

## **Soccer Stories, by Bipin**

Often in the early days Guru would watch part of the finals competition of the UN Meditation-Flames.

As our years of losing seasons in the United Nations League multiplied, our team captain, like a child crying to his all-caring father, verbally spelled out to Guru the team's multi-leveled pathetic capacities and frustrations. Guru is a far, far superior football player to any member of the Meditation-Flames. One time Guru even visited our practice, and for 30 minutes literally walked us through the correct way to pass a ball, strike and anticipate the ball. I recall Guru pointing out that, when defending, if the opponent has passed or gone by you, you should make yourself heard by them with heavy footsteps. With this, fear will enter the opponent. Even if only a small amount, it will distract them. This struck me as being given a glimpse into valuing the subtle or psychic threshold to the way Guru physically took part in the game.

Many times Guru pointed out in great detail what we were doing incorrectly as a team. Then, he confidently

offered exact steps to correct our shortcomings. He offered boundless and patient encouragement, guidance plus massive amounts of smile-infused prasad!

The final humbling soccer lesson Guru offered us as a team came in South Africa on the Christmas Trip. We played the hotel team where we were staying. We soundly and easily were defeated, convincingly overpowered by the hotel team's controlled strength and skill.

But most disappointingly, as a team that day we displayed a tit-for-tat, borderline careless and reckless, wild behavior—a consciousness which saddened Guru very deeply.