RITUALS AND CHANTS ARE PART OF THE SPECTACLE. LISTEN FOR THE "MUCHACHOS" CHANT FOR ARGENTINA, "FOOTBALL'S COMING HOME" FOR ENGLAND OR "ALLEZ LES BLEUS" FOR FRANCE.

