

are putting their lives on the line every day,” explains his spokesman. Hostettler says he wants to see troops leave Iraq “in substantial numbers” this year but believes military advisers must determine how to do it safely.

Hostettler decries “partisan political posturing” by people who “were for the war when close to 70 percent were for it and are against it now that close to 70 percent are against it.” “I voted against the war when it counted,” he says. “I’m not absolving the president of his responsibility, but Congress could have said ‘no’.”

Although Hostettler is one of the few Republicans to consistently oppose President Bush’s biggest mistakes, the administration’s unpopularity has endangered him. Indiana’s “Bloody Eighth” congressional district is known for its close elections, and Hostettler has never won more than 53.4 percent of the vote, underperforming Bush in his district by almost eight points. He does little fundraising—his last opponent out-raised him \$1.5 million to \$480,210—and retains few campaign staffers. This year, his Democratic opponent is folksy, pro-war Sheriff Brad Ellsworth. Political analyst Stuart Rothenberg writes of the Democrats’ chances to defeat Hostettler, “It’s now or never. And it certainly looks like it is now.”

“I don’t have the liabilities on Iraq, amnesty, or spending,” Hostettler acknowledges. “But I know that the only way for voters in my district to get to them is through me.”

While the political damage of the Iraq invasion and big-government conservatism has been done, House Republicans still have the chance to follow Hostettler’s lead rather than the president’s on immigration. The GOP can either save its John Hostettlers or allow the White House to make more Republican districts look like the Bloody Eighth on election day. ■

One World Cup

Soccer gives American elites the chance to celebrate nationalism in other countries but not ours.

By Steve Sailer

JUST AS BRAZIL, soccer’s dominant nation, has been the “Country of the Future” for, roughly, ever, the quadrennial arrival of another month-long World Cup reminds us that, for Americans, soccer is the Sport of the Future and always will be. Every four years Americans get lectured that the World Cup is the biggest single-sport competition on Earth and that we’ll no doubt be hoping on this global bandwagon Real Soon Now.

Yet during the first weekend of the 2006 event, more people in America watched the World Cup on foreign-language networks such as Univision than on English-language ABC. Univision has paid \$325 million for the Spanish-language rights in America to the 2010 and 2014 World Cups, while Disney (ABC and ESPN) chipped in only \$100 million for the English-language rights to these same 128 games. NBC, in contrast, bought the 2010 Winter Olympics and 2012 Summer Olympics for \$2.2 billion.

Lately, though, a soccer-crazed fraction of our post-nationalist verbal elite has switched tactics and now implies that Americans will never get excited about soccer as a spectator sport because we just don’t deserve “the beautiful game.” In the new anthology *The Thinking Fan’s Guide to the World Cup*, novelist Dave Eggers contends that watching soccer on TV hasn’t caught on here because “people of influence in America long believed that soccer was the chosen sport of Communists. ... If

you were soccer, the sport of kings, would you want the adulation of a people who elected Bush and Cheney, not once but twice?”

This World Cup in Germany offers the soccerati the opportunity to flaunt their cosmopolitanism as they elucidate the exhilarating subtleties you likely missed in that Croatia-Japan nil-nil draw because you prefer native pastimes such as baseball, basketball, or, God forbid, NASCAR. The “celebrate diversity” folk want America to become athletically homogeneous with the rest of the world. To them, the tepid American response to the World Cup is evidence of our bigotry, our xenophobic failure to get with the global program. As Kevin Michael Grace says, their slogan would be “One people, one world, one sport,” if they weren’t so freaked out by all the host-country fans waving German flags. Ironically, while the World Cup is an occasion for globalist preening in the U.S., in the rest of the world it’s a prime locus for jingoism.

A common defense among intellectual soccer advocates against charges of status-climbing is that they are instead welcoming the Hispanicization of America by mass immigration. But in truth, soccer is growing in the U.S. on two distinctly separate tracks, the immigrant and the upper middle class.

When my family lived in Chicago’s Uptown neighborhood, an immigrant entryway where 100 different languages are supposedly spoken in two square miles, every Saturday morning the

adjoining soccer fields would swarm with white yuppie families from the posh Lincoln Park neighborhood attending American Youth Soccer Organization games. Intrigued, my wife repeatedly called AYSO to sign our boys up, but she got the runaround until she finally swore that, despite living in an immigrant neighborhood, our boys were not demonically gifted foreign soccer dervishes but just American-born klutzes like the rest of the league.

As with many aspects of American life, however, where the tangible contributions of Latin American immigration have been slower to arrive than forecasted by the advocates of multiculturalism, the enormous Hispanic influx into America has had less impact on American soccer than the census numbers would suggest. Only two of the 23 players

tykes is almost guaranteed to stumble into a few goals. (That's why college robot-building competitions typically feature soccer matches.) When my five-year-old would trot off the field after one of his AYSO games, which he spent discussing the Power Rangers with his opponents while occasionally swiping at the ball as it rolled past, he'd brightly inquire, "Did we win? How many goals did I score?"

To us Americans, a kids' soccer game doesn't look all that different from the endlessly ineffectual endeavors of the scoreless 1994 Brazil-Italy World Cup final in the Rose Bowl. Similarly, because we can't recognize quality soccer, we're as happy to root for our women as our men. We were ecstatic over America's victory in the 1999 Women's World Cup of soccer. We'd

games—perhaps not surprisingly when considering the quality of the competition—and thus its position as the top sport.

Unfortunately, there's a cost to abjuring the use of the opposable thumb: competence. While the average National Basketball Association team sinks three dozen field goals per 48-minute game, the all-star squads in the knockout rounds of the 2002 World Cup averaged less than one goal per 90-minute game. The reason soccer so often seems like an exercise in futility is that it's played with the wrong part of the anatomy.

For a conspicuous component of our alienated punditry, though, soccer's ennui is perversely attractive. *The New Republic*, under the editorship of Franklin Foer, author of the 2004 book *How Soccer Explains the World: An Unlikely Theory of Globalization*, has gone gaga over the World Cup.

Geopolitical theories of soccer (and soccer theories of geopolitics) trace back at least to Henry Kissinger's bravura 1986 essay on how differences in national character are embodied in the contrasting styles of their teams. Dr. K. majestically analogized:

The German national team plays the way its general staff prepared for the war. ... At the same time, [it] suffers from the same disability as the famous Schlieffen plan for German strategy in World War I. There is a limit to human foresight; psychological stress on those charged with executing excessively complex maneuvers cannot be calculated in advance. If the German team falls behind, or if its intricate approach yields no results, its game is shadowed by the underlying national premonition that in the end even the most dedicated effort will go unrewarded, by the nightmare that ultimately fate is cruel.

IT'S FUN, GOOD EXERCISE, CHEAP, AND, **UNLIKE BASKETBALL OR FOOTBALL, IT DOESN'T HELP TO BE 7-FEET TALL OR 300 POUNDS.**

on the U.S. World Cup roster have Spanish surnames. In contrast, six players are black, even though African-Americans overall show little interest in the game.

Soccer is by no means a bad sport to play. It's fun, good exercise, cheap, and, unlike basketball or football, it doesn't help to be 7-feet tall or 300 pounds. In fact, soccer shares many virtues with hiking, but there are no hiking hooligans and nobody calls you a chauvinistic boor if you don't watch Sweden v. Paraguay on TV in the World Hiking Cup.

The American professional classes have learned that soccer is a terrific game for small children. In comparison, tee-ball generates farce, while Little League baseball inflicts humiliation on rightfielders who drop fly balls, strike out, and get picked off. (Not that I'm bitter or anything.) Via random Brownian motion, a soccer team of

beaten the world! When cynics pointed out that the world, other than China and Norway, doesn't much care about women's soccer, well, that just made us even prouder of how liberated our women are, compared to those poor, oppressed women of Paris, Milan, and London, whose consciousnesses haven't been raised enough to want to trade in their Manolo Blahniks for soccer spikes.

Why is soccer played so much around the world? The countless hand-eye coordination sports like tennis, golf, ping-pong, and boxing are more popular taken together than foot-eye coordination sports like soccer, hacky sack, and tlachtli (that Aztec ballgame where every contest was sudden death—the losing team captain was sacrificed to the gods). Yet no single sport commands a large market share of hand games, while soccer holds a gigantic slice among foot

Sadly, it has been downhill for soccer highbrowisms ever since, with *The New Republic* posting endless World Cup Deep Thoughts, including a classic on the psychosexual relationship between “the Suez Canal conflict of 1963” and the rise of English soccer hooliganism. (Uh, actually, Suez was in 1956.)

Obsessing over soccer has “been a way of resisting assimilation, because it’s always been such a foreign phenomenon in the country,” explains Foer, who was raised in our nation’s capital by his baseball-crazed father. So Foer isn’t “resisting assimilation,” but de-assimilating away from his native culture. Not surprisingly, Foer has denounced American criticism of soccer as “Buchananite.”

The irony is that if soccer were a traditional American game, these same commentators would be excoriating it as politically retrograde. Around the world, soccer fans are far more explicitly nationalist, uneducated, working class, and reactionary (not that there’s anything wrong with that!) than those of any American sport other than professional

expensively educated captains of industry, the fans of cricket, rugby, and golf, must proclaim that since boyhood they have stood on the terraces with the lads. Because the game is only minimally entertaining to watch, it leaves many idle minds to become the devil’s workshop. While hooliganism has ebbed since 1989, when 94 fans died in a stampede at Hillsborough Stadium in Sheffield, England, and no country has invaded a soccer rival since the 1967 Futbol War between El Salvador and Honduras that cost about 2,000 lives, the level of off-field violence remains wholly alien to American sports.

To the common people of Europe, whose ancient nation-states are being dissolved by immigration, economic globalization, and the Eurocrats of Brussels, soccer provides a rare outlet for expressing their love of country. Unfortunately, in the minds of the ruling caste of Europe, the linkage between national pride and soccer hooliganism only reinforces their belief that all people of quality disdain patriotism.

Soccer, rugby, and American football evolved out of medieval English mass mêlées in which the livelier lads of rival villages would celebrate Shrove Tuesday by trying to propel an inflated pig’s bladder past the other mob. In England, soccer became the gentleman’s game played by thugs and rugby the thug’s game played by gentlemen.

Today, the English Premier League, which formed in 1992 with the backing of Rupert Murdoch’s satellite TV channel, is the biggest money circuit in all of soccer, with the most fans around the world. In contrast, the professional leagues in Brazil, home to the best playing talent, are moribund due to corruption, with almost all their best players in Europe.

Strikingly, one place where soccer is not terribly popular is in Britain’s cultural offspring. Being equally blessed with co-operative creativity, Canadians instead devised ice hockey and Australians developed Aussie rules football.

Similarly, Americans didn’t need to import soccer or rugby because we could cultivate our own variant. American football was adopted by the Republic’s commercial classes and refined into the most perfect sport for television the world has known. While soccer remains hamstrung by the need to keep the game affordable in the Third World, Americans could adopt costly innovations such as separate offensive and defensive units that make the football far more exciting than soccer, where tired players often visibly dog it around the field.

In summary, Americans play soccer—at least until we are co-ordinated enough to try other sports—but we don’t watch it on TV. Quite possibly, we’ve found the world’s best way to deal with soccer. ■

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IN ENGLAND, SOCCER BECAME THE GENTLEMAN’S GAME PLAYED BY THUGS AND RUGBY THE THUG’S GAME PLAYED BY GENTLEMEN.

wrestling. To the American alienists, however, lauding foreign nativists illustrates their cultural and moral superiority over their fellow Americans.

Outside the U.S., soccer players don’t start out too bright on average and a lifetime of bouncing balls off their skulls doesn’t improve matters. Not surprisingly, soccer statistics only recently surpassed the rudimentary. If Bill James, the great baseball numbers analyst, had been born in a soccer country, he would have expired of mental inanition.

In Tony Blair’s vulgarized Cool Britannia, it looks like the class war is over and the chavs have won. Even the most

While soccer is usually extolled or derided as a Eurosport—Tom Piatak calls it “the metric system in short pants”—it is actually another triumph of Anglo-Saxon culture. Sports have been played all over the world for all of history, but 19th-century Britain and its offshoots possessed a genius for self-organization. The Victorian emphasis on fair play created enough trust for local sportsmen to be able to co-operate nationally. Most of today’s major spectator sports, such as baseball, basketball, track and field, ice hockey, boxing, cricket, tennis, and golf, were formalized by English-speakers in the 1800s.

Wasteland of Wealth

Is the purpose of life—and work—only money?

By Chilton Williamson Jr.

ARISTOTLE, in the *Politica*, held that the nature of a thing is its end. From this, he concluded that “the quality of courage, for example, is not intended to make wealth, but to inspire confidence; neither is this the aim of the general’s or the physician’s art; but the one aims at victory and the other at health.” While the political leader, the general, and the physician must earn a living, beyond that necessity wealth is an incidental, not a primary, aim of their profession. “Nevertheless,” Aristotle acknowledges, “some men turn every quality or art into a means of getting wealth; this they conceive to be the end, and to the promotion of the end they think all things must contribute.” Unlike the citizens of 4th-century Athens, it scarcely occurs to those of the 21st-century West that anyone would think otherwise. That is the principal distinction between the civilization of the ancients and the barbarism in which modern men and women dwell in self-imposed captivity.

For the West, there is ultimately no purpose, no reason, no standard, no justification for, nor comprehension of, anything but the wealth it produces or attracts to itself. Here is the cause of the drab uniformity of secular capitalist democracy, its deadness of soul, its spiritual and social malaise, its intellectual morabundity, its perversity, its destructiveness, its craziness, its fundamental insanity. The industrial wasteland that Eliot described—a wasteland of smuts, dead weeds, rickety typewriters, squalid flats, and foldaway beds—like the spiritual one he also deplored, is the byprod-

uct merely of another, greater wasteland that has since spread itself about the entire world. This is the wasteland of wealth, where nothing can grow but money, and money, like a noxious weed, crowds out and kills all else, since nothing save money can live, let alone flourish, on lucre alone.

A more mundane way of saying the same thing is to remark that today, “It’s all about the bottom line.” Yet if this amounts to a trite observation, it is also a mostly unexplored and unplumbed one. What, really, are the consequences to a society whose sole criterion by which to assess governmental efficacy, general prosperity, social well-being and content, good health, educational attainment, intellectual, artistic, and scientific accomplishment, enjoyment and appreciation of the natural world, and what used to be called gracious living is the amount of money produced or consumed by these things? A knowledge of history, of course, would give us a very close idea of what those consequences are. However, since the history taught today is largely a smattering of ideological factoids gleaned from rude accounts of uncivilized or semi-civilized peoples, real history is mostly unavailable to all but that tiny remnant, the truly educated. So perhaps an inductive approach to the question is of greater use than the historical one. What are the observed as well as the expectable results for a great nation in substituting a particular end for a near infinity of others to which it is only indirectly connected?

The first thing to be said is that if the nature of a thing is indeed its end, then

the end of a thing is its nature—so that, if everything has the same end, then all things are the same. Politics, finance, poetry, music, architecture, philosophy, medicine, agriculture, sports, amusements, cooking—all these supposedly various activities are in fact identical: that is to say, they are commercial.

I recall reading the casual statement “America is a commercial society” and being struck by that simple sentence. I cannot say why I found it striking, as nothing on earth could be more obvious. Perhaps, that is why the fact is so seldom put that way. Rather, we say, “America is a democratic society,” or “America is a capitalist society”—better yet, “America is a democratic-capitalist society.” “Commercial” by comparison sounds so humdrum, so bourgeois, so small-minded, unheroic, and petty, calling to mind Napoleon’s contemptuous dismissal of the “nation of shopkeepers” (in our own case, mallkeepers). Nevertheless, it conveys the reality of America best.

It is clear what elemental and total violence is done to a thing when it is perverted from its inherent end to some subsidiary, and even contradictory, one. (In this way, the novel as Austen wrote it becomes *The Da Vinci Code*, a 19th-century farm dinner is recreated as Meal Number 5 on a Denny’s menu.) But remember, we have declared all ends to be the same today, and therefore all things! And so, who should complain? The answer is: all who appreciate diversity in human existence and long for more of it, not less. When everyone—the politician, the lawyer, the businessman,