

# ROB'S RAMBLINGS

Yes, even if the staff at sweepstake HQ are temporarily resting whilst the new sweepstake is constructed, we couldn't miss the opportunity to have a ramblings when Germany AND Holland are eliminated!! (I know several Belgian former colleagues who will have been celebrating hard after that double whammy!!)

## Germany are eliminated from the World Cup: the effect is felt in Florida



Particularly gutted by the German elimination was Nico Schlotterbeek. The German defender was already ruled out of the rest of the tournament through injury but had been given the honour of being the team's 'Sun bed towel boy' for the rest of the tournament. "I am as sick as a parrot at Germany's elimination", said a tearful Schlotterbeek. "Being made towel boy for the team was such an honour. My parents were so proud when they heard the news. I even took extra classes in order to learn the optimal time to get the towels out (*ed: it's 05:37 for Germans*) and how to spread them so that they are precisely perpendicular to the x-axis. But thanks to the elimination of Germany my dreams have been shattered". As a consolation, Schlotterbeek will be allowed to help the stewards distribute the teams meals on the return Lufthansa flight, following Germany's elimination. (*Ed: could we possibly include the words 'Germany's elimination' a few more times in case somebody missed it?*)

Meanwhile, it transpires that Thomas Tuchel is NOT the most despised Germany national team manager:

**Nagelsmann-Taktik:**

**"Wer nicht gegen Frankreich spielt kann auch nicht gegen Frankreich verlieren"**



One positive consequence of Germany's elimination is that none of us will ever have to see Germany's awful 2<sup>nd</sup> kit – navy blue with spots, with lime green shorts – ever again. Why they couldn't wear their white+black kit against Ecuador is a mystery. I was curious to understand the thought behind this design of kit so I looked on Adidas' official website. This is what it says:

When tradition meets modernity, the Germany FIFA World Cup 26™ Away Kit celebrates football culture, legacy, and identity. Crafted for those who play with heart and soul, this jersey merges tradition with modernity, inspired by iconic moments in football history.



What???! Can anyone remember an iconic moment in history that involved lime green shorts, or a shirt with spots on it???!?

Staying with hideous shirts team Canada celebrated wildly after they finished painting the kitchen ceiling white....



despite Germany's elimination we have one more item about the German team and team shirts, namely an interesting news story from Germany is an initiative by German youths to launch a 'Germany against Fascism' football shirt. This is a laudable action to reclaim 'patriotism' from the Far Right and the design is certainly better than the awful 2<sup>nd</sup> kit from Adidas. However, I see a small flaw in their initiative: the choice of black shirts. Not only was that the colour worn by fascists in Italy and the UK in the 1930s, but was also rather popular with the SS ..... Pink might have been a more 'woke' and less fascist colour.



Nobody would suggest that Cristiano Ronaldo has a big ego, or that he runs the Portugal national team, but when the 'wall' used in training for practicing free kicks have been sculpted to look like CR7 then I think the cult of the personality has gone a bit too far.....



The Belgian FA intend to copy this and have a training wall based on Romelu Lukaku's profile – however, theirs will only need a single silhouette of his arse for a 4m wide wall....

(Several Croydon-based sweepstakers have registered their objections to our use of their postcode – CR7 – to describe a certain camp footballer).



So I hope that you did better than me in the first sweepstake. (Given that I finished 430<sup>th</sup> I know that 86% DID do better than me!). Nonetheless I was considerably better than Yannis Coutsis who won the David Draper Memorial Trophy by a considerable margin. However, when I attempted to track him down to award the prize I discovered that he does not exist: rather, he was an AI-generated entry put in by a sweepstaker!!!

This is, in fact, great news. All those scare stories about how AI will ruin the world are clearly fake news: after all, if AI is so incompetent with something like the sweepstake then what is the likelihood that it can actually manage anything important, like a nuclear war or a Commissioner's briefing note?!!

There is, however, a scary alternative explanation. Namely that the evil geniuses running AI who are busily collecting every scrap of information in order to make AI more efficient have had access to the entire sweepstake archives – and have thus been able to make an AI model that accurately replicates David Draper's forecasting.....! That is a horrific thought, comparable to Saddam Hussain's weapons of mass destruction – in the wrong hands it could destroy sweepstakes forever. We have therefore contacted our loyal sweepstakers based in the EU Delegation in Tel Aviv and requested that they get the Israeli authorities to target this AI monster in Operation David Draper Drone.



Germany was not the only team to be eliminated yesterday. Holland were also beaten – though them losing on penalties was less a surprise and more an inevitability. Dutch King Willem-Alexander was gutted at the news as he was looking forward to another free trip to the USA to stock up on his duty free purchases.

Also out are Japan though, unlike the Dutch who in their orange clothing locals mistook for escapees from high security prisons, they will be sadly missed. For the Japanese fans are excellent at generating good PR. To be fair the Scots fans also generated a lot of positive feeling – but they also generated a lot of vomit and piss, too.

Those cunning Japanese fans have once again been sportswashing by tidying up the litter after games. (*Ed: If they think that this makes up for Pearl Harbor and the Burma Railway then they are wrong.*)



However in 2026 no act of goodwill cannot go by without someone moaning on social media. There have been several postings saying that Japanese men rank very low when it comes to doing domestic chores, so why should they get praised when they tidy up after themselves at a football stadium? A reasonable point but it's better than the alternative: leaving the stadium a mess AND not helping at home (which I'm sure is the case for England fans....!).

