

## Who'd have thought it?

# PASSION FOR SPORT

Looking back on sporting highlights is a very popular pastime. Most fans can rattle off a few good, if ever-so slightly embellished stories, of magic moments when they witnessed something really special, maybe something unique. And, of course, with so much sport to play and watch, there is no shortage of these golden moments.

Mind you, for some of us the most memorable occasions were not played out at a major venue in front of a capacity crowd, nor did they feature high profile teams or individuals.

One of my all time great moments was watching a local league soccer cup final. At the time I was chairman of a club that, prior to this particular season, had been somewhat undistinguished in its achievements. But this season was so different. Already league champions 'the double' was within our grasp. One more big effort; and what an effort it proved to be.

After 90 minutes of heart-thumping drama with the advantage swinging one way, then the other, the score was 3-3. Extra time saw us nervously press forward as, with less than ten minutes to go, the deadlock remained unbroken. And then we scored! Shortly afterwards the coveted trophy was lifted. Unbelievable! You should have heard our supporters, all forty of them, go wild!

No, that piece of soccer history didn't make the back pages of the national press. Indeed it hardly warranted a paragraph in the local newspaper, but those who played and those who watched were completely unfazed by the media's lack of interest.

Perhaps, rather like a birth or a death, they mean the world to those who were there, those who were close, but little to anyone else, unless, that is, the event points to something much bigger. Yes, I'm now thinking of a birth in a stable and a death on a cross.

There would have been other births in other stables given that stables were integral to most ordinary residences; there were numerous deaths, executions by crucifixion given the harsh justice meted out by uncompromising regimes. But as the significance of that particular birth and death became established, the magnitude of what had occurred was beyond measure.

On a much smaller scale it does remind us that the significance of a simple act or a passing word may mean little at the time, but who knows what that may become in the future? Sometimes, much later, we may discover that it was our action or our word that helped to transform a situation or even a life. We cannot know, and most times will probably never find out, but that is no reason to doubt the potential significance of the apparently insignificant.

*(See 2 Corinthians 13; 11 and 1 Thessalonians 5; 11)*

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