

Published July 21st, 2010

## Vamos España! Lamorinda Cheers for the World Cup Champions

By Sophie Braccini



Spain finally scores, and the crowd jumps to its feet  
Photo Andy Scheck

brought the girls, also supported Spain. "We are here because of the Spanish students and of the wonderful experience it is for us to have them in our home," said Bremer.

Maritza and Mia Grillo of Orinda play for the Lamorinda Soccer Club. "Our coach recommended that we see the games," said the older sister, "Spain's game is more offensive, all along the Cup they have been in possession of the ball for longer periods than their adversaries and occupied their field more; they should win." Her younger sister added that the Netherlands' reputation for having the best defense could pose a challenge. The Grillos' grandmother, Lupita Sutton, was born in Barcelona and was traveling in Europe with her granddaughters and the rest of the family at the beginning of the championship. "It was so passionate in Europe, all the bars had TV where the games were broadcast, everyone was into it, it was great fun," she said. Sutton and her granddaughters could be heard throughout the game cheering for their favorite team.

In fact, few were listening to the live commentary that accompanied the broadcast; most were making their own observations and discussing play with their neighbors. Some spectators were there just for the love of the game rather than to cheer on a favorite team; a few couples were split in their preferences. "I support the Netherlands," said Lonnie Treat of Moraga, "just because I have very good friends there," while her husband Chuck, who has been both a player and a referee himself, supported Spain.

During the very aggressive game, the crowd protested every time a Dutch player crossed the line and fouled an opponent. All together 14 yellow cards were handed out, and Dutch player Johnny Heitinga was finally expelled from the game. That proved to be the turning point. With the score at 0-0, the game went into overtime. Spain had been unable to overcome the Dutch defense. The Spanish goalie and team captain, Iker Casillas, had made one of the best saves of the championship from the ground with the tip of his shoe. But one less man in orange was enough to create an opportunity for the Spanish team, and Andres Iniesta finally scored the only goal of the evening.

At the New Rheem Theatre, the crowd jumped to its collective feet and exploded in joy.

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Manager Beau Behan had to turn away some 100 people who hoped to enter the New Rheem Theatre on July 11, so popular was the free live broadcast of the soccer World Cup championship game. Five additional rows of chairs were added on the floor of the largest theater, and roughly 500 soccer fans of all shapes and sizes had already found their way inside. During the long game some lights stayed on, spectators ate and drank on the premises, and were stirred in unison as Spain and the Netherlands fought it out. From a soccer perspective it was a jerky and indecisive game and spectators had to wait until the 116th minute to see the first and only goal. From the perspective of the Lamorinda audience, it was pure fun.

It was clear from the outset that the majority of the crowd wanted to see Spain come out on top.

Marta Barrasa and Virian Trigo, 17 year-old high school exchange students from Spain who are living with Lamorinda families this summer, were proud and excited to be viewing the big game live. "If we win it will be the first time we are world champions," said Trigo just before the game, "We are already the European champion; having both titles would be unheard of." "Vamos España!" added Barrasa in happy anticipation. Elizabeth Bremer of Lafayette, who