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Zidane - "Italy player called me a terrorist"

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12 July, 2006

THE ARTICLE

Zidane - "Italy player called me a terrorist"

French soccer superstar Zinedine Zidane has reputedly alleged that Italian player Marco Materazzi called him a "dirty terrorist" during the soccer World Cup final. The two had repeatedly tussled with each other throughout the game. An acrimonious exchange of words towards the end of the match resulted in the infuriated French maestro head-butting Materazzi in the chest and being red-carded. The moment of sheer lunacy was watched live by a billion people on TV. The Italian denies he provoked the French captain in such a derisory fashion: "I did not call him a terrorist. I'm ignorant. I don't even know what the word means," the Italian news agency ANSA quoted Materazzi as saying. A Paris-based anti-racism group SOS Racism says well-informed sources confirm Zidane's allegation. Zidane's agent cast Zinedine as "a man who normally lets things wash over him but on Sunday night something exploded inside him".

Reaction to Zidane's outburst is mixed in France. President Jacques Chirac called Zidane "a genius of world football," while former Sports Minister Marie-George Buffet slammed Zidane's act as "unforgivable", considering he was a role model for thousands of soccer-loving children. France defender William Gallas said: "The Italians did everything they could do to provoke Zidane." Striker Thierry Henry suggested perhaps Zidane's impoverished street upbringing might have been a factor. He said: "You can take the man out of the rough neighborhood, but you can't take the rough neighborhood out of the man." Zidane has a reputation as being a hard man. He was sent off 14 times in his career, once for head-butting an opponent in a Champions League match five years ago. Despite the present controversy, his artistry was recognized by the media, who awarded him the World Cup's MVP accolade.

WARM-UPS

1. ZINEDINE ZIDANE: Walk around the class and talk to as many students as you can. Find out what students know about Zinedine Zidane. Share your findings with new partners.

2. CHAT: In pairs / groups, decide which of these topics or words from the article are most interesting and which are most boring.

Soccer / superstars / exchanges of words / fury / lunacy / ignorance / racism / outbursts / genius / role models / upbringing / rough neighborhoods / head-butting

Have a chat about the topics you liked. For more conversation, change topics and partners frequently.

3. ANGER: Which of these things would make you very angry? How would you react if someone said these things to you? Rank them in order of the worst and talk about them with your partner(s). Decide on a good answer to each.

____ You are a dirty terrorist

____ All people from your country suck

____ You have no brains

____ Your religion is the worst

____ Your English is no good

____ You have no fashion sense

____ You smell bad

____ You come from a bad family

4. RED CARD: Write down (or brainstorm) three everyday things you would like to give people a red card for. Talk about them with your partner(s). Change partners and find out what other students considered everyday red card offences.

5. TWO-MINUTE DEBATES: Face each other in pairs and engage in the following fun 2-minute debates. Students A strongly believe in the first argument, students B the second. Change pairs often.

- a. Soccer is the world's greatest sport. vs. There are better sports.
- b. Soccer's World Cup is the greatest sporting event. vs. No. The Olympics is.
- c. Sport stars are highly overpaid. vs. Sport stars deserve every penny they earn.
- d. Too many sport stars are bad role models. vs. They are not paid to be role models.
- e. America and China will win the World Cup one day. vs. No chance.
- f. Soccer is a game full of artistry. vs. Soccer is a game full of thugs.
- g. Nothing unites the world like soccer's World Cup. vs. The Internet is better.
- h. Women's soccer is just as good as men's. vs. That's the funniest thing I've heard today.

6. SOCCER: Spend one minute writing down all of the different words you associate with soccer. Share your words with your partner(s) and talk about them. Together, put the words into different categories.

BEFORE READING / LISTENING

1. TRUE / FALSE: Look at the article's headline and guess whether these sentences are true (T) or false (F):

- | | |
|---|-------|
| a. The Italian soccer coach has branded Zinedine Zidane as a terrorist. | T / F |
| b. Zidane and an Italian player exchanged bitter words on the pitch. | T / F |
| c. The Italian player is intelligent and knows what "terrorist" means. | T / F |
| d. Zidane's agent said his client normally does a lot of washing. | T / F |
| e. France's president called Zidane a genius after the game. | T / F |
| f. A teammate said the Italians did all they could to protect Zidane. | T / F |
| g. Zinedine Zidane grew up in a well-to-do neighborhood. | T / F |
| h. Zidane received an award for the MVP of the 2006 World Cup. | T / F |

2. SYNONYM MATCH: Match the following synonyms from the article:

- | | |
|-----------------|------------|
| a. tussled | insulting |
| b. acrimonious | deprived |
| c. infuriated | bitter |
| d. sheer | described |
| e. derisory | foe |
| f. cast | criticized |
| g. slammed | award |
| h. impoverished | clashed |
| i. opponent | enraged |
| j. accolade | utter |

3. PHRASE MATCH: Match the following phrases from the article (sometimes more than one combination is possible):

- | | |
|--------------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| a. An acrimonious | is mixed in France |
| b. The moment of sheer | confirm Zidane's allegation |
| c. he provoked the French captain in | street upbringing |
| d. well-informed sources | over him |
| e. lets things wash | recognized by the media |
| f. Reaction to Zidane's outburst | exchange of words |
| g. Buffet slammed Zidane's act | neighborhood out of the man |
| h. Zidane's impoverished | as "unforgivable" |
| i. you can't take the rough | lunacy |
| j. his artistry was | such a derisory fashion |

WHILE READING / LISTENING

GAP FILL: Put the words in the column on the right into the gaps in the text.

Zidane - "Italy player called me a terrorist"

French soccer superstar Zinedine Zidane has reputedly _____ that Italian player Marco Materazzi called him a "dirty terrorist" during the soccer World Cup final. The two had repeatedly _____ with each other throughout the game. An acrimonious exchange of words towards the end of the match resulted in the _____ French maestro head-butting Materazzi in the chest and being red-carded. The moment of sheer _____ was watched live by a billion people on TV. The Italian denies he _____ the French captain in such a derisory fashion: "I did not call him a terrorist. I'm _____. I don't even know what the word means," the Italian news agency ANSA quoted Materazzi as saying. A Paris-based anti-racism group SOS Racism says well-_____ sources confirm Zidane's allegation. Zidane's agent cast Zinedine as "a man who normally lets things _____ him but on Sunday night something exploded inside him".

Reaction to Zidane's _____ is mixed in France. President Jacques Chirac called Zidane "a genius of world football," while former Sports Minister Marie-George Buffet _____ Zidane's act as "unforgivable", _____ he was a role model for thousands of soccer-loving children. France defender William Gallas said: "The Italians did everything they could do to provoke Zidane." Striker Thierry Henry suggested perhaps Zidane's _____ street upbringing might have been a factor. He said: "You can take the man out of the _____ neighborhood, but you can't take the rough neighborhood out of the man." Zidane has a _____ as being a hard man. He was sent off 14 times in his career, once for head-butting an opponent in a Champions League match five years ago. Despite the present controversy, his _____ was recognized by the media, who awarded him the World Cup's MVP _____.

informed
infuriated
provoked
ignorant
alleged
lunacy
wash over
tussled

reputation
slammed
accolade
impoverished
artistry
outburst
rough
considering

LISTENING

Listen and fill in the spaces.

Zidane - "Italy player called me a terrorist"

French soccer superstar Zinedine Zidane has _____ alleged that Italian player Marco Materazzi called him a "dirty terrorist" during the soccer World Cup final. The two had repeatedly _____ with each other throughout the game. An acrimonious exchange of words towards the end of the match resulted in the _____ French maestro head-butting Materazzi in the chest and being red-carded. The moment of _____ lunacy was watched live by a billion people on TV. The Italian denies he provoked the French captain in such a _____ fashion: "I did not call him a terrorist. I'm _____. I don't even know what the word means," the Italian news agency ANSA quoted Materazzi as saying. A Paris-based anti-racism group SOS Racism says well-_____ sources confirm Zidane's allegation. Zidane's agent cast Zinedine as "a man who normally lets things _____ him but on Sunday night something exploded inside him".

Reaction to Zidane's _____ is mixed in France. President Jacques Chirac called Zidane "a genius of world football," while former Sports Minister Marie-George Buffet _____ Zidane's act as "unforgivable", considering he was a role model for thousands of soccer-loving children. France defender William Gallas said: "The Italians did everything they could do to _____ Zidane." Striker Thierry Henry suggested perhaps Zidane's _____ street upbringing might have been a factor. He said: "You can take the man out of the rough neighborhood, but you can't take the _____ neighborhood out of the man." Zidane has a _____ as being a hard man. He was sent off 14 times in his career, once for head-butting an _____ in a Champions League match five years ago. Despite the present controversy, his artistry was recognized by the media, who awarded him the World Cup's MVP _____.

AFTER READING / LISTENING

1. WORD SEARCH: Look in your dictionaries / computer to find collocates, other meanings, information, synonyms ... for the words **'world'** and **'cup'**.

- Share your findings with your partners.
- Make questions using the words you found.
- Ask your partner / group your questions.

2. ARTICLE QUESTIONS: Look back at the article and write down some questions you would like to ask the class about the text.

- Share your questions with other classmates / groups.
- Ask your partner / group your questions.

3. GAP FILL: In pairs / groups, compare your answers to this exercise. Check your answers. Talk about the words from the activity. Were they new, interesting, worth learning...?

4. VOCABULARY: Circle any words you do not understand. In groups, pool unknown words and use dictionaries to find their meanings.

5. STUDENT "WORLD CUP" SURVEY: In pairs / groups, write down questions about the 2006 World Cup.

- Ask other classmates your questions and note down their answers.
- Go back to your original partner / group and compare your findings.
- Make mini-presentations to other groups on your findings.

6. TEST EACH OTHER: Look at the words below. With your partner, try to recall exactly how these were used in the text:

- | | |
|-------------|----------------|
| • reputedly | • mixed |
| • exchange | • unforgivable |
| • sheer | • upbringing |
| • provoked | • rough |
| • ignorant | • controversy |
| • wash | • accolade |

DISCUSSION

STUDENT A's QUESTIONS (Do not show these to student B)

- a. Did the headline make you want to read the article?
- b. What do you think of Zidane head-butting an opponent?
- c. Do you think his action is in any way excusable?
- d. Have you ever wanted to react to anything in such a violent fashion?
- e. Do you think Zidane should be stripped of his MVP award?
- f. Has Zidane sent a wrong message to children?
- g. Do you think Zidane should have been arrested for assault?
- h. Do you think soccer deserves to be called "the beautiful game"?
- i. What question would you like to ask Zinedine Zidane?
- j. What do you think his answer would be?

STUDENT B's QUESTIONS (Do not show these to student A)

- a. Did you like reading this article?
- b. What do you think about what you read?
- c. Do you think there might be any truth in Zidane's allegation of Materazzi calling him a "dirty terrorist"?
- d. What should soccer's ruling authorities do if they find out Materazzi did call Zidane a "dirty terrorist"?
- e. Do you believe Materazzi when he said he didn't know what the word "terrorist" means?
- f. Do you agree with the expression taught to children: "Sticks and stones may break my bones, but words will never hurt me"?
- g. How do you think Zidane's teammates feel about his action and red card?
- h. In which sport would you like to be considered a legend and why?
- i. Are you glad Italy won the World Cup?
- j. Did you like this discussion?

AFTER DISCUSSION: Join another partner / group and tell them what you talked about.

- a. What was the most interesting thing you heard?
- b. Was there a question you didn't like?
- c. Was there something you totally disagreed with?
- d. What did you like talking about?
- e. Which was the most difficult question?

SPEAKING

WORLD CUP SURVEY: Conduct the following World Cup survey by asking your classmates their opinions of the performance of the following teams:

	Student A	Student B	Student C	Student D
Italy				
France				
Germany				
England				
USA				
Other _____				

Sit with your partner(s) and share and talk about the opinions you found out. Write a report for a magazine based on your survey. Pin it to the classroom wall / put it in your school magazine/newspaper.

HOMEWORK

1. VOCABULARY EXTENSION: Choose several of the words from the text. Use a dictionary or Google's search field (or another search engine) to build up more associations / collocations of each word.

2. INTERNET: Search the Internet and find information about the highs and lows of Zinedine Zidane's career. Talk about what you discover with your partner(s) in the next lesson.

3. WORLD CUP REPORT: Write a report on the 2006 World Cup. Write about the high points and the low points. Read your report to your classmates in the next lesson. Which report did like best?

4. LETTER: Write a letter to Zinedine Zidane. Tell him what you think of his head-butting an opponent. Show your letter to your classmates in the next lesson. Your classmates will write a reply.

ANSWERS

TRUE / FALSE:

- a. F b. T c. F d. F e. T f. F g. F h. T

SYNONYM MATCH:

- | | |
|-----------------|------------|
| a. tussled | clashed |
| b. acrimonious | bitter |
| c. infuriated | enraged |
| d. sheer | utter |
| e. derisory | insulting |
| f. cast | described |
| g. slammed | criticized |
| h. impoverished | deprived |
| i. opponent | foe |
| j. accolade | award |

PHRASE MATCH:

- | | |
|--------------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| a. An acrimonious | exchange of words |
| b. The moment of sheer | lunacy |
| c. he provoked the French captain in | such a derisory fashion |
| d. well-informed sources | confirm Zidane's allegation |
| e. lets things wash | over him |
| f. Reaction to Zidane's outburst | is mixed in France |
| g. Buffet slammed Zidane's act | as "unforgivable" |
| h. Zidane's impoverished | street upbringing |
| i. you can't take the rough | neighborhood out of the man |
| j. his artistry was | recognized by the media |

GAP FILL:

Zidane - "Italy player called me a terrorist"

French soccer superstar Zinedine Zidane has reputedly **alleged** that Italian player Marco Materazzi called him a "dirty terrorist" during the soccer World Cup final. The two had repeatedly **tussled** with each other throughout the game. An acrimonious exchange of words towards the end of the match resulted in the **infuriated** French maestro head-butting Materazzi in the chest and being red-carded. The moment of sheer **lunacy** was watched live by a billion people on TV. The Italian denies he **provoked** the French captain in such a derisory fashion: "I did not call him a terrorist. I'm **ignorant**. I don't even know what the word means," the Italian news agency ANSA quoted Materazzi as saying. A Paris-based anti-racism group SOS Racism says well-informed sources confirm Zidane's allegation. Zidane's agent cast Zinedine as "a man who normally lets things **wash over** him but on Sunday night something exploded inside him".

Reaction to Zidane's **outburst** is mixed in France. President Jacques Chirac called Zidane "a genius of world football," while former Sports Minister Marie-George Buffet **slammed** Zidane's act as "unforgivable", **considering** he was a role model for thousands of soccer-loving children. France defender William Gallas said: "The Italians did everything they could do to provoke Zidane." Striker Thierry Henry suggested perhaps Zidane's **impoverished** street upbringing might have been a factor. He said: "You can take the man out of the **rough** neighborhood, but you can't take the rough neighborhood out of the man." Zidane has a **reputation** as being a hard man. He was sent off 14 times in his career, once for head-butting an opponent in a Champions League match five years ago. Despite the present controversy, his **artistry** was recognized by the media, who awarded him the World Cup's MVP **accolade**.