

A Clásico Display of Fútbol



By Adam
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Twice a year El Clásico is played between La Liga giants Barcelona and Real Madrid, the top two soccer teams in Spain, and two of the best club teams in the world. The rosters of both teams are oozing with international superstars, including 11 members of Spain's World Cup champion from this summer. The game also pits the best two players on Earth against each other, in Lionel Messi(Barcelona) and Cristiano Ronaldo(Madrid).

While most Americans had a sub-par football game to look forward to Monday night, the rest of the world was anxiously awaiting the kickoff of El Clásico. Those of us watching stateside on GolTV were blessed with the added privilege of having the game described by Ray Hudson. Hudson is an ex-player and coach from England who, along with his commentary partner Phil Schoen, describe the game like no others. The following is a recap of El Clásico, told through Ray Hudson quotes (in *italics*) from the game, along with a few words from me to put them into context:

"We're all in for a super treat here. This is an electrical atmosphere, more charged than a hair dryer in a hot tub. Despite the weather; forget the rain. This is a passion pot out there and its bubbling up like a witch's brew. Tonight all roads lead to Barcelona. Every football soul in the planet is fixated on this cauldron of the world's greatest sporting rivalry, bar none."



Lionel Messi and Ronaldo, the two best players on the planet.

The rain is falling at the Camp Nou, Barcelona's home field, and the seething crowd of over 100,000 are ready. The ball is put into play, and finally, here we go!

6' "He could follow you into a revolving door and he'd still come out first."

Messi gets his first touch on the ball, passing and dribbling and weaving through the Real Madrid defense. His speed and ball control make him nearly impossible to deal with.

8' "...blades flashing like a combine harvester."

Ronaldo looks dangerous out on the wing, immediately displaying his patented step-over as grass flies from his boots.

10' "...Xavi, cool as Jimi Hendrix at Woodstock again, lobs it over Casillas (Madrid's goalie) with the killer touch."

GOAL! Barcelona takes an early 1-0 lead on a goal by Xavi, and Madrid looks stunned!

18' "Old Chameleon Eyes(Xavi) with that kaleidoscope vision finds David Villa..."

Pedro scores off of a cross from Villa to make it **2-0!!** Through its first 12 games, Madrid had conceded just two goals. Barca now has two in just 18 minutes! Nobody predicted a start like this.

[revenueshare id="13"]25' *"They're skinning them down the right, they're skinning them down the left...you cant allow Barcelona to get into this sort of passing rhythm: You're committing hari-kari."*

Ray turns out to be right, as Barcelona controls the ball, keeps possession, and allows Real Madrid nothing. The teams head into halftime with Barcelona holding on to their 2-0 lead, and Madrid is lucky its not behind by more.

After halftime it is much of the same as Barcelona controls possession as they look to score their third goal, which will put this game to bed.

55' *"And there's the surgeon's scalpel finish by Villa! He's got biorhythms like a peregrine falcon that guy, he's so uncontainable"*

Another goal and its **3-0** Barcelona! Surely that's the game. Madrid's defenders can only point fingers at each other as they look for answers. Phil joins in and says what everyone is thinking: "Barcelona has taken it to another level, one that Real Madrid doesn't have the elevator key to."

58' *"Real Madrid's defense stretched out like spandex on Miami Beach...David Villa disappears like a ghost into the fog because of the pass of Lionel Messi..."*

Another goal and its **4-0**. Amazing! Messi finds Villa again with a perfectly weighted pass, and Villa one-times it past Casillas.

This is truly a performance for the ages by a team at the top of their form, playing a team who cannot hope to match it. Before the game many had anointed Real Madrid as the best team in the world. Tonight they look like they don't belong on the same field with Barcelona, but perhaps no club team in the world does.



David Villa celebrates his 2nd goal with fans at the Camp Nou.

92' *"This kid (Bojan) could bend light, if he needed to."*

The final insult is delivered as Barcelona's substitutes get into the act. Bojan delivers a perfect cross into the box, and Jeffren makes no mistake with his finish. **5-0 Barcelona**, and the question of who the best team in Spain is has been emphatically decided.

Real Madrid not only lost the game and their hold on first place, they were destroyed...demoralized and left to wonder if they could ever match the display of pure football put on by Barcelona. When the teams meet again in April, Madrid will have their work cut out if they expect to erase the memories of what took place in Barcelona. For now, the rest of the world is left with no choice but to agree with the words of Ray Hudson:

"I would say that any comparison that anyone draws against Barcelona is an insult, because they are kings of the castle, the top of the heap. Nobody can compare to them, nobody is in reach of their shadows. They eclipse every club team in the world in my opinion."