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**1) ARMCHAIR MIDFIELDER [A Look Back: '96 & '00 Olympics]**

*A monthly column about the State of U.S. Soccer that takes a hard look at everything from the performance of the U.S. National Teams to pro soccer in the good 'ole U-S-of-A . If you're looking for a viewpoint that you won't see in a generic, nuts-and-bolts U.S. Soccer press release, you've come to the right place.*

*This is it—the last chance for the 91ers / the Fab Five / Mia and the Gang, whatever you want to call these living legends. After grabbing gold in '96, the U.S. was dealt a blow to their dynasty in 2000, settling for silver. This time around they hope to get back to the top of the medal stand. Anything else will be a letdown. Sure, the U.S. would graciously accept bronze, but this isn't like a McDonald's Happy Meal--you don't want to collect all three prizes. To see how the U.S. performance in Athens is stacking up, we reminisce about our great runs in the first two Olympic Women's Football Tournaments.*

**1996**

Coming off a failed title defense and a third place finish at Sweden 1995, the pressure, although not nearly as overwhelming as what players carried on their backs in the summer of '99, was on the U.S. women. In the Golden Era of the 90s, failing to win two consecutive world championships was not an option. When the USA's mantra of the decade is as audacious as "Win Forever," the team is expected to do just that: win, win, win.

Besides the desire to maintain the standard of excellence that the team established with its win at the first ever Women's World Cup in 1991, the players undoubtedly had added motivation to win the first ever Olympic tournament to add to their legacy. Fortunately, the U.S. Women would have the luxury of attempting this historic feat right in their backyard and entered the Atlanta Games as the tournament favorite. (In fact, the team opened tournament play in Orlando, Fla., just a few miles from where they had been in residency since February of that year.) Like the 1999 Women's World Cup a few years later, they didn't disappoint, edging their rival China to win the world championship.

## **Opening Round**

### USA 3, Denmark 0 – Citrus Bowl; Orlando, Fla. – July 21, 1996

Lumped in Group E with rival China, the U.S. had its work cut out for them in the early going in order to advance to the medal round. The U.S. cruised in its opener, downing Denmark 3-0 on July 21 at the Citrus Bowl in Orlando, Fla. Versatile midfielder Tisha Venturini scored the first of her two Olympic goals to give the U.S. a 1-0 lead in the 37<sup>th</sup> minute, with Hamm striking just four minutes later for a 2-0 halftime lead. Speed demon Tiffeny Milbrett would clinch the game in the 49<sup>th</sup> minute, scoring her first of two in the tourney.

### USA 2, Sweden 1 – Citrus Bowl; Orlando, Fla. – July 23, 1996

Next up was Sweden, who was coming off a disappointing performance as host of the WWC just a year ago but was led by a core of veterans like legendary midfielder Pia Sundhage. The U.S. was up to the task, spurred on by another opening goal by Venturini (this time in the 59<sup>th</sup> minute) and a rocket from Shannon MacMillan three minutes later. Now sitting on a comfortable 2-0 lead, the U.S. turned right around and allowed the Swedes back into the game off an own goal. But the insertion of midfielder Tiffany Roberts for Milbrett in the 66<sup>th</sup> minute helped the U.S. control the match the rest of the way for the 2-1 win.

### USA 0, China 0 – Orange Bowl; Miami, Fla. – July 25, 1996

Now the U.S. had to face a dangerous China team that had shut out Sweden 2-0 in their opener and rolled over Denmark 5-1. But with both teams sitting at 2-0 with six points atop the group, they were both assured of advancing to the semifinal medal round. With that in mind, and knowing that they would likely meet again in the final, this third opening match for each team was expectedly played in a very cautious fashion. U.S. head coach Tony DiCicco was without Mia Hamm due to a minor injury and he pulled Milbrett after the 30<sup>th</sup> minute to save his top two forwards for the crucial semifinal three days later. The two teams played to a scoreless draw, with neither showing its full hand, and China finished first in Group G based on superior goal differential (+6 to the USA's +4).

## **Medal Round (Single Elimination)**

### USA 2, Norway 1 (ot) – Sanford Stadium; Athens, Ga. – July 28, 1996

Similar to what could be the case in Greece this year, the USA's opponent in the semifinals was the reigning world champion. In this case, it was Norway, who presented the toughest of physical battles, due to their hard-nosed players and trademark long-ball style. For this knockout round, the tournament finally moved from outlying venues in Florida, Washington, D.C., and Birmingham, Ala., to the state of Georgia, with the semifinal doubleheader taking place just down the road (okay, 75 miles) from Atlanta in Athens. In the first match, the U.S. watched Chinese forward Wei Haiying equalize the match at 2- versus Brazil in the 83<sup>rd</sup> minute and then lift her team to the gold medal match with a strike in the 90<sup>th</sup> minute. The result would provide a dose of foreshadowing for the game that followed, as the U.S. uncharacteristically gave up an early goal in 18<sup>th</sup> minute and found themselves in the rare position of being down a goal, only to roar back and tie the game through a Michelle Akers penalty kick in the 76<sup>th</sup> minute and then win on a golden goal by Shannon MacMillan in the 100th minute that still stands as one of the most important in the history of the U.S. Women's National Team program.

### USA 2, China 1 – Sanford Stadium; Athens, Ga. – August 1, 1996

The table was set for a classic final worthy of the first ever Olympic gold medal match for Women's Football: the U.S. facing China, for the first ever title of its kind, in front of the largest crowd to watch a women's soccer match to date. With the crowd of more than 75,000 behind them, DiCicco decided to have the team come out

swinging, using a 3-4-3 formation with the quick and talented trio of Hamm, Milbrett and MacMillan wreaking havoc up top. MacMillan scored in the 19<sup>th</sup> minute, only to have Chinese star Sun Wen strike back in the 32<sup>nd</sup> minute. The 1-1 draw lasted into the final third of the match, but Milbrett helped deliver the gold and claim her spot in women's soccer history by converting on a breakaway in the 68<sup>th</sup> minute for the final 2-1 result. The Golden Girls had their second world championship in three attempts.

## **2000**

The U.S. came into the 2000 tournament riding high. They were the defending Women's World Cup and Olympic champions, and under new head coach April Heinrichs they had picked up four trophies in the calendar year as part of their extensive preparations for Sydney. But as confident as they were heading into the tournament, they were also tired, having played an unprecedented 33 matches before stepping on the field in Melbourne. That exhaustive number of matches in the eight months prior to the Olympics was more than the U.S. had played in any 12-month span in its entire 15-year history. The U.S. was also competing in a world championship for the first time without a pair of legends in defender and captain Carla Overbeck and Michelle Akers, who to this day stands as arguably the best women's soccer player of all time. But the U.S. performed admirably in Australia, advancing to the gold medal match before falling just short in overtime of the final.

### **Opening Round**

#### USA 2, Norway 0 – Cricket Ground; Melbourne, Australia – Sept. 14, 2000

The USA's performance in the first round in Australia was similar to that in the U.S. four years earlier, posting a 2-0-1 record in the Group of Death, with their only blemish a draw with an always tough China squad. The U.S. opened against old rival Norway, who had taken them down in the '95 WWC. This time, the U.S. took it to them early and often, with Milbrett converting a rebound of a shot that was saved by Norway 'keeper Bente Nordby in the 18<sup>th</sup> minute, Hamm scoring a second goal in the 24<sup>th</sup> and Milbrett hitting the woodwork twice before the half. The 2-0 score held up, as the U.S. back line of Kate Markgraf (nee Sobrero), Brandi Chastain, Joy Fawcett and Christie Rampone (nee Pearce) diffused the now predictable and less effective long-ball attack for the entire match.

#### USA 1, China 1 – Cricket Ground; Melbourne, Australia – Sept. 17, 2000

The U.S. was equally impressive in their second match against China, but as in '96, could only muster a draw despite outplaying their counterpart through the majority of the match. Current captain Julie Foudy got the U.S. on the board in the 38<sup>th</sup> minute, heading home a corner kick at the far post, but Sun Wen brought China back by curling a free kick into the top corner of the goal in the 67<sup>th</sup> minute. The U.S. had a chance for the win, but superkeeper Gao Hong stretched to save Kristine Lilly's penalty kick effort after a handball had been called in the Chinese box.

#### USA 3, Nigeria 1 – Cricket Ground; Melbourne, Australia – Sept. 20, 2000

Playing their third game without travel in Melbourne, the U.S. was already happy with four points from its first two matches, but needed a win over Nigeria to top Group F. The U.S. came out with guns a-blazin', as Brandi Chastain knocked in a loose ball off a corner in the 26<sup>th</sup> minute and Kristine Lilly made it 2-0 in the 39<sup>th</sup> minute with a low blast that deflected off a Nigerian defender to fool goalie Anna Chiejine. Nigeria came out like the U.S. in the second half, pulling a goal back in a matter of three minutes from "Marvelous" Mercy Akide, but a thunderous free kick from MacMillan sealed their fate in the 56<sup>th</sup> minute.

## **Medal Round (Single Elimination)**

USA 1, Brazil 0 – Bruce Stadium; Canberra, Australia – Sept. 24, 2000

By claiming the top spot in Group F, the U.S. avoided a tough semifinal match with a much-improved German team that had gone 3-0 in Group E and outscored its opponents 6-1. But still, the U.S. had to go through an always tricky Brazilian squad in a bit of déjà vu from the Women's World Cup less than a year earlier. Again, the U.S. would prevail, with the U.S. applying constant pressure and thwarting Brazil's dangerous counterattacks. Mia Hamm was in the right place at the right time to score the lone goal in the 60<sup>th</sup> minute, finishing a loose ball after Milbrett had collided with Andreia. The U.S. continued to frustrate the Brazilians and pulled out a close result in a brutal physical battle that yielded seven yellow card cautions.

Norway 3, USA 2 (ot) – Football Stadium; Sydney, Australia – Sept. 28, 2000

With the win over Brazil, the U.S. was rewarded by finally having the chance to join the rest of the Olympic action in the Sydney home base. But their exhausted and bruised bodies only had a few days to recuperate before facing another physical test against the toughest team in Europe. The U.S. had solved their playing style in the opener, but that day Norway brought a fire that was missing from the first contest. It didn't take long for little Tiff Milbrett to utilize her speed against the Scandinavian's size, scoring in the fifth minute. The U.S. looked well on its way to victory until defender Gro Espeth headed home a corner kick just before halftime that evened the match. While the game was essentially reset with the beginning of the second half, Norway entered with clear momentum, and it grew even more so when Ragnhild Gulbrandsen scored on a second header goal in the 78<sup>th</sup> minute. With just over 10 minutes to play, the U.S. pushed feverishly for the equalizer, and got it with just 18 seconds left in regulation when Milbrett, the smallest player on the field, rose to score on a header in the 90<sup>th</sup> minute and make it 2-2. But in the first 15-minute overtime period, Norway regained the edge and took advantage of both a miscommunication between Fawcett and goalkeeper Siri Mullinix and a no-call on a handball, as Dagny Mellgren converted to give Norway the title and end what was easily one of the best women's football matches of all time. It's tough to say if things would have been different with Akers in place of defensive midfielder successor Lorrie Fair and Scurry in goal instead of the less experienced Siri Mullinix, but in the end the U.S. just came up short in a dramatic overtime that could have gone either way. Lady Luck was not with the U.S. on that day, and for that, they bowed to accept silver while wiping away tears of disappointment.

## **2004**

For a recap of how things have gone so far for the U.S. women, check out "Mark That Calendar" below.

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## **"BEHIND CLOSED DOORS"**

*A section that will let you get to know the real personalities of your favorite Men's, Women's and Youth National Team players through various funny and unique first-person accounts. In this issue, you'll find:*

### **2) IN 3's (w/ WNT midfielder Julie Foudy)**

*What's it going to be? Door number one, door number two, or door number THREE?!? Okay, so this section has less to do with "Let's Make A Deal" and more to do with the Multiple Choice section of an SAT test. "In 3's" peeks inside the head of a select National Team player as they pick one of three choices for 20-some questions about personal tastes and pop culture.*

*Most of you know the basics about Julie Foudy: captain and head jokester of the U.S. Women's*

*National Team, member of the 200-cap club, former med student at Stanford and politically aware former President of the Women's Sports Foundation. But what else makes Jules tick? Read on and find out.*

Geography:

Favorite big city in the U.S.: Chicago, LA or NYC?

"NYC, baby. It satisfies all my addictions in one place. Great restaurants, electric atmosphere, a place to run in a beautiful park, the theatre and world class shopping."

Favorite place you've lived: Palo Alto, San Diego or Manhattan Beach?

"Tough one, but Manhattan Beach. Although I love San Diego, the actual beach of Manhattan sets it apart. It's big, white and sandy with a ton of volleyball nets already up and great surf, so it is really swim-friendly. It's also got a cute little downtown. It has a community feel, and I lived 100 yards from the beach. And I had great neighbors. How do you beat that?"

Messiest roommate at the Manhattan Beach pad: Brandi, Lill or Mia?

"Myself. I like my piles; piles of clothes, mail, notes, catalogs... However Mia did leave an unopened jar of pickles on the kitchen counter for two months. We didn't touch them for two months to see if she would put them in the cabinet. She finally figured out what we were laughing about and put them away."

Best place for shopping: Santa Monica, Beverly Hills or Fashion Valley Mall (in San Diego)?

"Beverly Hills is way too pricey and posh for me. I don't do well in the boutiques. They give me the 'Pretty Woman Treatment.' Santa Monica I like, but you just cannot beat Fashion Valley. It's one of the best malls in the country."

Favorite way to enjoy the beach: lay out and read a book, go for a walk/bike ride or try to surf:

"Probably try to surf, except I am awful. I am not big on laying out. I like to toss the football around in the water. I have this great little Nerf ball that got a lot of use in Manhattan Beach. I like to play volleyball, but I was usually too tired. We actually did love the bikes. We had beach cruisers that we took out all the time."

Misc.:

Favorite kind of car: sports car, SUV or soccer mom minivan?

"I'm going to go with the 1970 VW Beetle. That could have been the best car of all time. I had a red one in high school that I called Herbie. My parents had to push-start me every morning at 6:30 a.m. in their robes because I had a 7 a.m. class."

Presidential candidate that will get your vote in November: Bush, Kerry or Nader?

"I would never vote for Nader because he is now taking money from Republicans and getting Republican signatures to get him on the ballot. So I am going with the Johns, Kerry and Edwards."

*[Obvious Editor's Note/Interjection: The opinions expressed here by Julie Foudy are in no way representative of the "Center Circle" editorial staff or the U.S. Soccer Federation.]*

Number of kids you'd like to have if/when you settle down: 1, 2 or a bunch?

"Two is a bunch, isn't it? I am hoping that when I finally have kids they have some technology where you can just sneeze and the kid pops out. My real answer would be two."

Most likely occupation after soccer: broadcaster, politician or Dunkin Donuts franchisee?

"I think I want to perform on Broadway in musicals. The only problem is I can't sing and I can't dance, but that would be my dream job."

Favorite section of *USA Today*: News (Front section), Sports or Life?

"Every paper I read the front section and Op-Ed because that has all the juice on the latest news in politics. I am trying to get our younger players to do the same. My husband grabs the sports, I grab the front and then we swap. It makes for a good marriage."

#### TV & Movies:

Favorite late night talk show host: Letterman, Conan or Jon Stewart?

"Jon Stewart. He's hilarious. I have never been on the show, but he is one funny dude."

Funniest movie starring Ben Stiller: "There's Something About Mary," "Meet the Parents" or "Dodgeball: A True Underdog Story"?

"None of the above. It's 'Zoolander.' I haven't even seen the whole thing, and I thought it was hilarious."

Funniest movie starring Will Ferrell: "Anchorman," "Old School" or "Elf"?

"That's too hard! I haven't seen 'Elf,' but I think 'Anchorman' was funnier than 'Old School,' but I have my husband and a lot of my teammates that will disagree with me. That's a close one."

Best description of moviemaker Michael Moore: "Unamerican," talented documentarian or well-informed smart-ass?

"He's definitely a well-informed smart ass, but with a ton of talent, too."

#### Soccer and Sports:

Favorite San Diego sports team (besides the Spirit): Chargers, Padres or Sockers?

"I gotta say the Chargers for my man Doug Flutie, but I love the Padres' new stadium, especially since it's a short walk from my place."

Favorite Olympic sport (besides soccer): Gymnastics, Swimming or Track & Field?

"Beach volleyball, except it's really hard to find on TV in Greece unless you want to watch the Greek teams. Although I wouldn't mind trying my hand at white-water kayaking after I retire from soccer."

Favorite Stanford alum-turned Olympic gold medal swimmer: Janet Evans, Jenny Thompson or Summer Sanders?

"I love Summer, she's my girl."

#### Food:

Favorite non-American food: Mexican, Italian or Asian?

"Indian, especially vegetable somosas for starters, moving to a medium spicy chicken tiki marsala, sometimes chicken khorma and lots of lots of nan bread."

Favorite pasta sauce: marinara, pesto or alfredo?

"I like the pink sauce, so if I don't have that, I mix the marinara and cream. The alfredo is too rich and the marinara is to tomato-y. I really like it when my mom throws in big chunks of spicy sausage."

Best California burger-and-fry fast food: Carl's Jr., In-and-Out or Jack in the Box?

"In-and-Out. I get 'the Animal.' It has everything on it. We had one right off the turn-off on the freeway in Manhattan Beach. After a hard day of training, we'd stop and chow down."

Worst vice: coffee, desserts or fast food?

"Desserts, desserts, desserts. I try and do the fruit thing after meals to avoid dessert. It doesn't work."

Favorite dessert (besides donuts or donut holes): cake, pie or ice cream?

"Brownies and cookies with ice cream on top. No nuts please. Chocolate sauce and caramel welcome."

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### **3) GEAR GALORE (WNT Jerseys)**

*In a new piece for 2004, we engage in some shameless self-promotion by spotlighting a different U.S. Soccer product each month, from the newest, state-of-the-art Nike apparel to all kinds of other exclusive U.S. Men's & Women's merch.*

August is all about Athens and the U.S. Women's National Team is already on its way to play for a gold medal at the 2004 Olympics. But if you're not one of the lucky few supporting them in person in Greece, now's your chance to get all the latest WNT gear to wear when you watch the team play live from your living room. For the first time ever, all of the women's offerings are together in one collection on [ussoccerstore.com](http://ussoccerstore.com).

The hottest new items on the website are the official Nike Women's National Team jerseys (either red or white) with the last name and number of some of your favorite players, including veterans Mia Hamm, Brandi Chastain and Briana Scurry, as well as young stars like Abby Wambach, Shannon Boxx and Cat Reddick.

This the first time that these unique jerseys have been available anywhere on the Internet, and there's no better time than now to buy a #9 or #6 to remember Mia and/or Brandi and the legacy they will leave behind upon their retirement from international soccer. There's no better way to celebrate the Golden Era of the U.S. Women's National Team than buying a special jersey of the team's two biggest stars. But as amazing as the past has been, the future looks just as bright. Abby Wambach's #20 jersey is perfect to help support the team for years and years to come.

*To order one of the specially made WNT jerseys now, click here:*

<http://www.ussoccerstore.com/wntjerseys.html>

U.S. Soccer also now offers some other perfect keepsake items in a collection of pins honoring the "91ers," otherwise known as the five veterans still on the team that helped win the first Women's World Cup title all the way back in 1991. Each of the five "91ers" pins – Chastain (#6), Hamm (#9), Joy Fawcett (#14), Julie Foudy (#11) and Kristine Lilly (#13) – has the player's jersey number, the U.S. Soccer crest and their signature by their name at the bottom. Fans can collect them individually for \$6.95 each or get them together for \$24.95.

*To check out these pins and the rest of the WNT collection, click here:*

<http://www.ussoccerstore.com/womens.html>

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#### 4) “QUERIES & ANECDOTES” (w/ MNT Manager Bruce Arena)

*Off-the-wall Questions and Answers, Queries and Anecdotes from U.S. Men’s National Team Manager Bruce Arena.*

*With the U.S. Men’s National Team revving up for the next stretch of the Road to Germany 2006, we sat down for a phoner with the de facto dean of American soccer. But instead of grilling him about the semi-final round of qualifying, we picked his brain with 15 questions about everything from the state of MLS, to the state of his golf game, to the state of the union.*

Center Circle: We'll start off with some softies. You looked like you were having fun coaching the MLS World Stars against the MLS USA '94 squad before the All-Star Game a few weeks ago. What was it like coaching all of those legends, and in a sense, against the U.S. Men's National Team?

Bruce Arena: “Well, that was just a fun exercise, to welcome back players from the league. In all fairness, that game was not played in that much of a serious manner. It was just a friendly game, an enjoyable game that was really dedicated to those players and to thank them. It wasn't something that I'd put at the top of my coaching memories in the sport, however, it was certainly an honor to have around guys that played for me such as Etcheverry or guys like Valderrama, Campos and other great players.”

CC: With MLS missing some of the legendary playmakers like Valderrama, Etcheverry, Cienfuegos and Preki that helped make the league what it is, do you think MLS is suffering at all from a lack of creativity and/or attacking standpoint in 2004?

BA: “Sure. The MLS now is a league for young players. It's a league where there's a lot of running, a lot of battling, and obviously when you don't have players such as a Valderrama or an Etcheverry, games are going to get a little more hectic, and that's probably like the league is right now. It's a fast league, it's a running league, it's an aggressive league. In time, as Americans keep developing, I think the league will be altered, and I think the league will be bringing in other quality foreigners.”

CC: With the loss of more and more top Americans to teams in Europe, do you think there are enough good young American players to fill out another two teams and keep the level of play in MLS on the up and up?

BA: “I think there are definitely enough good young American players. I don't think that will be an issue. I think the league is going to continue to move forward, because it's beginning to turn the corner somewhat financially, and it will allow them to reinvest in players. We'll see next year that the quality won't drop off at all.”

CC: Who has impressed you in MLS play this season that you have yet to call into a MNT camp?

BA: “I think two of the young players that are in our camp now – Eddie Johnson and Eddie Gaven – have done very well. I think Chad Marshall of Columbus continues to grow as a player. I think Clint Dempsey has had an outstanding year and is probably the lead candidate for Rookie of the Year. He's a guy that I think could have a future with us. I think a young player like Justin Mapp in Chicago continues to show that he's a player that will continue to get better and perhaps challenge for a position on the National Team. I think every team in the league, as you look around, are developing good young players. Another player that has blossomed as of late is Mike Magee of the MetroStars. I just think there are a lot of good young American players and the future is bright for the league, and hopefully, the future is bright for the National Team.”

CC: How many years in MLS will it take before Freddy Adu is one of the top players in the league?

BA: “I don't know the answer to that question. It's important that he moves along at the right pace. I think the

expectations were too great in the early going, and as the pressure has subsided, he's had a chance to breathe a little bit and been able to get on the field and be a little bit better. But at this point in time, he's clearly behind a lot of players in the league on a physical side. Technically, he's a good player, but tactically, he's got a ways to go. I'd like to believe that in a short period of time he's going to develop into a pretty good player. The time frame, whether it's a year, two years, three years, four years, in the end, Freddy's going to surface into being one of the better players in the league."

CC: Which two teams do you think will end up in the MLS Cup in November?

BA: "I don't need to be a genius to say this, that the top three teams in the West are San Jose, L.A. and Kansas City. I think in the East, very little separates one team from the other. However, in all fairness, the MetroStars have been the best team in the Eastern Conference, but over the next six to eight games that could change as well. It's really hard to tell. I guess I'm saying that there's a lot of parity in the league, and clearly, I think there's about six or seven teams that are very close to each other."

CC: I'm sure you saw in a recent *Soccer America* column where Paul Gardner stated that the current environment at U.S. Soccer is such that there is no fear you might lose your job if the team suffers a stretch of poor results. How off-base is that notion?

BA: "I didn't read it that closely; I skimmed through it. I think he's trying to say that there's no pressure here. The pressure in this job is different than it would be in a higher-developed soccer country. It's true. For whatever reason, our National Team hasn't gotten its due respect by sports fans in the United States, and therefore, there's a smaller media following and smaller fan following, and it tends to create an atmosphere that's not as intense as it's going to be in another countries in the world. When the National Team plays in a lot of countries, everything stops and all the focus is on the National Team. Obviously, that's not the case in the United States. I think that's what he meant."

CC: What was the single best memory of your first four years as U.S. MNT coach? Maybe a specific game?

BA: "Certainly, the 2002 World Cup. I don't think there was one game more important than the other. Just getting there, one, and then playing like a team that belonged there, and certainly capping it with a tremendous effort against Germany in the quarterfinals."

CC: Who is the most talented player that has worn a National Team jersey in your tenure?

BA: "It's not one particular player. Certainly our current captain Claudio Reyna would have to be up there. Our goalkeepers are talented, our young ones like Beasley and Donovan are very good. There's so many good players. Eddie Pope has been a rock for U.S. Soccer for many years. In all due respect to the players, I don't think you can single out one over another."

CC: Which MNT player do you think is primed to have the best season overseas?

BA: "I think Beasley will do well at PSV. I think the league and the way it's set up, obviously with PSV and Ajax clearly being the cream of the crop, that's going to help DaMarcus and his transition there. I think Claudio is going to have a breakout season with Man-City if he stays healthy, and I think Bocanegra should have a very good second year at Fulham. Cherundolo is captain at Hannover, and that says a lot for him. All of our guys are now very experienced and proven professionals in Europe and there's no reason to believe they can't all have good years."

CC: How many hours of soccer do you think you watch in an average week?

BA: "I would say....between 30 and 40 hours."

CC: Who was or is your biggest influence as a coach?

BA: "It's not any soccer coaches in the world, and not any particular coach, but clearly I've been influenced by coaches in all sports in our country: the NBA, NFL, Major League Baseball, college basketball and college football. I could name 10-15 coaches that are outstanding professional coaches in their sport, and those would be the people. Like a Bill Parcells, like a Mike Krzyzewski, like a Larry Brown, like a Pat Riley, like a Joe Torre. Those types of coaches I've followed and tried to see how they run their team, and whether any of that stuff is relevant to what I do. A lot of the top professional coaches in this country have been role models for me."

CC: Now switching to the personal side of things. What's the best and worst thing about the game of golf?

BA: "The best thing about the game of golf is hitting a good shot and getting a birdie. The worst is having a nightmare. I mean, talk about a range of emotions in sport. It's like that in every sport, but golf is certainly, for amateurs like myself ... it can be a wide range of emotions on each and every shot. But hitting a clean shot, striking the ball perfectly with a particular club, there's not a better feeling. Certainly, a birdie is what every golfer lives for."

CC: How many times in an average round of 18 holes do you get that clean fairway drive?

BA: "I've actually had days where I've hit the fairway, when you exclude the par 3's and have 14 opportunities to hit the fairway, I've had days where I hit the fairway 10 or 12 times...and the second without any trouble, but I've had those moments. Not a lot. In fact, if I had a lot I wouldn't be coaching soccer."

CC: What's an ideal night out with Phyllis?

BA: "An ideal night out with my wife would probably just be having dinner somewhere. At our age, we like our ideal nights at home."

CC: How long will Howard Stern be around on national airwaves?

BA: "I would think he'd be around for as long as he wants. I don't think any of these issues with the FCC are going to hold. I think it's a violation of freedom of speech. I think with his popularity and him being number one in most major markets, certainly his company is going to want him on the airwaves and I don't think anything with the federal government is going to amount to anything. He's going to be on the radio as long as he wants to be."

CC: And you're going to be listening for as long as he's on?

BA: "Yeah, I think so. He's on in my office every morning."

CC: And finally, who do you think will be our next president?

BA: "I don't know. I think it's going to be an election that's going to go right down to the wire. Whoever has the momentum in the last couple of weeks will win. Certainly the issue with the war and the economy are going to be factors in those last couple of weeks. It's that simple, and it's going to be that close."

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## 5) "MARK THAT CALENDAR"

**WNT vs. Japan – Friday, August 20 @ 11 a.m. ET**

**[LIVE on MSNBC, Telemundo and ussoccer.com's MatchTracker]**

*A stern reminder about an upcoming U.S. Soccer-related event, whether you plan to check it out live and in person, on the "telly" or that wacky world wide web.*

It's a case of "good news, bad news" in Greece for the U.S. Women's National Team. What do you want to hear first? The good news? Good choice.

The good news is that the U.S. Women continued their unbeaten streak in the opening round of Olympic competition while giving up just one goal in three games, defeating Greece 3-0 on Aug. 11, edging Brazil 2-0 on Aug. 14 and drawing 1-1 with Australia on Aug. 17. Need more good news? Well, Abby and Mia continue to spark the U.S. offense, with each player scoring in both of the opening round wins. And the defense looks solid, with Joy Fawcett shutting down even the quickest of opponents and owning our third with Ms. Perfect, Briana Scurry.

Now for the bad. We're not complaining here, nor demanding perfection, in what is an extremely difficult tournament set-up, but it's fair to say that the U.S. Women don't look as dominating or as sharp as we're used to seeing them. We probably should've scored a couple more goals against Greece, could've been down 2-nil at halftime versus Brazil and then without Abby, had trouble breaking down a defense that we scored three goals against in one half with her in the lineup less than a month ago.

Now for more of the bad. Standing in our path just to GET to the gold medal match are Japan and Germany, two teams that have given us problems in recent years. Up first in the quarterfinals on Friday (Aug. 20) is Japan, who we've only been able to draw in the last three meetings, including the last meeting on June 6 in Louisville, Ky. Abby and Mia will have to be in top form in the attack, while Shannon Boxx will be counted on to shut down their star Homare Sawa in order to meet the reigning world champs for a chance at WWC revenge in the medal round.

Fans can follow the match live on MSNBC and Telemundo at 11 a.m. ET or on ussoccer.com's MatchTracker, presented by Philips Electronics.

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#### **6) "DESERTED ISLAND DISCS" (w/ U-19 WNT midfielder Angie Woznuk)**

*Chances are that U.S. Youth National Team star Angie Woznuk will never end up on a deserted island. But if she did, she wouldn't be there for long, especially with her 82 first cousins and the rest of her massive extended family forming the search party. The 19-year-old from El Cajon, Calif., who is known as "Wozilla" to teammates, is one of the top scorers for both the U.S. Under-19 Women's National Team and the University of Portland. But this Fall, the 5-5 midfielder will be taking a break from nutmegging opponents in college soccer in help the U.S. defend their world title in Thailand from November 10-27. Below are Angie's favorite five albums if and when that deserted island thing ever happens.*

#### Maroon 5, "Songs About Jane" (Octone Records, 2002):

"I love listening to this CD when I have a lot of spare time. It has a great mixture of slow and upbeat songs. It also makes me think of my boyfriend--he thinks he looks like the lead singer. I like how their voices are real--they sound just as good in concert as they do on their CD."

#### Switchfoot, "The Beautiful Letdown" (RED Ink/Columbia, 2003):

"This is one of my favorite CDs to listen to at night before I go to bed. His voice is just so different from any other singer, and I can relate to the words in a lot of his songs. This is one of those CDs that makes you reflect and think about life. For some reason I tend to look in the mirror at the person I have become, and question if it is who I want to be."

Rascal Flatts, "Melt" (Hollywood, 2002):

"This has to be one of the best CD's ever made. Every song is soooo good. You can listen to the whole CD over and over again and never get tired of it. It's one of those CD's that can put me in a good mood no matter what."

Watashi Wa, "The Love of Live" (Tooth & Nail, 2003):

"I would like to have this band with me on an island because they are a more spiritual type of group. Each song that they write really has a lot of meaning behind it. It just really relaxes me and takes my mind off any bad situations that may be going on in my life."

Evanescence, "Fallen" (Wind-up, 2003):

"I love this artist because she has such a different voice. And this is also where Erik (my boyfriend) took me for our first date. So it really brings back a lot of good memories. This is the first concert I had ever gone to, so it has a lot of meaning behind it for me."

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## **7) CAN YOU HAIKU? (MNT Semifinal Qualifying)**

*Our brand new "Can You Haiku?" piece was so popular in the July issue of that we're taking the "if it ain't broke..." approach and offered another forum for you to express your views and zen-like thoughts about a given topic through some simple and beautiful haiku poetry.*

*As you might know from last month, the popular Japanese form is traditionally made up of three lines of separate thoughts that together tell about the same simple subject matter, with the number of syllables restricted to: 5 in the first line, 7 in the second line and 5 in the third line.*

*With the U.S. Men having opened the semifinal round of FIFA 2006 World Cup Qualifying against Jamaica on August 18, they are the topic of this month's "Can You Haiku?" Here are the top responses, some of which dealt directly with the USA's semifinal opener and some of which dealt with qualifying as whole:*

McBride rules up front  
Landon owns the midfield  
Yanks are Deutschland bound.  
--Jacob Krall / 20 / Portland, Ore.

We begin the quest  
At "The Office," green and gold  
Three points on the road.  
--Daniel Moses / 25 / Arlington, Va.

Summer sun heats them  
As cleats, sweat, pride pave the road  
The road to '06.  
--Ylana Beller / 33 / New York City

Goalkeepers stand tall  
Donovan and mates hit net  
On to Germany.  
--Greg King / 43 / Miamisburg, Ohio

M.L.S. stars key  
E.P.L. veterans lead  
Ages mix to win.  
--Ben Shell / Philadelphia, Pa.

Mastroeni's dreads  
Heading past the Reggae Boyz  
Be easy skankin'.  
--Robert Netsa / Indiana, Pa.  
[Editor's Note: Mastroeni sheered off his dreads, unfortunately, and missed the match due to an injury.]

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### **8) "YOU DON'T KNOW JACK (MARSHALL)" (U.S. Men's Semifinal Qualifying Trivia)**

*Think you know your soccer trivia? We'll be the judge of that. Pop quiz: who the heck is Jack Marshall? Even the trivia buffs in the U.S. Soccer Communications Department would be hard-pressed to tell you that one Jack Marshall received his one and only cap way back in 1926. Okay, that was pretty much impossible. They get easier. We give you four questions at varying difficulty levels, from 1 (easiest) to 4 (hardest).*

*It hardly seems like it's been four years since the last go-round of World Cup qualifying, but I guess time flies when you're busy solidifying your stature as one of the top 10 teams in the world. But the semifinal round hasn't always been a breeze for the U.S., so let's not just assume we're on the way to Germany just yet. In the meantime, here's some trivia about past semifinal rounds of qualifying:*

#### Questions:

Q1: Which U.S. goalkeeper has recorded five shutouts in seven matches during the semifinal round of World Cup Qualifying?

Q2: Which CONCACAF rival is the only team to ever have beaten the U.S. in a semifinal round World Cup qualifier?

Q3: Who scored the final U.S. goal in the 1996 semifinal round to earn a 2-2 road draw versus Guatemala:

- a. Preki
- b. Frankie Hejduk
- c. Roy Lassiter
- d. Thomas Dooley

Q4: Who are the six players that have scored more than one goal for the U.S. in the semifinal round of qualifying?

#### Answers:

A1: Kasey Keller.

A2: Costa Rica.

A3: Frankie Hejduk.

A4: Brian McBride (4), Earnie Stewart (3), Joe-Max Moore (3), Eric Wynalda (2), Ante Razov (2), Cobi Jones (2).

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