

## THE CUP OF LOGISTICS?

Very impressive the performance of the Dutch against Spain, specially in the second half. While the Spanish stars showed tiredness, the veterans Arjel Robben and Van Persie, and the excellent young defenders were running as the game was just starting. A magnificent display of physical fitness.

It's a very curious thing, because, at first sight, the logistics chosen by the Dutch team in this tiring Cup may seem daring, and certainly would not be adopted in any case by other teams, including Brazil. The Dutchmen are hosted in the Cesar Park Hotel, in the prestigious neighborhood of Ipanema, very well known by its charming beach and beautiful girls, lots of nightly entertaining options, the vicinity of Copacabana, the famous touristic point, and also of Leblon, equally attractive by its restaurants, bars, theaters, bookshops opened until late hours, etc. Ipanema is worldwide famous by the song "Garota de Ipanema" ("Girl from Ipanema"), by Antonio Carlos Jobim (who gives his name to the International Airport of Rio de Janeiro), translated to English to be recorded by Frank Sinatra. Maybe too much entertaining... But it seems the Dutch commanders used a good strategy, allowing the players' wives to join them at the hotel. As a matter of fact, there was news in the media about certain exaggerations perpetrated by Arjel Robben, who arrived (?) early (in the morning) one day at the hotel; however, as it became clear during the game, Robben was wonderfully conditioned.

The Ipanema location makes all sense after we are informed that the Dutch team elected as its training center the facilities of the well known Flamengo, the Flamengo of Zico, the most popular team of Brazil, which are far roughly ten or fifteen minutes from the hotel. Very clever: it's very comfortable, the Dutchmen put in the contract they would repair the grass, the gym equipments and other facilities, so they now have an excellent and very inspiring place to prepare themselves, a place which contains lots of sweet memories of glories achieved in Maracanã, the venue of the final. That was good business both for the Dutch and Flamengo.

Besides that, the hotel is not far from the Rebouças Tunnel, an important route to the airport, by which they reach their plane in about 50 minutes, not bad compared to other locations in the city.

Therefore, the logistics chosen could be not that appropriate for the "common" people, but maybe for the Dutchmen is the finest possible: they can train well and comfortably, they will not suffer from boredom for sure, provided they will not fall into mundane temptations, since they can count on their wives for the necessary moral support... I remember once I travelled to Holland to participate, for the first time, in the World Solving Chess Championship, in Rotterdam 1991. I wanted to know Amsterdam, and I spent four days and nights there: not the best possible choice, I was seduced by the nightly and daily attractions of the city in summer. I must say I arrived in Rotterdam completely out of shape...Then, I thought, "If someone can concentrate himself in Amsterdam in the summer, so he can do that in any place." Maybe this is the secret of the Dutch team: they are used to concentrate in the most tempting vicinities...

It is evident that in this World Cup in Brazil the logistics aspects are very important. The distances between the venues can be very large, so can be the differences between them in terms of whether conditions. It seems almost all the teams paid great attention and care to this point. The Dutchmen contracted with Flamengo early in 2011, when they were not yet sure they would qualify! But only they were so "liberal" in their choice of place to stay. For example, the Germans built an entire resort for them in the coast of Bahia, near Porto Seguro (an important touristic point), not far from Salvador, where they will play their first, and very important, match against Portugal, next Monday. It's equipped with all training and hosting facilities, it's very agreeable, for sure, but at the same time very quiet.