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Violence tarnishes World Cup

I guess soccer is just one of those things that I wasn't meant to appreciate. Sometimes avid sports fans almost feel obligated to follow every sport out there. Currently, getting into soccer is, as Willford Brimley would say, "the right thing to do." The United States is hosting the World Cup, soccer's crowning jewel, and it has proved to be quite popular. Extended television coverage and enthusiastic, standing-room-only crowds have spread "soccer fever" throughout the United States.

The U.S. squad did the impossible and advanced into the second round. Brazil awaited the United States on a sunny Monday, the Fourth of July, for its opening second round match. I don't think anybody realistically believed that this group of anonymous athletes from the United States could pull off a miracle victory over the heavily favored Brazilians.

I am not so sure that I really wanted the United States to win, either. Sure, I watched the game and cheered each defensive gem that the United States turned in. Offensively, there was not much to cheer about. But is it really worth it to win the game, considering all the potential riots and mayhem that such a win could have started? After all, the last team that the United States beat, Colombia, now has to be heavily guarded from would-be revenge killers in their own country, after the murder of fellow national Andres Escobar.

The murder of Escobar solidified my non-interest in soccer as a sport. I enjoy watching the World Cup games as background entertainment, but when players that have given their all for their nation return home



CHRIS METZ

only to be executed for their efforts, I'll follow baseball.

Soccer fans, put down your fists. I'm not trying to mix it up here. I can honestly understand why people religiously follow soccer. The game involves a high level of athletic skill combined with in-depth strategy, resembling war-like tactics. One of the things that I do enjoy about soccer is the international flavor that it brings. What other sport could bring together countries like Saudi Arabia and Sweden?

But it's hard not to be turned off by the politics that go along with the games. It was quite refreshing to hear the chants of "U.S.A." echo throughout Stanford Stadium after the 1-0 loss to Brazil. To the United States it was just a game. It was the biggest game in United States soccer history, but there was no threat of anyone from the American team being murdered. If Brazil would have lost, it can be safely assumed that similar "Brazil" chants would not have been heard.

The death of Escobar in Colombia is one of the sickest things I've ever heard of. It sounds more like a scene from a gangster movie than a real life situation. Sports has a unique way of bringing out the worst in people. While money was undoubtedly the motivating factor in Escobar's death (one group of drug lords reportedly

lost \$10 million on Colombia's loss to the United States), sports in general has the ability to turn people into callous, unfeeling masses.

I'm not trying to oversimplify the Escobar situation at all. The drug situation in Colombia is a very complex issue that would require much more than a couple paragraphs to effectively analyze. Not to mention that Escobar was a likely target for such a tragedy as he accidentally scored against his own team in the loss to the United States. The main point is that I don't really care to follow a game that produces such intensity and is marred by violence.

At the same time, no one is innocent.

In the United States, we have grown accustomed to perpetuating the downward spiral of many an athlete's career — both on and off the playing field.

The United States is home of former major league baseball player Bill Buckner, who can't even live in his own home town anymore because of the abuse he has received over his crucial error in the 1986 world series.

California Angel reliever Donnie Moore couldn't live with the torment that his two-out, two-strike pitch to Boston's Dave Henderson — which Henderson belted over the left-centerfield wall in the 1986 American League Championship Series — gave him. The home run ruined California's chances of getting to the World Series, and Moore committed suicide a couple of years later.

Are we really so surprised and "shocked" at Escobar's death, then? Somehow, I don't think so.

Chris Metz will be sports editor for the Emerald next fall.

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Kierkegaard's World

by Anti-Climacus

I said, Who are you? And how do you know my name?
 Oh, I know all about you!

My name's Lucky Duck (no relation to Howard or Donald) and I've read all your philosophy.
 And what is that egg-shaped thing?

Oh, that's my time machine. I'm from the 20th century, from a place called Oregon.

Oregon? Hm... I've heard of it... Oregon Territory, where all the pioneers are going. Keep up with me, Soren!

CLEPTH FERRATU NICTO
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DOONESBURY

BY GARRY TRUDEAU

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MR. CAVEN-DISH! PLEASE!

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