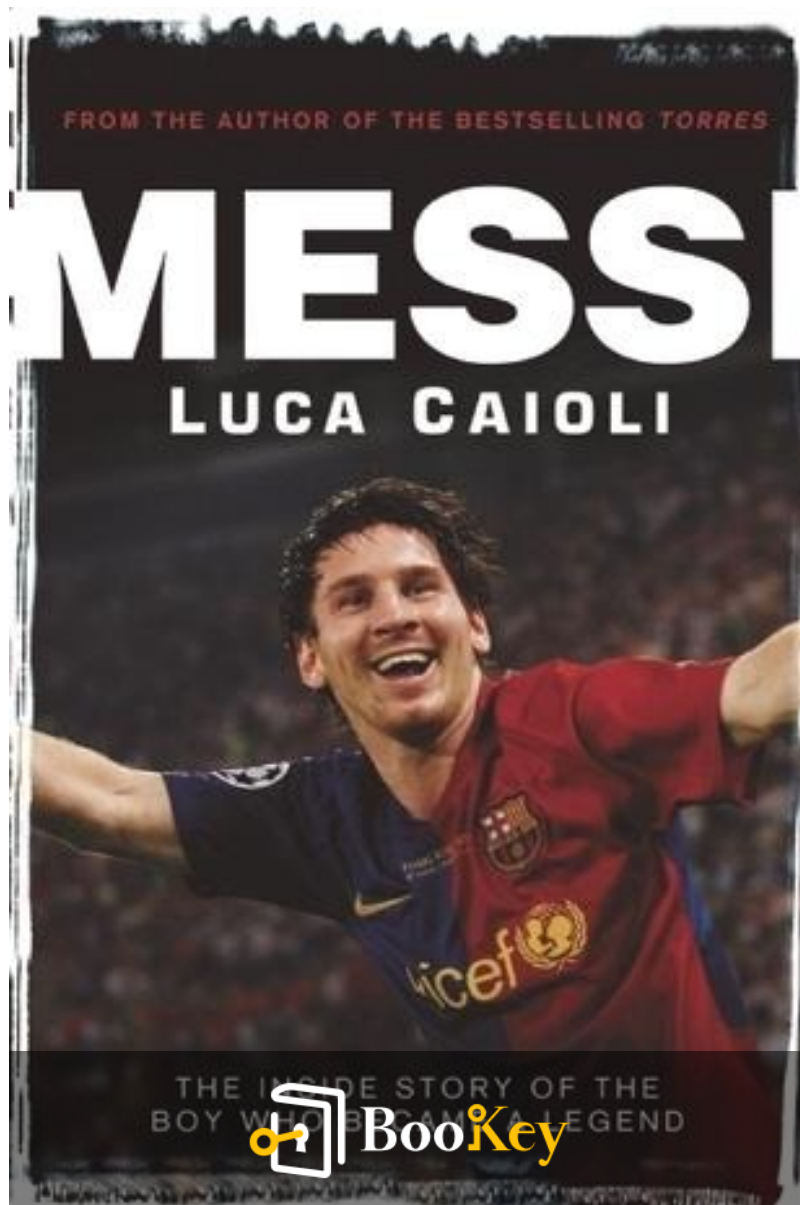


# Messi PDF

Luca Caioli



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# Messi

The Untold Journey of Soccer's Greatest Legend.

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## About the book

In "Messi," acclaimed sports journalist and bestselling author Luca Caioli delves into the life of Lionel Messi, widely regarded as the greatest soccer player of all time. Through compelling anecdotes and insights from those closest to him, including his parents Celia and Jorge, brother Rodrigo, and various coaches like Frank Rijkaard and Gianluca Zambrotta, as well as Messi's own reflections, the book paints a vivid portrait of the incredible journey that shaped this football legend.

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## About the author

Luca Caioli is a renowned Italian journalist and author, celebrated for his insightful sports writing and in-depth profiles of some of the world's most iconic athletes. With a background in journalism and a keen interest in soccer, Caioli has carved a niche for himself by blending rigorous research with a compelling narrative style, engaging readers with the personal and professional journeys of sports legends. His works, including the biography of Lionel Messi, reflect not only the triumphs and struggles of the individuals he writes about but also offer a broader commentary on the culture of football and its impact on society. Through his meticulous storytelling and passionate exploration of the sport, Caioli has gained recognition as a leading voice in sports literature.

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# Chapter 1 Summary : 1: Rosario



Section	Summary
Celia's Cooking for Leo	Celia Cuccittini shares the love and humor in preparing Lionel Messi's favorite dish, schnitzel a la napolitana, believing it contributes to his football success.
Lionel's Simple Tastes	Lionel prefers simple foods like schnitzel over elaborate dishes, enjoys chocolates and alfajores, and has a childhood anecdote about scoring goals for treats.
Family Dynamics	Celia and Marcela reflect on family games with Leo and his cousins, showcasing their close-knit family and shared passion for football.
Grandmother's Influence	Celia recalls her mother's support in nurturing Lionel's passion for football, which helped shape his future as a football star, honoring their late grandmother's legacy.
Early Football Journey	From a young age, Lionel displayed impressive skills and passion for football, finding joy in practice rather than viewing it as a chore.
Celia's Reflections on Fame	Celia feels pride and protective instincts about Lionel's fame, wishing for him to stay grounded and cherish his family amidst stardom.
Wishes for the Future	Celia hopes Lionel achieves greatness in football while leading a happy life, wishing him to experience all facets of life beyond the sport.
Conclusion of the Visit	As the visit ends, Celia and Marcela express concerns about injuries and fame's pressures, desiring to maintain normalcy for their children despite Lionel's success.

## Chapter 1: Rosario

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## **Celia's Cooking for Leo**

Celia Cuccittini describes her son Lionel Messi's favorite dish—schnitzel a la napolitana. She details the cooking process with love and humor, emphasizing how often she prepares it when visiting him in Barcelona, believing it's a key to his success on the football field.

## **Lionel's Simple Tastes**

Lionel enjoys simple foods, preferring schnitzel over more elaborate dishes his brother Rodrigo, a chef, likes to experiment with. His sweet tooth for chocolates and alfajores is highlighted, with a charming anecdote from his childhood when he scored goals for treats.

## **Family Dynamics**

Celia and her sister Marcela reminisce about family games involving Leo and his cousins. The close-knit family, enriched by their shared love of football, reflects on cherished memories and playful competitions.

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## **Grandmother's Influence**

Celia recalls how their mother played a pivotal role in nurturing Lionel's football passion, advocating for him to play despite his small stature. This familial support laid the foundation for his future as a football star, which his late grandmother would have been proud of.

## **Early Football Journey**

Lionel's impressive skills began at a very young age, captivating family members. His determination and passion for football were evident, with practices being his greatest joy rather than a punishment.

## **Celia's Reflections on Fame**

Celia expresses a mix of pride and protective instincts regarding Lionel's fame. She hopes that he remains grounded, highlighting his humility and love for family amidst his football stardom.

## **Wishes for the Future**

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As a mother, Celia wishes for Lionel to achieve greatness in football while also leading a happy, fulfilling life. Despite his dedication to the sport, she hopes he experiences all aspects of life.

## **Conclusion of the Visit**

As the visit concludes, Celia and Marcela share concerns about injuries and the pressures of fame on footballers. They remain rooted in their community, desiring to maintain a sense of normalcy for their children amidst the whirlwind of success.

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## Example

**Key Point:** The profound impact of family support on Messi's success

**Example:** Imagine you're a child practicing football in your backyard, your family cheering for every goal you score. Every evening, your mother cooks your favorite meal, fueling not just your body but your spirit. In that moment, you understand that these simple, loving gestures form the backbone of your achievements. Lionel Messi's journey mirrors this, as his family's unwavering support, especially from his mother Celia, cultivates his love for the game and instills in him the confidence to pursue his dreams, showcasing how deeply family influences one's path to greatness.

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## inspiration

**Key Point:** The Importance of Family Support

**Life inspiration:** Celia Cuccittini's unwavering belief in her son Lionel's potential, despite his small stature, illustrates the critical role of family support in nurturing talent. This chapter reinforces the idea that having a solid foundation of encouragement and understanding from loved ones can propel us toward realizing our dreams, no matter how ambitious they may seem. Embrace the power of your support system; let it inspire you to pursue your passions with conviction and joy, much like Lionel did on his journey to becoming a football legend.

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# Chapter 2 Summary : 2: Garibaldi Hospital



Section	Details
Overview of Garibaldi Hospital	Located in Rosario, Argentina; established on October 2, 1892, for the Italian immigrant community; known for its maternity unit.
Birth of Lionel Messi	Lionel Messi was born on June 24, 1987, at Garibaldi Hospital; third child of Jorge (steelworker) and Celia (magnet manufacturer); humble beginnings.
Background of Messi's Family	Both parents have Italian roots; Jorge's ancestors from Porto Recanati; unaffected by Argentina's turbulent history; married on June 17, 1978, during World Cup excitement.
Socio-Political Context	References to political turmoil in 1980s Argentina; bomb explosions coincided with Messi's birth; indicative of the nation's instability.
Early Life of Messi	After a difficult birth, Messi was healthy; showed interest in football as a toddler; family supported his early passion for the sport.

## Chapter 2 Summary: Garibaldi Hospital

### Overview of Garibaldi Hospital

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- Garibaldi Hospital, located in Rosario, Argentina, is an Italian hospital dedicated to Giuseppe Garibaldi.
- Inaugurated on October 2, 1892, it was established primarily for the Italian immigrant community, which made up over 70% of new arrivals at that time.
- The hospital is now renowned for having one of the best maternity units in the city.

## **Birth of Lionel Messi**

- Lionel Messi, the third child of Jorge and Celia Messi-Cuccittini, was born on June 24, 1987, at Garibaldi Hospital.
- Jorge, 29, worked in steelmaking and Celia, 27, was employed in a magnet manufacturing workshop.
- Their relationship began in the humble neighborhood of Las Heras, indicative of their working-class background.

## **Background of Messi's Family**

- Both families have Italian roots, with Jorge's ancestry traced back to Porto Recanati.
- Their lives were unchanged by the tumultuous history of Argentina, including the military dictatorship and the

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## Falklands War.

- The couple married on June 17, 1978, amidst the excitement of Argentina winning the World Cup.

## Socio-Political Context

- The chapter references the political turmoil in Argentina during the 1980s, including human rights violations under military rule and rising social strife.
- On the day of Lionel's birth, there were bomb explosions in response to the recent enactment of a controversial law, reflecting the nation's instability.

## Early Life of Messi

- After a difficult birth, Lionel was pronounced healthy shortly thereafter.
- As a toddler, Messi began showing an early affinity for sports, particularly football, despite initial accidents such as a broken arm.
- His family encouraged his interest in the game, marking the early stages of his legendary future in football.

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# Chapter 3 Summary : 3: The smallest of them all

Chapter Title	Summary
Chapter 3: The Smallest of Them All	This chapter recounts a summer afternoon in 1992 in Rosario, Argentina, at the Grandoli football ground, where a young Lionel Messi begins his football journey. Messi's first coach, Señor Salvador Ricardo Aparicio, recalls how Messi, the smallest player, was encouraged by his grandmother to join the team. Despite initial doubts about his size, Messi quickly showcased extraordinary talent, impressing Aparicio with his skills and goal-scoring ability. The narrative also touches on Messi's upbringing, highlighting his shyness, academic struggles, and the support from family and neighbors that fueled his passion for football. This chapter emphasizes Messi's humble beginnings, perseverance, and the emergence of his natural talent that would lead to his greatness in football.

## Chapter 3: The Smallest of Them All

This chapter takes place on a summer afternoon in 1992 at the dilapidated Grandoli football ground in a rough neighborhood of Rosario, Argentina. The surroundings are bleak, marked by makeshift carwashes and signs for scrap metal. The football pitch is largely deserted except for a young Lionel Messi, who is about to embark on his football journey.

Señor Salvador Ricardo Aparicio, Messi's first coach, recalls how Messi, though the smallest player, joined the team unexpectedly when they were one player short. His grandmother, Celia, insisted that he take a chance on Leo, despite concerns about his size. Upon his first match, Messi

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quickly proved his extraordinary talent by skillfully maneuvering past defenders, leaving a lasting impression on Aparicio.

Aparicio reminisces about Messi's early days playing football. Despite his small stature, Leo showcased remarkable skills, often scoring multiple goals during games. Aparicio affectionately recalls the impact Messi had on the field, emphasizing his natural playing style and determination despite being easily hurt.

The narrative transitions to Messi's later years, highlighting his upbringing and school life. As a child, he was often shy and struggled academically but excelled at football, where he found joy and recognition. His family and neighbors supported him, and he exhibited talent that foreshadowed his future success.

The chapter illustrates Messi's humble beginnings, his family's role in his early football career, and the profound impact of his first coach. It underlines the theme of perseverance and the emergence of a natural talent that would later bloom into one of the world's greatest football players.

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## Example

**Key Point:** Perseverance in the face of adversity is key to unlocking true potential, just like Messi.

**Example:** Imagine you're standing on a dusty field, surrounded by a rough neighborhood, feeling the weight of doubt about your own abilities due to your small stature. Just like young Lionel Messi, you are faced with the challenge of proving everyone wrong. As you take your place on the pitch, your heart races, but you decide to channel that energy into your game. Each time you manage to dribble past an opponent or make a precise pass, you feel a surge of confidence. Your family's encouragement echoes in your mind, reminding you that size doesn't determine success. By embracing the challenge and focusing on your unique talents, you embark on a journey that reveals your true potential and sets the stage for future achievements. Through this experience, you understand that perseverance, like Messi's, can transform vulnerability into extraordinary skill.

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## inspiration

**Key Point:** Embrace your uniqueness

**Life inspiration:** Just like Messi faced challenges due to his size yet still shone on the football pitch, recognize that your individuality is your greatest asset. Don't be afraid to step onto the field of life, no matter how daunting it may seem. Embrace your strengths, and don't let the opinions of others deter you from pursuing your passions. Channel your determination and skill, just as Messi did, and allow your unique talents to propel you forward, proving that greatness often comes in the most unexpected forms.

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# Chapter 4 Summary : 4: The same as always

## Chapter 4: The Same as Always

### Conversation with Cintia Arellano

Cintia Arellano, a close friend of Lionel Messi, welcomes the narrator at her quaint home. Known for her bright blue eyes and friendly demeanor, Cintia recalls her deep ties with Messi, stemming from their mothers being pregnant at the same time. Growing up together, Cintia and Lionel were inseparable, sharing school journeys, birthdays, and countless memories.

### Lionel's Childhood

Cintia describes Lionel as a shy, introverted boy who only shined during football. He often became the sought-after player during school playground games due to his scoring ability. Despite his lack of interest in academic subjects,

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Lionel excelled in physical education and art. Cintia aided him in schoolwork, and their friendship was strong until Lionel moved to Barcelona, leading to a bittersweet farewell.

## Memories and Celebrations

Cintia shares nostalgic moments, flipping through old photos and newspaper clippings that chronicle Messi's life. She recounts organizing a neighborhood celebration for his return after winning the FIFA U-20 World Cup in 2005, revealing the overwhelming affection the community had for him. Although there were challenging times, including scrutiny during the 2006 World Cup, Cintia emphasizes Messi's humility and the unchanged bond they share, noting that despite his fame, he remains the same shy friend she grew up with.

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# Chapter 5 Summary : 5: Red and black

Section	Summary
Raúl and Messi's Passion for Newell's	Raúl admires Argentine footballers and wishes to experience local matches, highlighting Messi's loyalty to Newell's, linked to his family traditions.
Messi's Early Football Journey	In March 1994, at age six, Messi begins trials at Newell's after being scouted, showcasing his family's long connection to the club.
Club Rivalry and History	Newell's Old Boys, founded in 1903, has a historic rivalry with Rosario Central, which began in 1889, and both clubs have rich fan cultures.
Nicknames and Rivalry Dynamics	Newell's fans are nicknamed "lepers," which originated from a historical stigma, but has since become a badge of pride.
Messi's Development and Achievements	Messi stands out as he progresses through the youth ranks, achieving local icon status through skill, enthusiasm, and success.
Coaching and Influences	Coach Ernesto Vecchio emphasizes Messi's extraordinary talent and the crucial role of family support in his growth.
First Media Recognition	By 2000, Messi gains media attention as he transitions from youth leagues, signaling a promising future at Newell's.
Conclusion	Chapter 5 highlights Messi's formative years at Newell's, emphasizing his early talent, family ties, and the cultural significance of football.

## Summary of Chapter 5: Red and Black

### Raúl and Messi's Passion for Newell's

Raúl reflects on his admiration for Argentine footballers and expresses a desire to experience the local matches in Argentina, specifically mentioning Newell's. Lionel Messi, who shares a deep family connection to Newell's through his father Jorge, emphasizes his loyalty to the club, a sentiment

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rooted in family traditions.

## **Messi's Early Football Journey**

In March 1994, Messi, not yet seven, begins trials at Newell's after being identified by scouts. He impresses the coaches during an intense evaluation period, leading to his formal enrollment in the club. Messi's family history is intertwined with Newell's, as his father and brothers also participated in the club.

## **Club Rivalry and History**

Newell's Old Boys, founded in 1903, stands against their rivals Rosario Central, which was established in 1889. The historical significance and legendary figures associated with both clubs are noted, along with the emergence of their respective fan cultures.

## **Nicknames and Rivalry Dynamics**

The Newell's fans are referred to as "lepers," a nickname derived from a historical event involving charity matches and social stigma surrounding leprosy. This label, initially

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derogatory, has turned into a point of pride among supporters.

## **Messi's Development and Achievements**

As Messi develops through the youth ranks, he stands out for his skill and enthusiasm. After achieving significant successes, including winning trophies and impressing in public performances, he becomes a local icon at Newell's.

## **Coaching and Influences**

Ernesto Vecchio, one of Messi's coaches, recalls Messi's extraordinary abilities and highlights the importance of supportive family dynamics in his development. Vecchio shares anecdotes that illustrate Messi's natural talent and impact on the field.

## **First Media Recognition**

By 2000, Messi transitions out of the youth leagues while garnering attention from local media. A notable interview introduces him to the public as a promising player, foreshadowing his future success and dedication to Newell's.

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## Conclusion

Chapter 5 captures Messi's foundational years at Newell's, illustrating his early talent, family connections to the club, and the cultural significance of football in his life. Messi's journey is framed by historical club rivalries and a sense of community within the sport.

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## Example

**Key Point:** The importance of family and local culture in shaping Messi's football journey.

**Example:** Imagine attending a local match with your family, feeling the electric atmosphere as you cheer for a club deeply rooted in your heritage. Like you, Messi's loyalty to Newell's Old Boys is not just about football; it's about honoring the legacy of his family who supported the club before him. Each play and goal ignites a shared passion, reminding you that community and tradition weave seamlessly into the fabric of athleticism.

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## inspiration

**Key Point:** Loyalty to family and tradition

**Life inspiration:** Reflecting on the deep family connection Messi has with Newell's, we are reminded of the power of loyalty and traditions in our own lives. Just as Messi's unwavering dedication to his club stems from his family's history and values, we too can find inspiration in embracing our roots and honoring the relationships that have shaped who we are. When we stay true to our loved ones and the traditions that connect us, we not only nurture a sense of belonging but also lay the foundation for our future achievements. Whether it's by participating in family activities or supporting local communities, channeling Messi's spirit of loyalty can empower us to pursue our passions with the same fervor and commitment.

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# Chapter 6 Summary : 6: He was a Gardel

## Chapter 6: He Was a Gardel

### Conversation with Adrián Coria

Adrián Coria, a former player and youth coach from Newell's, reflects on Lionel Messi's early days. He recalls how, in an era dominated by hype around another young player, Leandro Depetris, he confidently proclaimed that Messi would outshine him and potentially surpass Maradona. Coria highlights Messi's extraordinary talent despite his small stature, noting his explosive ability, ball control, and competitive nature.

### Messi's Playing Style

Coria describes Messi's role as an attacking player behind the strikers, where he thrived even when opponents sought to hinder his progress with aggressive fouls. Rather than being

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deterred, Messi used these challenges to fuel his performance, often single-handedly winning matches.

## **Respect and Attitude**

Messi was respectful towards his coach and teammates, showing humility despite his talent. However, Coria mentions Messi's disinterest in training exercises, focusing instead on the ball. After a minor incident where he was sent home for disregarding training, Messi returned to practice, demonstrating his dedication.

## **Transition to Europe**

Coria expresses disappointment over Newell's failure to invest in Messi when he was young, highlighting a missed opportunity for the club. Reflecting on Messi's growth in Europe. Coria acknowledges his progress while believing

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# Chapter 7 Summary : 7: Size: small

## Chapter 7 Summary

### Overview of Messi's Early Health Concerns

On January 31, 1997, Doctor Diego Schwarsztein met a nine-and-a-half-year-old Lionel Messi, who was brought in by his parents due to concerns about his limited growth. At that time, Messi measured only 1.27m and had not yet made a name for himself in football, playing only junior-level matches.

### Diagnosis of Growth Hormone Deficiency

After a thorough examination and numerous tests, Doctor Schwarsztein diagnosed Messi with growth hormone deficiency, a rare condition affecting one in every 20 million children. The doctor explained this condition is analogous to diabetes but is not hereditary, as evidenced by Messi's taller siblings.

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## **Treatment and Its Implications**

Once identified, Messi began a stringent growth hormone treatment regimen, requiring daily injections for up to six years. Doctor Schwarsztein clarified that this treatment was a well-established practice, not an experimental trial. The key to evaluating the effectiveness of the treatment was regular X-rays to monitor bone development.

## **Controversy Surrounding Growth Hormone Treatments**

Despite the clarity regarding Messi's need for treatment, there were controversies about the use of growth hormones in sports. When used by healthy adults, growth hormones might be misused as anabolic steroids, raising health risks and ethical concerns.

## **Challenges Faced by the Messi Family**

Though Messi's family received some support from social security and local clubs, financial barriers persisted. The Messis ultimately sought options outside Argentina for continued treatment, as Barcelona agreed to cover the

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expenses—creating a connection that would alter Messi's future in football.

## **Public Misunderstanding of Growth Treatments**

The publicity surrounding Messi's treatment led to misconceptions, with many parents wrongly believing that the hormone therapy could be a solution for all children with growth concerns. Doctor Schwarsztein warned that such treatment is inappropriate for children without hormone deficiencies, stressing the importance of targeting real medical needs rather than misconceptions bred by fame. In conclusion, Messi's journey with growth hormone deficiency illustrates both the medical challenges he faced and the broader social implications of his condition. The treatment he received was critical for his development, allowing him to grow to his genetically intended height, which has played a pivotal role in his extraordinary football career.

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## Example

**Key Point:**Overcoming Growth Hormone Deficiency

**Example:**Imagine as a parent, feeling the heaviness of concern when your child struggles in their growth. You might find yourself anxiously visiting doctors, sharing in their fears as they face the unknown. Discovering a diagnosis of growth hormone deficiency could invoke a surge of emotions—relief, determination, and hope. You would then embark on a rigorous journey of daily treatments, feeling the responsibility to support them relentlessly, navigating through financial uncertainties. As you witness their growth not just physically but also within the sport they love, a profound realization dawns upon you: sometimes the greatest hurdles we face become the foundation for extraordinary achievements. Through this struggle, your child, like Messi, transforms challenges into stepping stones towards greatness.

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# Chapter 8 Summary : 8: International star in a small town

Section	Summary
Introduction to Messi's Impact on Rosario	Journalist Mariano Bereznicki highlights Messi's significance as Rosario's pride and a symbol of hope for Argentina.
Local Recognition and Career Beginnings	Messi was not widely recognized in Rosario during his early career. Local clubs overlooked his potential, and now the town longs to see him play locally.
Initial Encounter with Messi	Bereznicki recalls meeting a humble Messi in 2000, who transformed on the pitch. His fame surged after the 2005 Under-20 World Cup.
The Frenzy of Fame	Following the World Cup, Messi became a media sensation, overshadowing other stars and satisfying Argentina's long wait for a talent of his magnitude.
Messi's Visits to Rosario	In Rosario, Messi is regarded as a star. His affiliations with major brands draw crowds, but he prefers family time to recharge from his Barcelona life.
Personal Insights into Messi	Bereznicki presents Messi as humble and grounded, with unique football talents and exceptional acceleration, known primarily to his close circle.
Predictions for Messi's Future	Bereznicki believes Messi has secured his place in European football and still has potential for growth, being celebrated as the authentic Messi.

## Chapter 8: International Star in a Small Town

### Introduction to Messi's Impact on Rosario

Mariano Bereznicki, a journalist from La Capital, discusses the significance of Lionel Messi for his hometown of Rosario. He describes Messi as the best player the town has ever produced and a beacon of Argentine hope.

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## Local Recognition and Career Beginnings

Messi is noted for not being widely recognized in Rosario during his early playing days. He participated in junior football but left before achieving popularity. Local clubs failed to comprehend the potential they were losing, and now Rosario longs to see him play on their fields, as they only witness his talents through television.

## Initial Encounter with Messi

Bereznicki recounts his first meeting with Messi at the end of 2000, noting Messi's humble demeanor and how he transformed once on the pitch. His significant rise to fame began after the 2005 Under-20 World Cup, where he captured attention for his exceptional performance.

## The Frenzy of Fame

Post-World Cup, Messi became a media sensation, with national and international outlets seeking interviews. The excitement was due to Argentina's long wait for a player of his caliber, overshadowing other stars like Riquelme and Tévez.

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## Messi's Visits to Rosario

When Messi visits Rosario, he is seen as an international star in a small town. His connection to major brands enhances his visibility, attracting local crowds. However, he finds solace in spending time with family and friends, recharging for his life in Barcelona.

## Personal Insights into Messi

Bereznicki describes Messi's true character as known only to his close circle. Despite his fame, Messi remains painfully humble and grounded. In terms of football talent, Bereznicki notes that Messi possesses unique skills and an exceptional ability to accelerate.

## Predictions for Messi's Future

Looking to the future, Bereznicki believes Messi has already established himself in European football but still has room to grow. He emphasizes that Messi is not just a successor to Maradona but is celebrated as the genuine Messi.

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## Example

**Key Point:** Messi's increased fame profoundly impacts his hometown and its perceptions of local talent.

**Example:** Imagine walking through the streets of Rosario, where kids often play football on every corner, dreaming of becoming the next big star. As you dribble the ball, you hear whispers of Messi's humble beginnings and how the world recognizes him now. You feel a mix of pride and longing—an understanding that local talent may sometimes be overlooked until it shines on a broader stage. The dreams of aspiring players are fueled by Messi's success, reminding you that greatness can emerge from anywhere, igniting hope within the community.

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# Chapter 9 Summary : 9: Across the pond

Section	Summary
Transition from Argentina to Spain	On September 16, 2000, Messi and his father move to Barcelona for better opportunities due to Leo's soccer potential, facing cultural challenges in Spain.
Leo's Early Soccer Career	At thirteen, Messi gains recognition in youth soccer, attracting interest from clubs like River Plate, leading to a family decision to pursue a brighter future for him.
Testing at FC Barcelona	After arriving in Barcelona, Messi impresses during a training trial, particularly catching the eye of Charly Rexach, who recognizes his exceptional skills.
The Signing Process	Despite obstacles as a foreign minor and concerns over his size, negotiations lead to a signed agreement on a napkin, indicating future signing under trial conditions.
Final Agreements and Relocation	On January 8, 2001, Messi's formal contract is secured, allowing the family's move to Barcelona, with Jorge offered a job at the club, marking a pivotal change for Leo.

## Chapter 9 Summary: Across the Pond

### Transition from Argentina to Spain

On September 16, 2000, Lionel Messi and his father, Jorge, travel from Rosario, Argentina, to Barcelona, Spain, seeking new opportunities as Lionel's soccer talent had gained attention back home. Despite their Argentine roots, the Messis face the challenges of moving to a foreign culture where the Spanish language takes on different meanings.

### Leo's Early Soccer Career

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At just thirteen, Leo is already recognized in youth soccer circles, drawing attention from clubs, including River Plate. The family debates the decision to leave, but ultimately decides to pursue a better life for Leo, including necessary medical treatments and football development.

## **Testing at FC Barcelona**

Upon arriving in Barcelona on September 17, 2000, Messi is invited for a training trial. His performance captures the attention of FC Barcelona's management, particularly Charly Rexach, who is impressed by Leo's skills and uniqueness, distinguishing him from typical players.

## **The Signing Process**

Although initially facing barriers due to his status as a

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# Chapter 10 Summary : 10: Latigazo

## Chapter 10: Latigazo

### Conversation with Fernando ‘Chiche’ Niembro

Fernando Niembro, a Fox TV commentator, discusses Lionel Messi's transition from Argentina to Spain. He highlights that Messi left for Europe at a young age without significant recognition, and he believes that the recruitment of young South American talents by European clubs often leads to a talent drain that negatively impacts local leagues.

### Assessment of Messi

Niembro describes Messi as a "latigazo" or "lash," signifying his ability to decisively change a game with a single move. While there are many good players, Messi's capacity to electrify the crowd is unmatched. However, Niembro emphasizes that Messi must learn to cooperate more with teammates, share the ball, and adapt to playing as part of a unit rather than making plays solely for personal glory.

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## Marketing and Game Performance

Niembro also advises Messi to be cautious of the implications of marketing, suggesting that he should focus on performing well in games rather than worrying about his marketability.

## Comparison with Maradona

The inevitable comparison between Messi and Diego Maradona is discussed. While Niembro acknowledges similarities in their playing styles, he notes that modern football presents more challenges than it did in Maradona's time. He believes that it is unfair to directly compare the two until Messi's career concludes. Niembro expresses hope that Messi will surpass Maradona, which would benefit Argentine football, yet insists Messi must first lead his team to a World Cup victory.

## Future Predictions

Looking ahead, Niembro finds it challenging to predict the future in an ever-evolving football world, emphasizing the rapid changes within the sport.

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# Chapter 11 Summary : 11: Provisional licence

## Chapter 11: Provisional Licence

### Introduction to Barcelona

In March 2001, Lionel Messi receives his provisional players' licence, allowing him to debut for Barcelona's B team, where he impressively scores a goal. However, being a foreign player, he is unable to participate in national competitions or join the main A team, which is already set for the season.

### Initial Challenges

Messi faces significant challenges in his early days in Barcelona. The transfer from his former club, Newell's, has not been finalized, and he is restricted to playing only regional league matches. On April 21, Messi suffers a serious injury—a fracture to his left leg—while playing, marking the

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first significant setback in his young career.

## **Injuries and Rehabilitation**

Following the fracture, Messi undergoes treatment that includes a splint and a plaster cast, followed by rehabilitation, keeping him out of the game until June. A subsequent injury from a fall leaves him sidelined for three weeks. On a health note, doctors determine that Messi can gradually reduce his growth hormone treatment, though he will need daily injections for a few more years.

## **Family Adjustments**

While Messi struggles with adaptation to his new life, his family faces their own challenges. His sister struggles to acclimate, leading to a decision where the family must split: Jorge and Leo remains in Barcelona, while the rest return to Argentina. Messi expresses a strong desire to succeed at Barcelona.

## **Sports and Academics**

At fourteen, Messi returns to school and training, but his

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transfer issues persist, limiting him to friendly matches. However, his dedication and effort during training earn him recognition from coaches and peers. By December, a new contract is signed by his father amidst financial struggles due to bureaucratic delays.

## **Breakthrough and Success**

Finally, in February 2002, Messi is allowed to join official competitions. He quickly proves himself, scoring multiple goals in a pivotal match and winning his first title with the team. His performance continues to improve, earning him accolades and establishing a growing rapport with teammates.

## **Conclusion**

The season transitions positively for Messi, culminating in impressive statistics. As a key player in the B team, he gains confidence and respect, preparing for his eventual rise in the following seasons. Despite the obstacles he faces, Messi's talent shines through, positioning him as a vital part of the growing success at Barcelona.

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## Example

**Key Point:**Overcoming adversity is crucial for achieving greatness.

**Example:**Imagine yourself stepping onto a challenging field where everyone around you is more experienced; you feel the weight of expectations and the fear of failure. Yet, as you lace up your cleats, you know deep down that your passion and determination can turn adversity into your greatest ally. This was Messi's journey: starting from limited opportunities and painful injuries, he channeled setbacks into relentless effort and resilience, proving that perseverance in the face of challenges is paramount for success.

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## inspiration

**Key Point:** Resilience in the Face of Adversity

**Life inspiration:** Just like Messi faced numerous challenges in his early career—injuries, family adjustments, and bureaucratic hurdles—you too can draw inspiration from his resilience. Life will surely throw obstacles your way, but it's your response to those challenges that defines your path. Instead of succumbing to hardship, you can choose to embrace each setback as a learning opportunity, just as Messi did. His unwavering commitment to his dream teaches us that persistence and hard work can turn temporary difficulties into stepping stones for greatness. So, the next time you're faced with adversity, remember Messi's journey and muster the strength to keep pushing towards your goals.

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# Chapter 12 Summary : 12: Puyol's mask

Section	Content
Setting and Background	The scene is at the Nou Camp ice rink with young professionals; Álex García shares insights as a former player and coach at Barça's youth team with Messi.
Messi's Early Characteristics	At 15, Messi was talented, reserved, determined, and known for match-changing skill. He was treated like a little brother by teammates.
Challenges Faced by Messi	Messi felt lonely away from home and was frustrated by playing out of position but adapted quickly to different roles.
Coaching Philosophy	García aimed to combine street football with Barça's attacking style to develop Messi's potential while nurturing his natural talent.
A Memorable Incident: The Mask	Messi fractured his cheekbone during a crucial match but played with a protective mask, securing victory against Espanyol.
Final Match Performance	Messi scored two goals despite mask difficulties, showcasing his quick career progression and potential for future success.
Reflection on Messi's Journey	García predicts Messi will leave a lasting legacy in football due to his rapid rise.

## Chapter 12: Puyol's Mask

### Setting and Background

- The scene is set at the Nou Camp ice rink where young professionals are training.
- Álex García, a former player and coach, shares insights from his coaching days at Barça's youth team, where he had Messi in his squad.

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## Messi's Early Characteristics

- At 15, Messi was described as talented, reserved, and determined.
- He exhibited great skill and was known for his ability to change the outcome of a match.
- García highlights Messi's connection with his teammates, who treated him like a little brother.

## Challenges Faced by Messi

- Despite his talent, Messi experienced loneliness being away from home.
- Playing out of position frustrated him, although he adapted quickly to different roles on the pitch.

## Coaching Philosophy

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# Chapter 13 Summary : 13: Debut

Section	Details
1. Introduction to the Venue	The Dragão stadium in Porto, built for Euro 2004, has a capacity of 52,000 and hosts an important FC Barcelona match on November 16, 2003.
2. Messi's Debut	Lionel Messi comes on as a substitute in the 74th minute during a match that Barcelona loses 2-0, showcasing potential at just 16 years old.
3. Context of the Match	The match's significance is overshadowed by the stadium's inauguration celebrations, and Barcelona relies on youth players due to absences.
4. Messi's Background and Rise	Messi is now one of the youngest players in Barcelona's history, scoring three goals for the youth A team a day before his debut.
5. Changes at Barcelona	Under new management led by President Joan Laporta and Coach Frank Rijkaard, Barcelona shifts focus to nurturing young talent.
6. Youth Team Success	Messi excels in the youth B team and rapidly advances to the youth A team, showcasing his skills in international tournaments.
7. Performance Highlights	Messi scores 18 goals in 11 matches for the youth A team, playing a key role in securing victories and titles.
8. Transition to Professional Football	After impressive performances, Messi transitions to the senior squad, facing challenges and negotiating contract terms amid rival club interests.
9. Conclusion	Messi's debut is the start of an extraordinary career, filled with lessons and challenges as he rises in Barcelona's football hierarchy.

## Chapter 13: Debut

### 1. Introduction to the Venue

- The Dragão stadium in Porto is highlighted for its beautiful design and capacity of 52,000, built to host major events, including Euro 2004.
- The match on November 16, 2003, serves as the backdrop

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for an important moment for FC Barcelona.

## **2. Messi's Debut**

- Lionel Messi debuts as a substitute in the 74th minute for Barcelona in a match that ends in a 2-0 victory for Porto.
- At just 16 years old, Messi stands out during his brief time on the pitch by creating scoring opportunities.

## **3. Context of the Match**

- The match is overshadowed by the stadium's inauguration celebrations rather than the game itself.
- Barcelona had to rely on youth players due to many internationals being unavailable for the match.

## **4. Messi's Background and Rise**

- Messi's debut makes him one of the youngest players in Barcelona's history, following only Paulino Alcántara and Haruna Babangida.
- Only a day prior to debuting, Messi scored three goals for the youth A team.

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## 5. Changes at Barcelona

- The club undergoes significant changes with new management and a shift towards nurturing young talents.
- Joan Laporta is elected president, and Frank Rijkaard is appointed as coach, aiming to rebuild after a disappointing season.

## 6. Youth Team Success

- Messi shines in the youth B team, quickly rising up the ranks and demonstrating remarkable skills during international tournaments.
- His performance leads to him being moved to the youth A team, showcasing his incredible talent.

## 7. Performance Highlights

- Messi scores 18 goals in 11 matches for the youth A team and demonstrates exceptional playmaking abilities in various tournaments.
- He plays a crucial role in helping his teams achieve important victories and titles.

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## 8. Transition to Professional Football

- After substantial contributions in the youth leagues, Messi transitions to the senior Barcelona squad, facing challenges but adapting successfully.
- His first professional contract negotiations prove difficult, highlighting his importance to the club amidst fears of losing young talent to rival clubs.

## 9. Conclusion

- Messi's debut marks the beginning of an extraordinary career, with lessons learned and challenges faced as he rises through the ranks of Barcelona's footballing system.

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## Example

**Key Point:** Embrace Opportunities

**Example:** Imagine standing on the sidelines, feeling the electric atmosphere of a massive stadium as your moment approaches. At just 16, you step onto the pitch, heart racing, knowing this debut could change everything. Like Messi, who emerged in a challenging game against Porto, embrace every chance you get to showcase your talent. Just as you create opportunities, remember that this moment is the first step towards your dreams and aspirations in the sport.

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## inspiration

**Key Point:** The Power of Seizing Opportunities

**Life inspiration:** Lionel Messi's debut at such a young age demonstrates how crucial it is to seize opportunities when they arise. You may find yourself in a moment that could change your life, just as Messi did when he stepped onto the pitch at the Dragão Stadium.

Regardless of the circumstances or the odds stacked against you, embracing these moments with confidence can set the stage for greatness. Take inspiration from Messi's story: when you see an opening, whether in sports, your career, or personal endeavors, don't hesitate to make your move and show the world your potential.

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# Chapter 14 Summary : 14: Home-grown

## Chapter 14: Home-grown

### Conversation with Cristina Cubero

Cristina Cubero, a journalist from Mundo Deportivo, discusses the significance of Leo Messi to Barcelona and the football world. She likens Messi's presence to the long wait for a player of Maradona's caliber, indicating that he is already among footballing legends like Pelé, Maradona, and Cruyff.

### Messi and Barcelona's Values

Cubero asserts that Messi embodies the club's values, having been nurtured by Barcelona since a young age despite his growth problems. His development within Barça's ranks and the local appreciation for his rise contribute to his status as a home-grown talent. The community's connection to youth teams has made Messi a familiar figure long before he reached the first team.

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## Early Encounters with Messi

Cubero reflects on her early interactions with a sixteen-year-old Messi, recalling his shyness and passion for playing rather than watching football. She highlights a poignant memory when Messi was deeply affected after being sent off in his first match with Argentina.

## Evolution Over the Years

Discussing Messi's growth, Cubero notes that he has shifted from being seen as a Maradona clone to developing his own identity as an extraordinary player. His experience has allowed him to channel the skills he learned from Diego into his unique style. She observes that Messi has matured significantly, displaying his emotions more openly and recognizing his impactful presence, especially after the Copa América in Venezuela.

## Messi's Role and Persona

Cubero describes Messi's position in the dressing room as a sporting leader despite not being the captain. His teammates

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understand his immense value. She contrasts Messi with Ronaldinho, noting Messi's essence in gameplay through his combination of speed and skill, positioning him as the new icon of Barcelona.

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## inspiration

**Key Point:** Nurtured Growth and Community Connection

**Life inspiration:** Just like Messi, whose extraordinary talent blossomed within the supportive embrace of Barcelona, you too can find inspiration in the power of nurturing and community. Think about the ways in which you can cultivate your own passions and talents by surrounding yourself with a network that believes in your potential. Whether it's through mentorship, collaboration, or simply sharing your journey with others, remember that growth often flourishes when we are rooted in a supportive community. Embrace the values of hard work, resilience, and connection that Messi exemplifies, and strive to develop your unique identity while remaining grounded in the supportive relationships that will help you flourish.

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# Chapter 15 Summary : 15: Videotape

## Summary of Chapter 15: Videotape

### Introduction of Messi

On June 29, 2004, Hugo Tocalli reflects on discovering a young player from Barcelona, Leo Messi, through a videotape sent by Claudio Vivas. Although initially skeptical, Tocalli becomes interested in Messi after hearing positive feedback and organizes friendlies to evaluate him.

### Messi's Early Impressions

Messi, shy and unknown to his teammates like Zabaleta and Garay, quickly proves himself on the field. Despite starting on the bench, he makes an impact during his debut match against Paraguay, scoring a goal and impressing coaches.

### Performance in Friendlies

In a subsequent friendly against Uruguay, Messi showcases

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his skills with two goals and four assists, solidifying his place in the squad for the upcoming FIFA Under-20 World Cup qualifiers.

## **Under-20 World Cup Qualifiers**

Messi debuts in the qualifiers on January 12, 2005, against Venezuela, contributing significantly to a 3-0 victory. He continues to excel in various matches, demonstrating his talent despite being one of the youngest players in the group.

## **Journey Through the Tournament**

Throughout the qualifiers, Messi's performances help Argentina to qualify for the Under-20 World Cup in Holland, where he earns recognition as one of the best players in South America.

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# Chapter 16 Summary : 16: The football is his toy

## Chapter 16: The Football is His Toy

### Conversation with Francisco ‘Pancho’ Ferraro

Pancho Ferraro, known for his impressive coaching career in football, reflects on his experiences, particularly his time leading the Argentine Under-20 team to victory in the 2005 World Cup. He expresses pride in guiding players like Messi, Agüero, and Gago.

### First Impressions of Messi

Pancho recalls first meeting Messi in January 2005 during the South American qualifiers, describing him as a shy and polite young boy who was still adjusting to the team. Initially, Messi lacked the stamina to play full matches but was introduced in the second half to exploit his talents.

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## Messi's Growth and Impact

Despite a minor injury that kept Messi on the bench during the first game, he quickly became an integral part of the team in subsequent matches. By the time of the Under-20 World Cup, Messi had matured physically and mentally, making significant contributions on the field. Ferraro notes Messi's enthusiasm and how he thrived when playing with the ball, demonstrating exceptional skills and spatial awareness.

## Comparison with Maradona

While comparisons with Diego Maradona are common, Pancho insists that Messi is a unique talent in his own right, capable of creating unforgettable moments in football.

## Messi's Rise to Stardom

The Under-20 World Cup was pivotal for Messi, establishing him as a star in Argentina. Despite the nation's high hopes for his inclusion in the 2006 World Cup, Messi began the tournament on the bench. Ferraro considers coach José Pekerman's tactics in that match, acknowledging Pekerman's expertise in youth coaching but leaving room for discussion

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about Messi's usage during crucial moments.

## Ongoing Development

Pancho concludes that Messi continues to evolve as a player without losing his humble demeanor. He emphasizes Messi's desire for tranquility and support from his family, which has remained constant throughout his career.

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# Chapter 17 Summary : 17: A friend

## Chapter 17: A Conversation with Pablo Zabaleta

### Overview of Zabaleta's Insights

Pablo Zabaleta, a close friend of Lionel Messi, is described as a trustworthy and experienced player by Messi's mother, Celia. Zabaleta grew up in Arrecifes, played for San Lorenzo in Argentina, and later became a significant player for Manchester City.

### Meeting Messi

Zabaleta reminisces about meeting Messi in the Under-20 team during their triumph at the Holland World Cup. He highlights the strong camaraderie and atmosphere within the team, mentioning how important it was for them to win together.

### Messi's Challenges

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Despite his talent, Zabaleta notes that Messi initially struggled to integrate with the team due to his different upbringing in Barcelona. However, Messi adapted quickly and began to thrive during the tournament.

## **Continued Friendship**

Their relationship has remained strong through the years. They keep in touch over the phone and meet during national team gatherings. Zabaleta recalls their shared moments in Barcelona, including outings to Argentine restaurants and conversations about football.

## **Messi as a Person and Player**

Zabaleta describes Messi as a normal guy who values family and home life. He believes Messi is an even better person than a footballer. As a player, he emphasizes Messi's unique abilities, including his ball control and game-changing potential.

## **Humility Amid Fame**

Zabaleta admires Messi's humility, stating that fame has not

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altered his character. He remains a great friend who has stayed true to himself despite his success.

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# Chapter 18 Summary : 18: Soap opera

## Chapter 18 Summary: Soap Opera

### Overview of the 2005-06 Liga Season

The Liga season begins on August 26, 2005, featuring new star Robinho from Real Madrid. Messi is surprisingly absent from the first match, sparking concerns over his playing status due to legal issues regarding non-EU players.

### Messi's Legal Status

Changes in regulations affecting non-EU players allow for the possibility of Messi playing in the league. However, FC Barcelona decides not to field him to avoid complications, which leads to confusion given Messi's previous appearances without issues.

### Rising Tensions and Complaints

As Messi remains sidelined, complaints arise about the

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handling of his naturalization process. Rumors permeate regarding interest from other clubs, further complicating his situation. Barcelona finally secures a professional contract for Messi, coupled with a significant increase in his fees.

## **The League's Reaction**

On September 20, the Professional Football League votes against new rules favoring naturalized players, effectively barring Messi from league play for the time being, despite him being eligible for Champions League matches.

## **Messi Gains Spanish Citizenship**

On September 26, Messi officially obtains Spanish nationality, clearing the path for him to play as a local. After several administrative battles, he joins the team on October 1 and is welcomed warmly by fans despite the club not

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# Chapter 19 Summary : 19: A breath of fresh air

Section	Summary
Conversation with Fernando Solanas	Discussion on Messi's initial contract with Nike and the eventual switch to Adidas, prompted by Solanas in 2003, highlighting potential profits.
Adidas' Strategy	Solanas emphasizes the significance of recognizing future sports stars, noting Messi's increasing attention after the 2005 Under 20 World Cup. Adidas made a competitive offer that was accepted in early 2006.
The Legal Battle	After Messi began using Adidas gear, Nike challenged his contract legally. The court upheld that Messi was not obligated to wear Nike, allowing him to officially collaborate with Adidas.
Messi's Persona in Sports Marketing	Messi is portrayed as a relatable and humble figure, likened to Maradona. His appeal is showcased in Adidas' "Impossible is Nothing" campaign, chronicling his inspirational journey.
Market Presence and Concerns	Adidas acknowledges Messi's strong market presence in various regions, with a focus on Latin America, Spain, and Asia, and addresses concerns over burnout and media exposure while emphasizing brand management.

## Chapter 19: A Breath of Fresh Air

### Conversation with Fernando Solanas

In a discussion with Fernando Solanas, the Head of Sports Marketing at Adidas Iberia, the narrative begins with the early relationship between Lionel Messi and Nike. Initially tied to Nike through a sportswear contract, Messi's father, Jorge, was content with the American company's sponsorship. However, Solanas seized the opportunity in

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2003 to persuade Jorge to consider Adidas once Nike's contract was up, emphasizing the potential profit from this switch.

## **Adidas' Strategy**

Solanas explains that identifying future stars is vital for sports marketing, and it was clear to many scouts and coaches that Messi was a remarkable talent. After Jorge delayed signing with Nike, Messi gained more attention, especially after his performance in the Under 20 World Cup in 2005. Eventually, Adidas made a competitive offer, which was ultimately accepted by Jorge in early 2006.

## **The Legal Battle**

After Messi began wearing Adidas gear and scored his first goal with the brand during the Copa del Rey, Nike took legal action to uphold their contract. The court ruled that Messi had to wear Nike during specific matches, but later determined that he had no obligations to the company. Following this legal resolve, Messi officially began working with Adidas.

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## Messi's Persona in Sports Marketing

Solanas describes Messi as a refreshing figure in the football world, comparing him to a young Maradona and praising his relatable demeanor. His humility and normalcy contribute positively to his appeal among fans. Messi features prominently in Adidas' "Impossible is Nothing" campaign, which highlights his inspiring journey from a boy facing physical challenges to a global football star.

## Market Presence and Concerns

Adidas recognizes Messi's strong market presence in regions like Latin America, Spain, and Asia, especially Japan, where his stature resonates with consumers. In Europe, his image continues to grow, fueled by high-profile Champions League matches. Despite concerns about potential burnout and media overexposure, Solanas emphasizes the importance of careful management of Messi's brand to maintain his authenticity and appeal.

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## Example

**Key Point:** The significance of Messi's brand transition from Nike to Adidas

**Example:** Imagine you're a young athlete, just beginning to find your footing in the competitive sports world. You receive your first sponsorship offer from a well-known brand and feel elated. However, as you progress and attract more attention through your exceptional skills, you realize you have the power to choose who represents you. You consider the implications of selecting a brand—how it will shape your image and opportunities. This pivotal moment mirrors Messi's transition from Nike to Adidas, symbolizing how exceptional talent can alter the course of partnerships and marketing strategies, ultimately shaping a global icon.

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## inspiration

**Key Point:** Seize Opportunities

**Life inspiration:** The conversation between Fernando Solanas and Messi's father illustrates the importance of recognizing and seizing opportunities that can change the course of our lives. Just as Solanas identified Messi's potential and made the compelling case for Adidas to sponsor a rising star, you too can find moments in your life where recognizing a chance to pursue your passions or switch paths could lead to extraordinary outcomes. Embrace these moments with courage, and remember that sometimes a single decision can open new doors that take you closer to your dreams.

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# Chapter 20 Summary : 20: Boy of the match

## Chapter 20 Summary: Boy of the Match

### Setting the Scene

- Date: February 22, 2006
- Location: Stamford Bridge, London
- Match: UEFA Champions League quarter-final, Chelsea vs. Barcelona
- Conditions: Cold, muddy pitch leading to controversies; a heated atmosphere.

### Team Backgrounds

- Chelsea: Known for defensive and vigorous play; recently suffered defeats in the Premier League and FA Cup.
- Barcelona: Talented and imaginative but struggled due to injuries (Eto'o, Xavi, Ronaldinho).

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## Match Significance

- Duels of star players like Ronaldinho vs. Frank Lampard, and coaches Mourinho vs. Rijkaard.
- Barcelona seeks revenge after their previous humiliating loss to Chelsea in 2005.

## Key Events and Performances

- Messi, wearing number 30, enters the game and demonstrates fearlessness despite his young age.
- A series of impactful plays from Messi, including an early shot on goal and critical involvement in attacking plays.
- Del Horno (Chelsea) is sent off after a foul on Messi, leading to a tactical shift for Chelsea, who now aims for a 0-0 draw.

## Match Progression

- Chelsea takes the lead through an own goal by Motta in the 58th minute.
- Messi continues to push his team forward, creating chances but facing a lack of support.
- The match sees several dramatic moments, including a

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missed penalty call against Chelsea.

## **Climactic Turn**

- Messi assists in leveling the score when Ronaldinho scores from a free kick in the 70th minute.
- Late in the game, Eto'o scores the winning goal, handing Chelsea their first home defeat in a long time.

## **Post-Match Reactions**

- Mourinho attributes the loss to the referee's decisions and criticizes Messi's performance as theatrical.
- Messi downplays the physical toll he endured during the match, expressing pride in the victory.

## **Injury and Recovery**

- In the following match at Nou Camp, Messi sustains a muscular injury, leading to an extended absence from the field (79 days).
- Messi misses crucial matches, including the Champions League final, while his teammates celebrate victory without him.

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## Example

**Key Point:** Fearlessness and determination in the face of adversity

**Example:** Imagine stepping onto a muddy pitch in front of thousands, knowing you are expected to perform against seasoned veterans. This was the setting for Messi, who, despite his young age and a struggling team, played with a fearless heart. You can envision him darting past defenders, taking that shot on goal, and creating opportunities, knowing that the weight of the game rests on his shoulders. It takes immense courage to rise to the occasion when not only the fans but also your entire team relies on your talent to turn the tide. Messi's performance embodies the belief that no challenge is insurmountable, inspiring you to confront your own obstacles with the same unyielding spirit.

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# Chapter 21 Summary : 21: Supersonic aesthetic

## Chapter 21: Supersonic Aesthetic

### Interview Reflection on Messi

Santiago Segurola, a journalist for Marca, reflects on Lionel Messi's exceptional talent after a stunning performance in the Chelsea-Barcelona match. He describes Messi as an eighteen-year-old who stands out with remarkable skills, intelligence, and courage, making a significant impact during the match.

### Comparison with Other Legends

Segurola compares Messi to legendary players he's witnessed, noting that while he experienced the brilliance of Maradona and Raúl, Messi's combination of power and bravery sets him apart.

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## Attributes of Brilliance

1.

### **Speed:**

Messi's speed is unparalleled. Despite the risks of collisions in football, he showcases an extraordinary ability to make quick decisions without errors.

2.

### **Game-Changing Ability:**

Messi can score from nearly any position on the pitch, demonstrated in his goal against Zaragoza, which emphasizes his versatility and skill.

3.

### **Cultural Representation:**

Messi embodies a blend of his Argentine heritage and the "Barcelonan" style, exemplifying the successes of FC Barcelona's youth academy.

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# Chapter 22 Summary : 22: Difficult, very difficult

Section	Summary
Introduction to Asier del Horno	Asier del Horno, a former left-back born on January 19, 1981, in Barakaldo, reflects on his football career with clubs like Athletic, Chelsea, and Valencia.
The 2005–06 Champions League Match	Del Horno recounts the tense Chelsea-Barcelona match, where Messi posed a significant challenge despite the team's preparation.
Messi's Surprising Impact	Del Horno notes that Messi was an unexpected standout in the match, recalling a specific foul that resulted in a yellow card for him.
Character of Messi	Messi is characterized as calm and not verbally provocative, with Del Horno reflecting on an incident where Messi's skill led to a controversial red card.
Challenges of Defending Against Messi	Del Horno emphasizes Messi's exceptional ball control and speed, making him very difficult to defend against due to his agility.
Advice for Defenders	While lacking specific tactics, Del Horno suggests defenders need to be aligned, aggressive, and quick to effectively counter players like Messi.

## Chapter 22: Difficult Conversations with Asier del Horno

### Introduction to Asier del Horno

Asier del Horno, a former left-back born on January 19, 1981, in Barakaldo (Vizcaya), reflects on his career in football, highlighting his experiences from clubs like Athletic, Chelsea, and Valencia.

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## **The 2005–06 Champions League Match**

Del Horno recounts the tense atmosphere during the Chelsea-Barcelona match at Stamford Bridge. Despite the team's preparation under Mourinho, Messi posed a significant challenge, frequently breaking through the defense.

### **Messi's Surprising Impact**

Del Horno acknowledges that there are always unexpected players in a match, and Messi was that player for him. He recalls a specific incident where he fouled Messi, resulting in a yellow card, although he does not remember the details of the play.

### **Character of Messi**

Messi is described as a calm player who doesn't provoke opponents verbally. Del Horno reflects on an incident in the game where Messi skillfully outmaneuvered defenders, resulting in a controversial red card for him.

### **Challenges of Defending Against Messi**

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Del Horno highlights Messi's exceptional ball control and speed, making him a formidable opponent for defenders. He emphasizes the difficulty of stopping Messi due to his agility and skill set.

## **Advice for Defenders**

While unsure of specific tactics, Del Horno suggests that defenders must remain aligned, aggressive, and swift in their approach to counter players like Messi.

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## inspiration

**Key Point:** The Importance of Adaptability in the Face of Challenges

**Life inspiration:** Just as Asier del Horno learned from his encounters with Messi, you too can embrace the unexpected challenges that life throws your way. Messi, with his extraordinary skill and ability to surprise defenders, serves as a reminder that flexibility and quick thinking are invaluable assets. When faced with obstacles—be it in your career or personal life—be like del Horno striving to adapt and overcome; remain aligned with your goals, show determination, and respond swiftly to change. By cultivating an agile mindset, you can navigate through life's complexities and emerge stronger, just as the finest players learn to adjust their strategies to outmaneuver the toughest opponents.

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# Chapter 23 Summary : 23: Not even a single minute

## Chapter 23 Summary

### World Cup Expectations

On June 30, 2006, the global anticipation surrounding the World Cup centers on prominent players like Brazil's Ronaldinho, who is favored to excel, while Argentina has high hopes for Juan Román Riquelme. Messi, at just eighteen, is looked upon as a promising young talent but is categorized as a medium-level star.

### Messi's Journey Begins

Messi enters the national team with high expectations but faces challenges due to his young age and shy demeanor. His debut against Hungary effectively ends in disappointment as he is sent off just after his entrance. Although he struggles to fit in with his teammates, he has garnered significant media

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attention.

## **Building Momentum**

As the World Cup progresses, Messi's potential emerges despite limited playing time. He delivers promising performances during practice and is eventually given a chance to play against Serbia and Montenegro, where he makes an impactful debut by scoring a goal and assisting others.

## **Missed Opportunities**

Despite the positive contributions in earlier matches, Messi finds himself on the bench during crucial moments, particularly in the quarter-finals against Germany. Coach José Pekerman's decision not to play him leads to speculation and criticism, as many believe Messi could have made a difference.

## **Outcome of the World Cup**

As Argentina faces Germany, they ultimately exit the tournament after a penalty shootout. Messi expresses

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disappointment regarding his limited opportunities and the varying perceptions around his involvement with the national team. The chapter concludes with reflections on Messi's potential future impact on Argentine football and his journey ahead.

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# Chapter 24 Summary : 24: Positive discrimination

## Chapter 24: Positive Discrimination

### Conversation with Jorge Valdano

Jorge Valdano prefers to be introduced as an "ex-footballer," despite his extensive career as a general director, coach, writer, and commentator. He discusses Lionel Messi, focusing on the 2006 World Cup where Messi didn't play in a crucial match. Valdano speculates that coach Pekerman's decisions may have been influenced by unforeseen circumstances regarding Messi's fitness. He laments that Argentina faltered without Messi.

### Messi vs. Maradona

Valdano compares Messi to Diego Maradona, noting that while both are individual sensations capable of influencing games, they differ fundamentally in style. Maradona

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showcased versatile playmaking abilities, whereas Messi is characterized by intense, direct goal-scoring efforts. Valdano points out that Messi's explosive style requires him to maintain peak physical condition, as indicated by his injury history.

## **Messi's Current State and Future Prospects**

Reflecting on Messi today, Valdano acknowledges his growth and ability to handle competitive pressure. Messi thrives under difficult conditions and exhibits remarkable skill, even when heavily marked. Valdano believes Messi has the potential to dominate the 21st century's football landscape, akin to legends from the 20th century. He notes Messi's humility and focus, contrasting it with Maradona's volatile public persona. Valdano emphasizes that Messi must harness his talent while maintaining a distance from fame, paving the way for his greatness in football.

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## inspiration

**Key Point:** Embrace Humility and Focus

**Life inspiration:** One of the most inspiring takeaways from this chapter is Messi's ability to stay humble and focused despite his immense success and fame. In a world that often celebrates extravagance and public personas, Messi reminds you that true greatness lies in dedication to one's craft and maintaining integrity. This can inspire you to pursue your goals with a similar relentless focus, prioritizing your passion over seeking external validation. Just like Messi, you can cultivate your talents while remaining grounded, leading to not only personal success but also earning respect in your community.

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# Chapter 25 Summary : 25: The devil

## Chapter 25 Summary: The Devil

### Introduction

On March 10, 2007, Leo Messi, the young Argentine footballer, disrupts Fabio Capello's hopes during a vital match between Barcelona and Real Madrid, showcasing his extraordinary skills.

### The Match Setup

- Barcelona needs a victory to overcome past failures in the Champions League.
- Real Madrid sees this match as their last chance to stay in the title race.
- Barcelona starts with a bold 3-4-3 formation, but Madrid quickly takes the lead.

### Key Events of the Match

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- Real Madrid scores first, leading 1-0, placing pressure on Barcelona.
- Messi enters the game early and equalizes shortly after with a brilliant goal.
- The game sees continued back-and-forth with goals from both teams leading to a 3-3 score in an electrifying match.

## **Messi's Impact**

- Despite being marked heavily, Messi's ability to create chances and score proves crucial.
- His equalizing goals keep Barcelona in contention, and his performance is marked by speed, dribbling, and creativity.
- Messi displays improvement and resilience after previous injuries.

## **Capello's Predicament**

- Capello struggles with his team's defense against Messi, who once again proves to be Capello's nightmare.
- The match highlights Messi's evolution from a promising talent into a match-winner.

## **Messi's Motivation**

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- Messi reveals that playing against Real Madrid motivates him significantly, showcasing his relentless energy and determination.

## Conclusion

Messi's hat-trick not only salvages the season for Barcelona but also changes the trajectory of his career, marking a transformative moment for the club and the young star. His performance symbolizes hope and resilience, showing that he is capable of extraordinary feats on the pitch.

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# Chapter 26 Summary : 26: Jaw-dropping

## Chapter 26: Jaw-Dropping Conversation with Gianluca Zambrotta

### Two Seasons at Barça

Gianluca Zambrotta reflects on his challenging two seasons at FC Barcelona, feeling they were disappointing for both him and the club.

### Messi's Exceptional Talent

Zambrotta praises Lionel Messi, calling him one of the greatest talents in recent years, and emphasizes his potential for further growth at just 24 years old.

### Memorable Matches

He recalls the influential match between Barça and Real Madrid on March 10, 2007, where Messi, then only 19, showcased remarkable talent and maturity. Zambrotta

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highlights Messi's ability to carry the team's weight during a competitive fixture.

## **The Iconic Goal Against Getafe**

Discussing Messi's astonishing goal against Getafe, Zambrotta describes it as "jaw-dropping" and likens it to Diego Maradona's legendary goal in 1986, noting its beauty and impact.

## **Messi's Unique Relationship with the Game**

Zambrotta notes Messi's lack of pressure and carefree attitude when playing, equating his love for the game to that of a child with a toy. He marvels at Messi's incredible ball control and agility in tight spaces.

## **Impact on Matches**

Messi's consistently high-level performance leaves a significant mark on games, often attracting multiple defenders yet still managing to be impactful.

## **Team Player, Not an Individualist**

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While Messi is known for his dribbling skills, Zambrotta asserts that he is not an individualist; rather, he plays for the team and understands teamwork's importance.

## **Personality in Training and the Dressing Room**

Zambrotta describes Messi as modest, hardworking, and fun-loving, contributing positively to team camaraderie despite their age difference. He recognizes Messi's great personality and maturity.

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# Chapter 27 Summary : 27: Leo and Diego

## Summary of Chapter 27: Leo and Diego

### Memorable Goals

On April 18, 2007, Lionel Messi scored a remarkable goal against Getafe, reminiscent of Diego Maradona's iconic goal in the 1986 World Cup against England. Messi's goal showcased his incredible skill, as he dribbled past several players before scoring with a right-footed shot. The television commentary drew parallels between Messi and Maradona, noting the exceptional talent displayed by both players.

### Comparative Analysis

The chapter emphasizes the similarities between Messi's and Maradona's goals, despite the differing contexts—Messi's being in a Copa del Rey semi-final and Maradona's in a

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World Cup quarter-final. The media erupted with comparisons, sparking debates globally regarding which goal was superior. Polls on various platforms showed a divided opinion among fans.

## Media Reactions

Messi's goal led to widespread acclaim, with many commentators highlighting the moment as one of the best in football history. Teammates and opponents alike praised the goal, expressing disbelief over Messi's feat. The event even caught the attention of Madrid sports papers, which historically refrained from covering Barcelona.

## Maradona's Response

Diego Maradona, recovering from health issues, weighed in on the comparisons, asserting that his goal was superior due

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# Chapter 28 Summary : 28: A long career ahead of him

## Chapter 28: A Long Career Ahead of Him

### Conversation with Frank Rijkaard

Frank Rijkaard, the former Barcelona coach, reflects on Lionel Messi's early career during a relaxed conversation. He emphasizes Messi's youth and potential, stating that comparisons to Diego Maradona should be reserved until Messi's career concludes. Rijkaard acknowledges the excitement around Messi's debut in 2003 and highlights his remarkable goal against Getafe, which reminded many of Maradona's famous 1986 World Cup goal.

### Messi's Characteristics and Evolution

Rijkaard describes Messi's consistent desire to play and win, regardless of the audience size. He notes Messi's exceptional skills, including speed, ball control, and explosiveness,

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despite his smaller stature. Over the years, Messi has grown more confident on the field while maintaining his original attributes of respectfulness and humility.

## **Relationship with Messi**

Rijkaard expresses a deep care for Messi, initially supporting him due to his youth. He recognizes Messi's maturity in handling responsibilities on and off the field. Rijkaard recalls a poignant moment when he consoled Messi after an injury against Chelsea, showcasing their strong bond.

## **Advice for Success**

Rijkaard shares important advice he gave to Messi: to finish actions instead of over-dribbling, allowing for a more effective use of his talents while minimizing risks. Over time, Messi has shown improvement in his decision-making and maturity on the field, demonstrating his ability to achieve greater success without unnecessary exertion.

## **Joy of the Game**

Ultimately, Rijkaard concludes that both Maradona and

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Messi share an innate joy for playing football, always eager to engage with the ball and driven by a passion for the game.

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# Chapter 29 Summary : 29: You have to prove it

## Chapter 29: You Have to Prove It

### Overview of Carlos Salvador Bilardo

Carlos Salvador Bilardo is a renowned figure in football, known for phrases that emphasize winning, like "Winning is all that matters" and "A final is a question of life and death." After a political career, he returned as the general manager of the Argentine national team. His insights into football are characterized by a frank and ironic tone.

### Comparison Between Messi and Maradona

Bilardo discusses the frequent comparisons between Lionel Messi and Diego Maradona. He points out that while Messi is performing well, he must win a World Cup as a team leader to be on Maradona's level. Many great players have been compared to Maradona, but only those who have

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achieved World Cup glory are truly validated.

## **Analysis of Goals**

Bilardo reflects on Messi's famous goal against Getafe and Maradona's iconic goal against England, noting similarities despite the different contexts. He acknowledges the excitement that Messi's goal generated, particularly in Spain. Technically, he notes that Messi maintains consistent power, while Maradona would change rhythm.

## **Preference Between Messi and Maradona**

Bilardo expresses a preference for Maradona's goal due to the challenges he faced during the play. He highlights the difficulty defenders have in tackling Messi due to his acceleration and movement patterns.

## **Qualities of Both Players**

Bilardo recognizes both Messi and Maradona can change the outcome of a match with their skills—quick, short steps and strong shooting abilities. He acknowledges that comparisons between players are constant in football's history, but

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changes over time are evident, much like advancements in medicine.

## Conclusion

Bilardo admits he still does not know Messi as intimately as he knows Maradona, who is well-versed in both tactics and technique in football.

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## Example

**Key Point:** Winning legitimizes greatness in football, especially for high-caliber players like Messi.

**Example:** Imagine you're on a football field, the crowd's roars echoing through your ears. You've just showcased your remarkable footwork, dazzling everyone with skills reminiscent of legends. Yet, as you glance up at the scoreboard, the realization sinks in: without that championship trophy, all the talent in the world pales compared to the legacy cemented by hard-earned victories. This stark reality resonates deeply, as legends before you, like Messi, understand that true validation comes from triumphing on the grandest stage, the World Cup—the ultimate proof of greatness.

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# **Chapter 30 Summary : 30: Disappointment**

## **Chapter 30: Disappointment**

### **Summary of Events (July 15, 2007)**

In June 2007, Lionel Messi experienced sorrow and frustration as Barcelona failed to secure the titles they aimed for that season. Although they started strong, they were eliminated early from the Champions League and then faced disappointment in the Copa del Rey, ultimately only winning the Spanish Super Cup from eight possible titles. Messi, who prioritizes winning, expressed his disappointment regarding the club's performance in interviews.

### **Individual Performance and Expectations**

Despite the team's struggles, Messi had a positive individual season, showcasing his talent and scoring significant goals, including a memorable hat-trick against Real Madrid.

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However, he felt unsatisfied as these achievements were overshadowed by the team's overall failure to win. With hopes pinned on the upcoming Copa América, Messi faced high expectations and pressure from media and fans, especially as he prepared to turn 20.

## **International Opportunities**

Messi's new coach, Alfio Basile, emphasized his importance in the national team and provided mentorship from seasoned players. Throughout the Copa América, Messi faced immense popularity, leading to "Messimania" among fans. This adoration culminated in a dramatic incident where a fan attempted to leap from the stands towards him.

## **Copa América Journey**

During the tournament, Messi finally scored against Peru.

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# Chapter 31 Summary : 31: An electric kid

## Chapter 31: An Electric Kid

### Conversation with Alfio ‘El Coco’ Basile

In a lively Buenos Aires restaurant, Alfio Basile, known as Coco, shares his thoughts on Lionel Messi. He describes Messi as a humble and likable person, who remains unaffected by fame. Coco recounts a memorable incident during a training session in Oslo, where Messi was unexpectedly celebrated by fans, showcasing his modesty and humanity.

Coco emphasizes Messi's remarkable characteristics, attributing them to his supportive family. He mentions that, despite the pressure on him, Messi maintains focus on the game and has an immense love for football. Reflecting on Messi's development, Coco recalls their first meeting when Messi was just fifteen, and describes him as an "electric kid" full of talent and creativity.

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When discussing comparisons between Messi and Diego Maradona, Coco acknowledges that while Messi has immense potential, he is still early in his career and should continue to enjoy playing without the burden of such comparisons. He highlights Messi's freedom on the pitch, which allows him to be inventive and excel as a player. Coco's commitment to supporting Messi throughout his journey underscores the bond they share.

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# Chapter 32 Summary : 32: Bronze and silver

## Chapter 32: Bronze and Silver

### Messi's Progression in Numbers and Headlines

In the 2007-08 season, Messi showed significant improvement, scoring eight goals at the start and accumulating 21 goals in 22 matches since his hat-trick against Real Madrid in March 2007. Headlines praised his performance, calling him "the king of La Liga" and "irresistible."

### Recognition from Coaches and Experts

Coaches and football experts acknowledged Messi's incredible potential, dubbing him a "footballer without limits." His extreme speed and low center of gravity were frequently highlighted, leading to comparisons with Diego Maradona.

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## Ballon d'Or Nominations

As Messi's performances soared, speculation about his candidacy for the Ballon d'Or began to circulate. He was acknowledged as a strong contender behind Kaká, who eventually won the award, with Messi finishing third.

## Awards and Honors

Messi received the Bravo award from Guerin Sportivo for the best Under-21 player in the European championships. He placed third in the Ballon d'Or, accumulating 255 votes, while Kaká led with 444.

## FIFA World Player Gala

At the FIFA World Player Gala 2007, Kaká secured the gold award again, but Messi moved up to silver, surpassing Cristiano Ronaldo. An amusing moment occurred when there was confusion over who received which trophy.

## Messi's Family Perspective

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Family members discussed Messi's rise to fame and talent, attributing his success to a mix of willpower and talent. His father's concern lies in protecting Messi from external pressures in the football world.

## **Life Beyond Football**

Messi maintains a grounded lifestyle despite his fame, spending time with family and friends, emphasizing the importance of staying true to his roots and managing wealth responsibly.

## **Future Prospects**

Both his family and followers express optimism about Messi's future potential, with hopes that he can achieve greatness comparable to Maradona, reflecting on the technical qualities that make both players unique.

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# Chapter 33 Summary : 33: Physical thinking

## Chapter 33: Physical Thinking

### Conversation with Roberto Perfumo, 'El Mariscal'

Roberto Perfumo, a well-known figure in Argentine football, shares his thoughts on Lionel Messi at La Biela, a café-bar in Buenos Aires. He discusses Messi's unique abilities and his style of play, emphasizing his technical skills and unmatched vision on the field.

### Messi's Abilities and 'Physical Thinking'

Perfumo praises Messi's ability to navigate the game without continually focusing on the ball, allowing him to anticipate moves and make extraordinary passes. He describes Messi's talent as a blend of mind and body, similar to legendary players like Pelé and Maradona. Perfumo notes that Messi often relies on intuition rather than conscious thought when

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making split-second decisions.

## **Comparisons to Maradona and Future Promises**

The conversation touches on the pressures of comparison with Maradona and the expectations placed on Messi as a potential successor. Perfumo believes Messi has the potential to reach great heights but must continue to evolve and learn from experience.

## **Messi's Weaknesses and Humility**

While praising Messi's talents, Perfumo acknowledges his youthfulness, suggesting that he sometimes struggles with decision-making during games. He highlights Messi's humble nature, which endears him to fans, especially children.

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# Chapter 34 Summary : 34: The long journey towards gold

## Chapter 34: The Long Journey Towards Gold

In May 2008, Messi expressed his excitement for the Olympic Games, emphasizing his desire to represent Argentina. The chapter details the initial gathering of the Argentine Under-23 squad at the Hesperia Tower hotel in Barcelona, marking the start of their Olympic adventure under coach Sergio Batista. Amid training sessions and media interactions, Messi became the center of attention, particularly regarding his potential absence from Barcelona's Champions League qualifiers due to his Olympic aspirations. Messi confirmed his wish to participate in the Olympics, asserting that Barcelona could cope without him for a few matches. However, the Catalan media reacted negatively, concerned about the team's state following disappointing seasons and the instability in the club. Despite Messi's reassurances, Barcelona remained adamant about retaining him for their upcoming qualifiers, leading to a tug of war between the Argentine Football Association (AFA) and the

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club.

As the conflict escalated, Messi participated in international matches, including qualifiers for the 2010 World Cup, while Barcelona sought a resolution to the situation. Despite various opinions and pressures, Messi made it clear he wanted to go to Beijing. Eventually, FIFA ruled in favor of the AFA, ensuring Messi's participation in the Olympics, and Guardiola, the Barcelona coach, supported his decision. During the Olympics, Messi showcased his talent and importance to the national team, leading Argentina toward their goal of gold. The chapter builds up to the final match against Nigeria, where Messi played a pivotal role, ultimately helping Argentina reclaim the Olympic title with a stunning performance.

The chapter concludes with Messi celebrating the achievement, declaring it all worth it despite the challenges faced along the way.

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# Chapter 35 Summary : 35: Happiness

## Chapter 35: Happiness

### Overview

On May 27, 2009, a Pakistani cab driver, known as "Happy Cabby", shares his life philosophy that happiness begins within oneself. This coincides with Lionel Messi's happiest year, which kicks off in New York when Pep Guardiola convinces club officials to allow Messi to play in the Olympics. This moment fosters a special bond between Messi and Guardiola, leading to Messi's significant personal and professional growth throughout the season.

### Messi's Performance and Impact

Messi has an outstanding 2008-09 season, contributing to Barcelona's historic treble, winning La Liga, Copa del Rey, and the Champions League—being the first Spanish team to achieve this feat. He scores numerous goals, including the iconic 5,000th goal in the club's history, and gains individual

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recognition as the best foreign player in La Liga and the top scorer in the Champions League.

## **Champions League Final Highlights**

In the UEFA Champions League final against Manchester United on May 27, 2009, Messi finally plays a pivotal role, scoring a goal and helping secure Barcelona's victory. This win is significant for Messi, who felt his previous Champions League title didn't belong to him due to his absence in 2006. Initially, Messi struggles to enter the game but grows into his role, culminating in a brilliant headed goal.

## **The Rivalry: El Clásico**

On May 2, 2009, Barcelona faces Real Madrid at the Bernabéu Stadium, delivering a historic defeat to their rivals, scoring 6 goals against 2. This match marks a point of redemption for Messi, who had not scored in his previous outings at the Bernabéu, and it serves as a reminder of Barcelona's dominance that season.

## **Copa del Rey Victory**

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In the Copa del Rey final held on May 13, 2009, against Athletic Bilbao, Messi shines by scoring a decisive goal and contributing assists in a 4-1 victory. His performance cements his status as Barcelona's key player and evokes comparisons to legends like Diego Maradona.

## **After the Season: Personal Life and Future**

Post-match, Messi acknowledges the importance of family and cherishes a budding romantic relationship with his childhood friend Antonella Roccuzzo. He signs a new contract with Barcelona, securing his future with the club. Messi openly expresses his desire to win the Ballon d'Or, highlighting its significance as the pinnacle of individual achievement in football.

## **Conclusion**

The chapter reflects a pivotal moment in Messi's life both on and off the field, showcasing his ascent as a footballing superstar while navigating personal happiness and familial bonds.

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## inspiration

**Key Point:** Happiness begins within oneself.

**Life inspiration:** As you dive into the essence of this chapter, let the wisdom of 'Happy Cabby' resonate with you; remember that true happiness is an internal journey. Just like Messi, who transformed challenges into triumphs, embrace the idea that your joy and fulfillment are rooted in your mindset and perceptions. By nurturing a positive outlook and fostering inner contentment, you can cultivate a life that flourishes regardless of external circumstances. This principle reminds you that achieving your dreams, whether in sports or any other area, starts with the happiness you foster within. Celebrate each victory, big or small, and let that happiness propel you toward greater accomplishments.

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# Chapter 36 Summary : 36: Third time lucky

## Chapter 36: Third Time Lucky

### Messi's Success at the 2009 Ballon d'Or

In December 2009, Lionel Messi finally clinched the Ballon d'Or after finishing third in 2007 and second in 2008. He achieved this prestigious award with an overwhelming score of 473 points, far surpassing Cristiano Ronaldo's 233 points. Messi's unanimous win was widely celebrated, making him the most convincingly awarded player in the history of the prize.

### Reasons Behind Messi's Triumph

France Football's editor-in-chief, Denis Chaumier, outlined three reasons for Messi's success: his extraordinary dribbling and creativity, his consistent performance over the years, and his significant achievements with both Barcelona and the

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Argentine national team, which showcased his prowess and talent.

## **Celebration of the Award**

Messi received the news of his Ballon d'Or win with joy on November 30, 2009, surrounded by his family. He continued to contribute to Barcelona's successes, including a crucial match against Real Madrid, where Barcelona ultimately triumphed.

## **Following Achievements and Recognition**

As Messi celebrated with family and friends, he acknowledged the influence of coach Pep Guardiola and dedicated his victory to his teammates. On December 6, 2009, he was formally presented with the Ballon d'Or, marking a significant milestone in his career.

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# Chapter 37 Summary : 37: Floods of tears

## Chapter 37: Floods of Tears

### Messi's Emotional Departure from the 2010 World Cup

On July 3, 2010, Lionel Messi experiences heartbreak as Argentina loses 4-0 to Germany in the World Cup quarter-finals. In the final moments of the match, Messi, feeling lost and despondent, contemplates his failure to score and live up to the expectations of fans hoping he would match Diego Maradona's legendary performance in the 1986 World Cup.

### Messi's Frustration and Inconsolable State

Despite his success as the top scorer in La Liga that season, winning the Golden Boot with 47 goals, Messi leaves South Africa feeling empty, inconsolable, and shattered by his

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inability to perform for the national team. His tears reflect his emotional investment in representing Argentina, encapsulated by Diego Maradona's assertion that Messi's distress signifies his pride in playing for his country.

## **Pressure and Criticism**

As the tournament progresses, Messi faces immense pressure to succeed, not only from the passionate Argentine fans but also from comparisons with Maradona. Despite individual accolades and his exceptional club performances, his World Cup journey is overshadowed by unmet expectations.

## **Relationship with Maradona**

The chapter highlights the evolving relationship between Messi and Maradona as they prepare for the World Cup. Maradona seeks to alleviate Messi's burdens by fostering a supportive environment within the national team, recognizing Messi's need for encouragement. However, tension arises when Messi struggles to hit his stride, resulting in frustration.

## **Group Stage Success and Responsibility**

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In the group stage matches, Messi showcases his skills despite challenges. He creates numerous chances for his teammates but faces criticism for not scoring. With the team advancing to the knockout phase, Messi is appointed captain, further heightening expectations of him leading Argentina to glory.

## **Disappointment Against Germany**

The climactic encounter with Germany brings disappointment as Argentina falls short, and Messi's performance falters. His struggle to impact the game leads to media scrutiny, questioning his involvement and Maradona's strategies. The match ends in a humiliating defeat, intensifying the emotional aftermath and leaving Messi in tears.

## **Conclusion: A Heavy Burden**

As the chapter concludes, Messi reflects on his disappointing World Cup experience, expressing a desire to return home and a determination to start anew. With time passing, the pressure remains, yet Messi's story is far from over. The

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narrative hints at a glimmer of hope for his future, drawing parallels to Maradona's triumphs and foreshadowing Messi's potential for redemption in upcoming tournaments.

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# Chapter 38 Summary : 38: Surprise

## Chapter 38: Surprise

### Introduction to the Ceremony

On January 10, 2011, Pep Guardiola, the coach of Barcelona, is tasked with revealing the winner of the FIFA Ballon d'Or amid high expectations. In an unusual twist, despite prior speculation that other figures would present the award, Guardiola opens the envelope to reveal Lionel Messi as the winner. This marks an unprecedented moment in Barcelona's history with three players, Messi, Andrés Iniesta, and Xavi Hernández, as finalists.

### Messi's Unexpected Victory

As Guardiola announces Messi's name, shock eases into applause throughout the auditorium. An astonished Messi approaches the stage, where he receives the trophy and delivers an emotional acceptance speech, thanking his teammates and family for their support. The award is a

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recognition of individual merit over the year's accomplishments, blending both the FIFA World Player of the Year award and the Ballon d'Or.

## **Reactions to the Result**

Despite being the youngest player to win a second Ballon d'Or at 23, Messi's victory raises eyebrows. Iniesta and Xavi express admiration and acceptance of the outcome, although disappointment lingers among the Spanish contingent due to the lack of recognition for their World Cup-winning efforts. The media and public debate ensue, with many in Spain criticizing FIFA's decision, feeling it undermines their World Cup success.

## **Global Responses**

International reactions are mixed; while some applaud Messi's accolades, others argue he didn't deserve recognition over players involved in the World Cup. Critics from Italy and France assert that Messi's achievements in the absence of titles during that year diminish his merit. Despite this, support for Messi remains strong, with sentiments from figures like Guardiola and Maradona emphasizing his

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exceptional talent.

## **Celebration with Barcelona Fans**

In the days following his win, Messi celebrates the trophy victory alongside Xavi and Iniesta at the Nou Camp during a match against Real Betis. A large gold Ballon d'Or adorns the pitch, and Messi receives jubilant accolades from fans, validating his recognition as one of the greatest players. His performance in the match, scoring a hat-trick, encapsulates his extraordinary ability and maintains the exuberance surrounding his triumph.

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# Chapter 39 Summary : 39: Simply the best

## Simply the Best

### Overview of the Final at Wembley (May 28, 2011)

In the Champions League Final at Wembley, Lionel Messi is unanimously hailed as the best football player, earning titles such as "King Messi" from both English and Argentine media. His performance is described as exquisite and lyrical, marking a game that fans will recount to their grandchildren. Messi's contribution is overwhelmingly impactful and he is recognized as man of the match, with comparisons made to historic performances.

### Messi's Performance Against Manchester United

Messi showcases his versatility as a team player by creating opportunities that unravel Manchester United's strategies. He begins the match cautiously but grows influential, constantly

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pressuring the United defense and contributing to Barcelona's dominant control of the game. After Pedro opens the scoring, Messi nets a pivotal goal from 35 yards, celebrating fiercely. His goal is notable as it breaks a previous curse of not scoring in England.

## **Statistics and Achievements**

By the end of the season, Messi has scored 53 goals across all competitions and matches his rival Cristiano Ronaldo's tally in La Liga. He becomes the top scorer in the Champions League for the third consecutive year and breaks records for goals scored. His significant achievement is particularly emphasized during pivotal matches against Real Madrid, indicating his ability to deliver when it matters most.

## **The Ongoing Rivalry with Real Madrid**

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# Chapter 40 Summary : 40: Barcelona

## Chapter 40 Summary: Conversation with Leo Messi

In this chapter, Leo Messi reflects on his life, highlighting his journey from Argentina to Spain. He recalls the challenges he faced after moving, such as missing his family and adjusting to a new environment. Despite the hardships, Messi acknowledges his happiest moments have come from winning titles with Barcelona and Argentina, stating that collective successes are more fulfilling than individual awards.

Messi discusses his love for football, which he attributes to a lifelong passion and the influence of family members, notably his grandmother, who introduced him to the sport. He explains how spending countless hours practicing with a football nurtured his skills and confidence.

He talks about key moments in his career, including memorable games and goals. Messi acknowledges the greatness of his idol, Diego Maradona, and emphasizes that he is constantly working to improve himself as a player. He credits his family for their support and remains grounded despite his fame, cherishing the importance of family in his

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life.

The chapter also touches on his approach to fame, where Messi remains humble, focusing on his passion for the game rather than the celebrity status that comes with it. He expresses a desire to one day play in Argentina and reflects on the joy of being with his family and friends outside of football.

Messi concludes the conversation by reiterating his ambitions and dreams, particularly the aspiration to become a world champion with Argentina, while looking forward to a future close to his loved ones.

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# Best Quotes from Messi by Luca Caioli with Page Numbers

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## Chapter 1 | Quotes From Pages 8-14

- 1.He's always been small. They were afraid he'd get trodden on, that he'd get hurt, but she wasn't, she insisted: 'Pass it to Lionel, pass it to the little guy, he's the one who scores goals.'
- 2.The worst punishment we could threaten him with was: you're not going to practice today. 'No, mummy, please, I'll be really good, don't worry, I promise... let me go and play,' he begged and insisted until he convinced me.
- 3.They love him, I think, because he is a simple, humble, good person. He always thinks of others and he makes sure that everyone around him is OK: his parents, his siblings, his nephews and nieces, his cousins. He's always thinking about his family. Of course, I'm his mother and a mother, when she speaks of her children, always says good things, but Leo has an enormous heart.

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4. I hope to God he will be happy, that he has a family, that he lives life, because he still hasn't really lived.

## **Chapter 2 | Quotes From Pages 15-21**

1. 'We were stunned when we saw what he could do,' says Jorge. 'He had never played before.'
2. 'The house is in order. Happy Easter,' – a phrase that will go down in history, because nothing could be further from the truth.
3. Celia and Jorge become parents: Rodrigo Martín is born on 9 February 1980, and 12 Messi, their second son, Matías Horacio, is born in one of the darkest hours of the country's history.

## **Chapter 3 | Quotes From Pages 22-28**

1. 'He was born knowing how to play.'
2. 'When I saw on TV the first goal he scored in a Barcelona shirt, I started to cry.'
3. 'I was waiting for the final player with the shirt in my hands while the others were warming up. But, he didn't show up... there was this little kid kicking the ball against

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the stands.’

4. ‘He was the smallest in stature and the youngest, but he really stood out.’

5. ‘He never complained. If they hurt him, he would cry sometimes, but he would get up and keep running.’

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## Chapter 4 | Quotes From Pages 29-32

1. 'He was a typically shy child and he talked very little. He only stood out when he played ball.'
2. 'Football has always been his passion.'
3. 'We all cried that summer afternoon when he and his family left for Spain.'
4. 'When he's not doing so well, Leo is a little bit solitary; he retreats, he withdraws into himself.'
5. 'He's the same Leo I grew up with.'
6. 'I don't want them to think I'm gossiping or trying to get myself noticed. No, for me, Leo is a humble, lifelong friend who still has no idea that he is so famous.'

## Chapter 5 | Quotes From Pages 33-40

1. 'I wish I could go to Argentina sometime soon and enjoy some football over there. I want to see a Boca or a River match.'
2. 'The father came to see me and said to me: "I'm going to take him to Newell's,"'
3. 'He didn't need to be taught a thing. What can you teach to



a Maradona or a Pelé?’

4. ‘Football helps them escape their misery, but afterwards, if it doesn’t suit them, they return to the slum, they fall into alcohol, drug use, desperation.’
5. ‘Ultimately, I believe very strongly in family environment as one of the factors in a footballer’s success.’

## **Chapter 6 | Quotes From Pages 41-43**

1. ‘At that time, there was a lot of talk about Leandro Depetris, a little blond boy who went to Milan aged eleven. Everyone was saying wonderful things about him. I disagreed. I always used to say to a friend of mine: “Leo will be ten times better than Depetris. When he grows up, he’ll be greater than Maradona – and I’m a huge fan of Diego.”’
2. ‘When you saw him, you would think: this kid can’t play ball. He’s a dwarf, he’s too fragile, too small. But immediately you’d realize that he was born different, that he was a phenomenon and that he was going to be something impressive.’



3. 'He dazzled against central defenders of 1.8m. He made a huge difference. And he had a strong temperament - he was competitive, he liked to win. I have never seen him resign himself to any result. He wanted to win every game.'
4. 'He never complained. On the contrary, it seemed that fouls spurred him on; the more they went for him, the more he stood up to them.'
5. 'He was a Gardel, in other words, a legend, like the famous tango singer Carlos Gardel.'

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## Chapter 7 | Quotes From Pages 44-49

1. 'The glands aren't making any growth hormone',  
says Schwarsztein.
2. 'It was never an experiment. For many years, growth  
hormone has been used in such cases... it is imperative that  
we replace what is lacking.'
3. 'The hormone deficiency and its treatment are nothing  
more than an anecdote – what really matter are the boy's  
footballing skills.'
4. 'Comparison is never healthy, because the normal rate of  
growth is extremely varied.'
5. 'None of this would have happened if everything had  
remained within the confines of doctor–patient–parent  
confidentiality.'

## Chapter 8 | Quotes From Pages 50-52

1. 'The best player the town has ever produced.  
Argentine hope. He is a footballing icon.'
2. 'On the pitch the real Lionel Messi appears. You have to sit  
back and enjoy it.'

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3. 'Only his intimate circle knows the real person. Even after reading many things about him, one cannot really know him.'
4. 'He was born from a mould that had seemed long forgotten since Maradona.'
5. 'Leo's future has already arrived. He has proven himself now in the competitive game of Spanish and European football.'

## **Chapter 9 | Quotes From Pages 53-60**

1. It requires a lot of willpower to leave behind one's childhood, one's hometown, school, friends, the team that you love... And, above all, without any guarantees for the future.
2. Before leaving, they gathered the family around the table and asked each one of them what they wanted to do, making it clear that if even one of them did not want to go, they would all stay in Rosario.
3. I had to run halfway around the pitch to get to the bench where the coaches were. It took me seven or eight minutes





to get all the way round. By the time I sat down on the bench, I had already made my decision.

4.I saw a home video of the lad; Horacio, Martin and Fabian assured me that it was worth me taking a look. So, I called Charly, who is a good friend of mine... Something like Maradona.

5.He's so good. Nonetheless, not everyone at the club is so convinced... Joan Gaspart wants an explanation of the matter, asking if it is worth them taking on the responsibility of the family of a thirteen-year-old boy.

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## Chapter 10 | Quotes From Pages 61-63

1. 'He didn't stop in, or even pass through, Buenos Aires. Ezeiza, the international airport where he departed for Europe, is not even in the city.'
2. 'Messi is currently a latigazo.'
3. 'He needs to understand that he is part of a whole, he has to share the ball, pass it more quickly, give the final pass and not just make it him versus the whole world.'
4. 'The comparison will be made at the end of Messi's career, but it will never be correct.'
5. 'It's difficult to predict because the world of football is accelerating at a very dynamic rate.'

## Chapter 11 | Quotes From Pages 64-68

1. 'At first we thought he was mute', says Arsenal captain Cesc Fàbregas, who was his team-mate at the time. 'Then, thanks to PlayStation and that trip to Italy, we discovered that he knew how to talk.'
2. 'When he played it was like watching Maradona when he

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was his age.’

3. ‘He is serious, polite and always remains quietly in his corner.’

4. ‘Does he want to return to Barcelona or go back to his old life in Rosario? The boy has no doubt in his mind. He makes it clear that he wants to succeed in Barcelona.’

5. By the 2002-03 season he was in the A team: 30 league games (he was the only player to play in every game), 36 goals, (five more than Víctor, the striker), three hat-tricks, one four-goal match, and two titles.

## **Chapter 12 | Quotes From Pages 69-72**

1. ‘Well, they looked after him a lot, they defended him because he was like their little brother and because the opposition always pounded him...

Everyone knew he was important to the team, that at any moment Leo could seal a match.’

2. ‘...he was conscious of the fact that he had an opportunity at Barça, he knew what it meant to make a sacrifice – both his sacrifice and his family’s, and he didn’t want to waste

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the opportunity he had been given.'

3. 'I think he has introduced us to the street football style, "playground football", as they say in Argentina – the dodge, the feint.'

4. '...if he doesn't suffer from any serious injuries, Leo will leave his mark on a whole era.'

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## Chapter 13 | Quotes From Pages 73-78

1. 'He is a boy with a lot of talent and a promising future.'
2. 'Leo was fierce.'
3. 'When the youth B team needed him, he immediately said yes.'
4. 'It could be in a championship game or in an important tournament.'

## Chapter 14 | Quotes From Pages 79-81

1. For Barcelona – and for the world – he represents the wait for a player like Maradona.
2. It's about more than just football.
3. He's no longer a clone of Maradona, he is his own person now, he's Leo Messi.
4. He has come to realize what he represents, and the atmosphere that he generates.
5. Leo parks and gets out for a picture.
6. He's not the captain, but in terms of football, he's a sporting leader, and no one disputes it.



7. Leo represents the essence of the game: speed plus skill.

## **Chapter 15 | Quotes From Pages 82-90**

1. 'He arrived one Monday to train with the Under 20s'
2. 'If he was good in training, on the pitch he was something else.'
3. 'I have nothing to say, I play for the team.'
4. 'I'm in a very good state of mind and I think I'm up for playing for 90 minutes, but I have to respect the coach's decisions.'
5. 'What can we say about him? The final images of last night sum it up.'

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## Chapter 16 | Quotes From Pages 91-94

1. 'It's true, I am proud of that victory on both a personal level and as part of the team, I'm proud of what the boys did, and of players like Messi, Agüero, and Gago, who made a name for themselves at international level.'
2. 'Yes, it bears repeating that Leo loves to play, and the football is his favourite toy; he has so much fun with it, and he can control it like nobody else.'
3. 'It was his explosive moment as a footballer. It was his chance to make himself known across half the world.'
4. 'I think Messi keeps on progressing, and for the moment he has no limits. He progresses while keeping the same low profile as always.'

## Chapter 17 | Quotes From Pages 95-97

1. 'I think he's an even better person than he is a footballer.'
2. 'He's a pretty normal guy. He's someone who likes to be at home and who loves his family very much.'

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3. 'He has the heavenly gift of handling the ball really well.'
4. 'Fame hasn't made him lose himself, the praise hasn't gone to his head.'
5. 'The atmosphere, great camaraderie, and everyone really wanted to win.'

## **Chapter 18 | Quotes From Pages 98-106**

1. 'make it into the first team'
2. 'We have sufficient legal basis for playing him. I don't know what else they want from us.'
3. 'I don't want to imagine the possibility that nowadays, in an era when democratic rights and liberties exist, we are going to drag up the past.'
4. 'Thanks to his achievements in the Under 20 World Cup, Messi steamrollers his opponents.'

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## Chapter 19 | Quotes From Pages 107-110

1. 'It's our job to be on the lookout for the stars of the future.'
2. 'Leo is something new, a breath of fresh air, the new Maradona.'
3. 'Through hard work, perseverance, willpower, nothing is impossible.'
4. 'His simple nature is his greatest advantage.'
5. 'Authenticity.'

## Chapter 20 | Quotes From Pages 111-117

1. Leo simply says: 'I have a cut on my knee, one on my thigh, and another on my foot. My whole body is bruised, but I'm not in pain because we won.'
2. 'Whoever says that Messi put on an act, obviously didn't see what really happened,' says Eto'o. 'They were pounding on him from all directions.'
3. 'It has been an incredible game.'
4. 'I saw the defender coming at me fast and deliberately, and I tried to jump out of the way...But I didn't make it.'



5. He is showered with praise, it is as if the boy has passed the test of maturity with flying colors and, with him, the entire team.

## **Chapter 21 | Quotes From Pages 118-120**

1. 'The essence of football is contained in the body of a little player, an eighteen-year-old boy who could pass by unnoticed on any given street. His name is Leo Messi and there is every reason to believe that we are in the presence of an exceptional player, the most brilliant to appear in recent years.'
2. 'Because that performance contained all the elements that fascinate spectators and encourage you to contemplate the wonder that is football. Because it didn't seem like a match for an eighteen-year-old boy who had spent very little time at the top.'
3. 'He is the only player capable of winning a match from anywhere on the pitch.'
4. 'What concerns me is the possibility of Messi losing speed. What will happen when time erodes his tenacity and his



velocity?’

5. ‘A great player has to know how to choose his moments.’

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## Chapter 22 | Quotes From Pages 121-123

1. 'In every match, there's always one player, the one you least expect, who makes you suffer.'
2. 'The key thing about Messi is that he drives the ball forward very well, quickly, and with the ball always glued to his boot.'
3. 'It's complicated. It's difficult, very difficult. Depending on the situation you're in, given his divine inspiration... he's a real problem for any defender.'
4. 'I can only say that defenders need to keep tightly in line, be aggressive, be speedy, and hold the position well.'

## Chapter 23 | Quotes From Pages 124-135

1. 'We also have a good team. Of course we are going to take it one step at a time, one game at a time.'
2. 'I wasn't thinking about my debut. I was thinking about winning a match that I really wanted to play in. In all honesty, I still haven't thought about the fact that I'm now a World Cup player and that I fulfilled a dream today.'
3. 'To me, football is always the same. I have expectations of



this squad from an analytical point of view, not based solely on desire.’

4. ‘Nobody doubts that Messi will give him the same over 90 minutes that he gives in fifteen.’

5. ‘The weight of defeat must not be allowed to rest on their shoulders.’

## **Chapter 24 | Quotes From Pages 136-138**

1. ‘Maradona played in his first World Cup when he was 21, and it was not a happy experience. He was not entirely mature enough yet. With Messi there was positive discrimination: we were thinking that if he had played he would have turned the match around.’

2. ‘He has matured. He has a natural ability to deal with the competition. He gives the impression of being happy whenever he has the ball at his feet – he is not conditioned by context, nor by the expectation he has generated.’

3. ‘He could dominate this decade, along with Cristiano Ronaldo. He’s in the best possible position. Mother Nature

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has given him all the tools he needs. Now, he must take charge of that talent.'

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## Chapter 25 | Quotes From Pages 139-145

1. 'Playing against Real Madrid,' says Messi, 'is always particularly motivating for any player.'
2. I owe a lot to Barça for what they did for me when they had the chance, and also to the fans for all the affection they have shown towards me, especially in these difficult few months.
3. Because losing to Real, he says, 'is always bloody awful.'
4. That was my unfinished business.

## Chapter 26 | Quotes From Pages 146-148

1. 'I think he's one of the greatest talents to come out of the last ten or twenty years. It's undisputable that he's one of the best players in the world today, especially if we take into account that he's only 24 years old and still has a lot of time to grow.'
2. 'He has exceptional abilities and, above all, a certain maturity and sense of responsibility rare in such a young player.'
3. 'The most beautiful goal I have ever seen anyone score. It



was very similar to the one Maradona scored in '86.

Although, from the ground, Leo's goal seemed to be even better than Diego's.'

4. 'For him, there is no difference between the Nou Camp and the football ground in his hometown. They are one and the same. He doesn't feel the pressure, or at least that's how it seems.'

5. 'Drive the ball forward, dribbling, those are trademark elements of his game – he always wants the ball because that's how he has fun and how he entertains everyone else.'

6. 'He seems like a mature kid who has his head firmly screwed on. With a great personality.'

## **Chapter 27 | Quotes From Pages 149-163**

1. 'I saw a gap and I went forward, as always, to get forward and try to score.'

2. 'I dedicate it to Diego. I want to send him all my support and best wishes and hope that he gets out of there as soon as possible and recovers, because that is what the whole of Argentina and all football fans everywhere want.'

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3. 'I don't feel any kind of pressure, I am going to keep playing and enjoying myself as I have always done.'
4. 'What planet did you come from?'
5. 'It wasn't a big deal, I really have not stopped to think about the goal and what it means'

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## Chapter 28 | Quotes From Pages 164-167

1. 'Messi is still very young, he has his whole career ahead of him.'
2. 'It was a genuine work of art.'
3. 'They are both Argentine, they're both little, and they both have great qualities, but comparisons are always complicated.'
4. 'He is the boy who says: "Give me the ball, I want to play, I want to be creative, I want to show my talents."'
5. 'He knows what his options are, he knows how the footballing world works.'
6. 'You have to deal with these things in your career. They are the things that make you grow, that motivate you to keep playing.'

## Chapter 29 | Quotes From Pages 168-170

1. 'Winning is all that matters,' and 'No one remembers the runner-up.'
2. 'In Argentina, and not only in Argentina, when a new player breaks onto the scene, there is always a comparison

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to be made with Maradona.’

3. ‘Messi is doing very well, he’s on the right track, but if he doesn’t win a World Cup, as team leader, he will never get to Maradona’s level.’
4. ‘They are two similar goals, in different situations: one at a national level in the quarter-finals of a world championship, the other at a club level in the semi-finals of the Copa del Rey.’
5. ‘Comparisons are an eternal feature of football.’

## **Chapter 30 | Quotes From Pages 171-176**

1. ‘If you add it all up, it’s painful,’ he explains in an interview with France Football.
2. ‘The hero is left without a prize,’ as the El País headline reads.
3. ‘The important thing is that it helped Argentina get to the final.’
4. ‘I swear I didn’t know what to do.’
5. ‘Maybe, I don’t know, I have scored a few good ones... It turned out well, didn’t it?’

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## Chapter 31 | Quotes From Pages 177-179

1. I love Leo very much, because he's a great lad.

He's humble, he doesn't think highly of himself, he doesn't think of himself as a star and the fame hasn't gone to his head.

2. When he gets onto the pitch he doesn't think about what's going on around him, he only thinks about playing with the football.

3. Leo is not yet Maradona. He has only just begun. He hasn't forged a career path yet. He plays a similar game, but there's no need to compare them... for now, he just has to keep doing what he's doing and enjoy playing.

4. From three-quarters of the way up the pitch Messi has the freedom to go anywhere, freedom to be inventive, to play the way he knows best.

## Chapter 32 | Quotes From Pages 180-186

1. 'Messi is worth the whole team' – El País, 20/09/07

2. 'Messi plays Messiah' – Marca, 23/09/07

3. 'Messi dominates' – El Mundo, 23/09/07

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4. 'Messi, the king of La Liga' – Marca, 08/10/07
5. 'Messi could be the best in the world' - Zaragoza coach  
Víctor Fernández
6. 'Just the fact that he is second and third in the world at  
twenty years of age means Leo is already a footballing  
icon.'
7. 'Messi's happiness was, and still is, tied up with football.'
8. 'The difference is that Leo has an attribute that I didn't  
have: he has a lot of willpower.' – Rodrigo, Messi's brother

## **Chapter 33 | Quotes From Pages 187-189**

1. 'Technically speaking, he's one of the few players  
in the world who can drive the ball forward  
without looking at it, and that allows him to watch  
the opposition and his teammates, and make an  
unprecedented pass.'
2. 'He is mind and body. All at the same time. He has the  
same gift that Pelé, Maradona, and Di Stéfano had.'
3. 'Because of his look, because of his face. He reminds me of  
the cuis (a type of squirrel, one of the most common



Argentine mammals). Add to that his natural magnetism when the ball is between his feet.'

4.'I hope that the money doesn't soften him. With millions of euros in the bank, he still needs to run, train, play in the cold, the rain, the snow.'

5.'When the bad times come, no one can endure them.'

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## Chapter 34 | Quotes From Pages 190-206

1. 'I'm excited because it's the Argentine national team. And I always said that I want to play for my country. It's the Olympics... it's an opportunity a player gets once in his career.'
2. 'Barcelona do not depend solely on me to win matches. They want to form a team that aspires to win all the titles.'
3. 'If I don't have Messi, I don't have a team, and if he doesn't come and play with us, it will spark a precedent which will prompt other teams to ask for their players,'
4. 'It wasn't only Messi who didn't play today. Riquelme, Agüero, and Garay didn't play either. I was thinking of the best for Argentina.'
5. 'After everything that was said and discussed, it was worth coming.'

## Chapter 35 | Quotes From Pages 207-224

1. 'To make others happy, you must be happy yourself. That is where happiness lies,' he says, turning in his seat to face the passengers and

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tapping his head with his index finger.

2. 'Everything began over there in Beijing, with the gold medal. He has been happier than ever before,' says his father, Jorge.
3. 'If, when he sees you, he jokes with you, then he's happy; if he doesn't seem to see you and looks the other way, something's wrong.'
4. 'It has been an incredible year. I have thoroughly enjoyed it.'
5. 'I feel like the happiest man in the world. It's like I'm dreaming, it's the most important victory of my life.'
6. 'Before the match, we said we weren't thinking about getting "revenge" for the walkway from the previous year, but evidently, deep down, there was still a thorn in our sides which bothered us.'

## **Chapter 36 | Quotes From Pages 225-237**

1. 'This prize is an honour; it is wonderful and very special, but I wasn't obsessed with winning it. I knew that if it was meant to happen, it would, but

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either way I would keep on working in the same way as always.'

2. 'Without them, I would not have won it,' he says emphatically. 'Xavi and Iniesta deserved this prize as well.'
3. 'Right now, I don't think we have fully realised what we have achieved. It will be difficult for another team to match this and, as time goes on, we will value it more and more.'
4. 'Anyone else in his situation could retire on the Ballon d'Or. But Leo has an unmatched competitiveness in his soul, such ambition, that he gets angry and even in difficulty he wants another goal and he says: "I'm going for it."'
5. 'It's the perfect end to a perfect year – more happiness would be impossible.'

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## Chapter 37 | Quotes From Pages 238-251

1. 'Anyone, who claims he isn't proud to play for his country is just plain stupid.'
2. 'Some people might think that he has no right to be like that as he has so much going for him in his life, but that's why I bring in boys like him.'
3. 'It's very hard to see Messi in such a state in the dressing room.'
4. 'We'll pick ourselves up and carry on.'
5. 'I hope to leave South Africa crying too – but this time crying tears of joy.'
6. 'Playing with the national team is completely different from playing in Barcelona...that's not to say that the international teams are worse – they're the best in the world.'
7. 'In the national team I hadn't been myself. I wasn't playing the way I was at Barcelona, and it was noticeable.'
8. 'I believe in God and... I wouldn't have been able to do anything without God's help.'





9. 'It has been a spectacular season for Lionel, with just two setbacks.'

10. 'Now that I'm here I'm going to show everyone what I'm made of, and I just have to keep doing that.'

## **Chapter 38 | Quotes From Pages 252-261**

1. 'Good, evening and, thank you very much for your applause,' says Leo, gripping the lectern. 'The truth is,..., I wasn't expecting to win tonight. It was already wonderful to be here with my team-mates, and to win it is even more exciting. This is a very special day for me and I want to share it with my team-mates and thank them, because without them I would not be here.'

2. 'I want to toast Xavi and Iniesta,' he says. 'Although I won, they deserve it just as much as I do. So this is for them.'

3. 'It doesn't faze me,' he says. 'I have the respect and recognition of my team-mates and my fellow countrymen. All my colleagues are happy for me and that's the main thing.'

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4. 'There is no jealousy between us. In the dressing room we are completely united. We are more than colleagues, we are friends.'

## **Chapter 39 | Quotes From Pages 262-275**

1. 'We are the best and we deserved to win. It is incredible what this team has achieved. Right now, I don't think we know what's hit us. We just want to keep winning things.'
2. 'I got some space, the goalie came out and luckily it went in.'
3. 'He is the best player I have ever seen, and will ever see,' says Pep Guardiola after the final. 'We could compete at a very high level, but without him, we wouldn't be able to play such a high-quality game.'
4. 'We have experienced some very difficult circumstances, but we always know how to come out on top.'
5. 'I hope he can stay happy in his personal life, because when that happens, Leo cannot fail.'

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## Chapter 40 | Quotes From Pages 276-285

1. 'Moving country from Argentina to Spain. I left my hometown, my friends, my people. The first few years here were tough. There were times when my father and I were in Barcelona and the rest of the family was in Rosario. We were suffering. I missed Matías, Rodrigo, my little sister and my mother. I used to cry alone in my house so that my father wouldn't see.'
2. 'The individual awards make the people I love happy, they make up for the sacrifices that my family has made. But the titles which make an entire town or country happy are worth much more. It's incredible, incomparable.'
3. 'I would never have predicted all this. Not in my wildest dreams did I think that things would turn out so well.'
4. 'I don't know. I first took a liking to it as a child, like all children do, and I still enjoy it a lot.'
5. 'All kids want to be footballers, but in order to make it, you need to work hard and make a lot of sacrifices. And you



have to go through some very tough times, like when I decided to stay in Barcelona... It was my decision. No one forced me to make it.'

6. 'It makes me very happy, because I still haven't done anything, I need to keep growing and learning. Every day I try to improve, to become a better footballer. And besides, Diego is unique, there will never be another.'

7. 'When I go onto the pitch, I am not interested in the opposition, nor in who's marking me. I try to do well, enjoy myself, and make a good contribution to my team.'

8. 'Wearing the national shirt is something really great. Although I live thousands of miles away, I would like to be at all the games and bring a lot of happiness to my people.'

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# Messi Questions

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## Chapter 1 | 1: Rosario| Q&A

### 1.Question

**What role did family play in Messi's early life and career?**

Answer:Family was central to Messi's life; his mother, Celia, often cooked his favorite meals like 'schnitzel napolitana' to keep him motivated. They supported his passion for football from a young age, with his grandmother encouraging him to play despite his small stature. This nurturing environment fostered Messi's immense talent and love for the game.

### 2.Question

**How did Messi's childhood influences shape his character?**

Answer:Messi's humble beginnings and close-knit family instilled values of simplicity and humility in him. Despite his

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fame, he remains grounded, prioritizing family and friends, as his mother emphasized the importance of staying true to one's roots.

### 3.Question

**What does Celia hope for Messi's future beyond football?**

Answer:Celia hopes for Messi to find happiness, build a family, and truly live life beyond football, indicating a desire for him to experience personal fulfillment alongside his professional success.

### 4.Question

**How did Messi respond to challenges in his youth, particularly in sports?**

Answer:From a young age, Messi was incredibly determined; he would often plead to practice football even when threatened with punishment. His passion for the sport was so strong that he overcame challenges, like his size compared to other players.

### 5.Question

**What lessons can be learned from Messi's relationship with his family?**

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Answer: Messi's story highlights the importance of support systems, resilience in the face of adversity, the value of staying grounded despite success, and the need for love and encouragement in pursuing one's dreams.

## 6.Question

**What does Messi's simple taste in food reveal about him?**

Answer: Messi's preference for simple dishes like schnitzel rather than elaborate meals reflects his down-to-earth nature and indicates that, despite fame, he appreciates the comforts of home and family.

## Chapter 2 | 2: Garibaldi Hospital| Q&A

### 1.Question

**What does the story of Lionel Messi's birth reveal about his family's background and social environment?**

Answer: Lionel Messi's birth at Garibaldi Hospital on June 24, 1987, unfolds within the context of a working-class family in Rosario, Argentina, showcasing the struggles and aspirations of the immigrant community. His parents, Jorge and

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Celia, come from humble beginnings, with Jorge working in steelmaking and Celia in a magnet manufacturing workshop. The couple embodies the immigrant experience, tracing their Italian roots and representing the dreams of their ancestors who sought a better life. This narrative reflects the larger social fabric of Argentina during a turbulent time, highlighting themes of resilience and hope despite economic and political crises.

## 2.Question

**How does the historical context provided in this chapter affect the message about perseverance in Messi's early life?**

Answer: The historical backdrop of the political turmoil in Argentina during Messi's early years, including the ramifications of military dictatorship and economic hardship, punctuates a message of perseverance. Despite being born during a period marked by societal instability and the trauma of civil unrest, Messi's family remains a symbol of

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determination. Their day-to-day struggles and the environment of their upbringing serve as a testament to the strength required to overcome adversity, setting a powerful precedent for Messi's own journey.

### 3.Question

**In what ways can Messi's early experiences as described in this chapter be seen as a foreshadowing of his future success?**

Answer: Messi's early experiences, filled with challenges from his birth amid societal unrest to his playful yet determined nature, foreshadow his future resilience and talent. His family's encouragement, such as giving him his first football at age four, coupled with his natural inclination towards the sport, hints at his destiny as a football legend.

The chapter illustrates not just the nurturing of talent but also the context of struggle that shapes character—an essential foundation for Messi's iconic career. This narrative positions Messi as someone who not only possesses extraordinary skill but also an indomitable spirit honed by the trials faced in his

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formative years.

#### 4.Question

**What significance does the location of Messi's birth hold in terms of his cultural identity?**

Answer: Messi's birth at Garibaldi Hospital holds cultural significance as it symbolizes the deep ties to Italian heritage in Rosario's immigrant community. Rosario, a city rich in Italian and Spanish immigrant history, becomes the backdrop to Messi's identity as a proud Argentine. This connection to cultural roots, acknowledged through the legacy of immigrants like his ancestors, provides Messi with a sense of belonging and identity that plays a pivotal role in his narrative both on and off the field.

#### 5.Question

**How do the familial relationships portrayed in this chapter contribute to the themes of support and ambition?**

Answer: The familial relationships highlighted in this chapter emphasize the themes of support and ambition that significantly influence Messi's development. Jorge and

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Celia's deep bond, alongside their dreams for a better future for their children, exemplify the nurturing environment that fosters Messi's potential. The involvement of his brothers in his early life—encouraging him to play and participate—illustrates the strong family support system that declares ambition not just a personal pursuit but a collective endeavor shared by loved ones.

## 6.Question

**What does the description of Rosario as a city of 'grandchildren of immigrants' signify in the larger narrative of Messi's life?**

Answer: The portrayal of Rosario as a city of 'grandchildren of immigrants' signifies a rich tapestry of cultural legacies that shape Messi's upbringing. This context underscores the perseverance of immigrant narratives, their contributions to Argentine society, and their hopes for future generations. Messi's life becomes a reflection of these collective dreams, where he embodies the triumph of immigrant identity in a society that often struggles with its historical complexities,

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fostering a narrative of belonging and success rooted in a vibrant cultural heritage.

## **Chapter 3 | 3: The smallest of them all| Q&A**

### **1.Question**

**What can we learn from Messi's early experiences on the football pitch?**

Answer: Messi's early experiences demonstrate that passion, perseverance, and support from loved ones can help overcome challenges such as physical stature. Despite being the smallest player, Messi's innate talent and love for the game allowed him to shine. His grandmother's encouragement and the old coach's willingness to give him a chance highlight the importance of recognition and nurturing of talent regardless of appearances.

### **2.Question**

**Why was Señor Aparicio hesitant to allow Messi to join the team at first?**

Answer: Señor Aparicio was initially hesitant because he

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perceived Messi as too small compared to the other players, fearing that he might get hurt. This illustrates a common bias toward physical attributes in sports, emphasizing the need for open-mindedness when evaluating potential and ability.

### 3.Question

**What role did family support play in Messi's development as a player?**

Answer:Family support, particularly from his grandmother, was crucial in Messi's development. She insisted that he be allowed to play, recognizing his talent despite concerns over his size. This familial encouragement propelled him onto the pitch and ultimately into a lifelong pursuit of football.

### 4.Question

**What does Messi's journey from a small boy kicking a ball to becoming a standout player teach us about potential?**

Answer:Messi's journey exemplifies that true potential often transcends physical limitations. Talent can manifest in unexpected forms, and sometimes those who appear the least likely to succeed can achieve greatness. His story encourages

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us to look beyond conventional measures of ability.

### 5.Question

**How did Messi's demeanor on the pitch as a child set him apart from others?**

Answer:As a child, Messi exhibited a serious demeanor and a quiet confidence, often staying close to his grandmother but showing remarkable resilience and dedication on the field.

This unique combination of traits distinguished him from his peers and likely contributed to his exceptional focus and work ethic.

### 6.Question

**What can be said about the importance of mentorship in Messi's early days?**

Answer:Mentorship played a pivotal role in shaping Messi's football career. Under the guidance of Señor Aparicio, who took a chance on him, Messi was able to harness his skills and grow as a player. This highlights the profound impact that mentors can have on young talents.

### 7.Question

**In what ways did Messi's educational experiences reflect**

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### **his priorities during childhood?**

Answer: Messi's educational experiences showcased that he prioritized football over academics, which is not uncommon for young athletes passionate about their sport. Despite struggling in school, his determination to succeed in football is evident in his dedication to training and his results on the pitch.

### **8.Question**

#### **What life lesson can we derive from the interactions between Messi and his first coach?**

Answer: The interactions highlight the lesson that opportunities should be provided based on talent rather than preconceived notions of capability. This emphasizes the necessity for coaches, mentors, and society in general to nurture and support young talents without bias.

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## Chapter 4 | 4: The same as always| Q&A

### 1.Question

**What were some characteristics of Leo when he was a child?**

Answer:Leo was a shy child, known for his quiet nature and reserved demeanor. He truly stood out only when he played football, scoring many goals which captured the attention of his peers. Although he struggled with subjects like languages and math, he excelled in physical education and art, indicating a natural talent and passion for creative expression and sports.

### 2.Question

**How did Cintia describe her friendship with Leo as they grew up?**

Answer:Cintia, who was Leo's childhood friend, highlighted the deep bond they shared since infancy, mentioning that their mothers were 'womb sisters'. They spent a lot of time together, going to school and celebrating birthdays, which

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created a strong, unbreakable friendship that endured even after Leo moved to Barcelona.

### 3.Question

**What impact did moving to Barcelona have on Leo according to Cintia?**

Answer:Cintia observed that the move to Barcelona was a significant experience for Leo that helped him mature.

Despite the challenges of being away from his hometown and friends, he was able to integrate into the new environment because of his passion for football, which helped him find connections with kids his age.

### 4.Question

**How did the community react to Leo's success after the FIFA Under-20 World Cup?**

Answer:The community organized a heartfelt celebration to welcome Leo back home after his victory, demonstrating immense pride and love for him. They decorated the streets and waited through the night just to catch a glimpse of their champion, showcasing the deep-rooted connection and

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affection the neighborhood had for Leo.

### 5.Question

**What did Cintia reveal about Leo's reaction to criticism after the 2006 World Cup?**

Answer:Cintia explained that although Leo faced harsh criticism after the Argentina-Germany match, he remained misunderstood. She expressed that Leo often withdrew into himself during tough times, revealing his sensitive side.

However, despite the pressures and solitude he felt, he always managed to maintain his sense of humor through it all.

### 6.Question

**How has Leo's fame changed his interactions with friends and the community according to Cintia?**

Answer:Cintia noted that while Leo has remained the same shy and humble friend she knew, the fame has dramatically changed how he interacts with the community. Instead of cruising around on his bike, he now arrives in a car, often followed by people seeking to take his photo or meet him,

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showing the immense impact of his celebrity status.

### 7.Question

**In what ways did Leo's journey reflect themes of friendship and self-identity?**

Answer:Leo's journey illustrates that true friendships withstand the trials of time and distance, highlighted by Cintia's unwavering support despite their separation. His humility amid fame reflects a constant struggle between his innate self-identity and the pressures that come with being a global superstar.

## Chapter 5 | 5: Red and black| Q&A

### 1.Question

**What does Lionel Messi's passion for Newell's Old Boys signify about his roots and identity?**

Answer:Messi's unwavering love for Newell's Old Boys highlights his deep-rooted connection to his family's football heritage and his hometown of Rosario. With his father and brothers being involved with the club, Messi's devotion reflects the

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values of loyalty, belonging, and family that shaped his early years, ultimately influencing his journey in football.

## 2.Question

**How did Messi's early experiences at Newell's Old Boys shape his approach to football?**

Answer:During his formative years at Newell's, Messi was not just a talented player but also someone who understood the importance of teamwork and camaraderie. His early trials, where he impressively played multiple games in various positions, instilled in him a strong work ethic and the ability to adapt on the field. This versatility became a cornerstone of his playing style throughout his career.

## 3.Question

**What role did family support play in Messi's development as a footballer?**

Answer:Family support was crucial in Messi's rise. His parents encouraged him to pursue football, providing the guidance and stability necessary for his growth. This backing

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allowed him to embrace challenges and focus on training, ultimately giving him the confidence to excel at Newell's and beyond.

#### 4.Question

**In what ways did Messi's time at Newell's Old Boys teach him about resilience?**

Answer:Despite early setbacks, such as losing championships, Messi learned valuable lessons in resilience. The Newell's team, nicknamed la Máquina del '87, showed persistence in bouncing back after defeats, teaching Messi to face challenges with determination and to view failures as opportunities for growth.

#### 5.Question

**What is the significance of Messi's nickname "the leper" in the context of Newell's Old Boys?**

Answer:Originally a derogatory term used by rivals, 'the lepers' became a badge of honor for Newell's fans, representing their unwavering loyalty and spirit. For Messi, this nickname symbolized the strong community and culture

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at Newell's that supported him, forging his identity not just as a player but as part of a devoted fanbase.

## 6.Question

**How did Messi's performances at Newell's Old Boys foreshadow his future success?**

Answer: Messi's remarkable skills, such as his ability to dribble past defenders effortlessly and score crucial goals, were evident from a young age. His performance in youth tournaments, where he continuously outshone his peers, hinted at his extraordinary talent and potential, laying the groundwork for his legendary status in professional football.

## 7.Question

**What values did Messi express in his early interviews, and how do they reflect his character?**

Answer: In his early interviews, Messi emphasized values such as humility, love for family, and respect for the game. His innocence and down-to-earth nature are depicted through his favorite moments, like winning with his team and cherishing relatives. These values illustrate a grounded

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personality, despite his rising fame.

### 8.Question

**What does Messi's response about his happiest moment reveal about his priorities?**

Answer: Messi's happiest moment being when Newell's became champions demonstrates his deep appreciation for teamwork and collective achievements over individual accolades. It underscores his belief in valuing relationships and experiences shared with teammates, which would continue to drive his success at every level.

### 9.Question

**How does Messi's journey reflect the importance of education, both in sports and life?**

Answer: Messi's commitment to finishing school while pursuing football highlights the significance of education as a foundation for success. His understanding that knowledge and skills extend beyond the pitch resonates throughout his career, reinforcing the idea that a well-rounded individual can better navigate both challenges in sports and life.

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## Chapter 6 | 6: He was a Gardel| Q&A

### 1.Question

**What were the characteristics that made Leo Messi stand out as a young boy in football according to Adrián Coria?**

Answer:Adrián Coria described Messi as explosive, with remarkable ball control and a competitive spirit. Despite his small stature at 1.2m, he dominated taller opponents, had a unique playing style, and possessed an extraordinary capability to anticipate plays. His strong temperament meant he never shied away from competition, always striving to win.

### 2.Question

**How did Messi's attitude on the pitch reflect his love for the game?**

Answer:Messi's resilience was evident when he faced aggressive tactics from opponents; rather than complaining, he thrived under pressure and often turned the fouls into motivation to excel, indicating his passion and dedication to

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the game.

### 3.Question

**What can be learned from Messi's approach to coaching feedback as a young player?**

Answer: Messi exhibited respect and humility by listening to his coach, Adrián Coria. He never boasted about his talent and showed a willingness to learn, which reflects the importance of being open to guidance and constructive criticism in achieving success.

### 4.Question

**What did Adrián Coria think about Messi's potential compared to other players?**

Answer: Coria was confident that Messi would surpass others in football greatness, forecasting that he would be 'greater than Maradona.' He recognized Messi's exceptional abilities at a young age, claiming he was a 'phenomenon.'

### 5.Question

**How did Messi's early departure to Spain highlight potential oversights by Newell's?**

Answer: Coria pointed out that Newell's failed to recognize

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Messi's immense potential and didn't make a financial effort to keep him, suggesting that sometimes opportunities are missed when talent is overlooked.

## 6.Question

**What insight does Adrián Coria provide regarding Messi's fame and character?**

Answer:Coria believes that Messi's fame has not changed him for the worse; he remains humble and grounded. Even after achieving great success, he still displays the same kind-hearted nature he had as a child, indicating that true talent is often accompanied by humility.

## 7.Question

**What does the term 'a Gardel' imply about Messi's status according to Adrián Coria?**

Answer:Calling Messi 'a Gardel' likens him to a legendary figure, much like the famous tango singer Carlos Gardel, emphasizing that Messi has become an icon in the world of football, revered not only for his skills but also for his impact on the sport.

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## 8.Question

**What deeper message about persistence and passion can be derived from Messi's experiences as recounted by his coach?**

Answer: Messi's journey illustrates that true greatness often stems from relentless perseverance and an unwavering passion for one's craft, showcasing that one should never be discouraged by obstacles or their circumstances.

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## Chapter 7 | 7: Size: small| Q&A

### 1.Question

**How did Lionel Messi and his family cope with his growth hormone deficiency diagnosis?**

Answer:Lionel Messi, despite facing a significant health challenge with his growth hormone deficiency, maintained a healthy relationship with the illness. He demonstrated resilience throughout the numerous tests and the daily hormone injections necessary for his treatment. His family played a crucial role in supporting him during this difficult time, ensuring he approached each challenge, including invasive tests and therapy, with a strong mindset and without excess trouble.

### 2.Question

**What significance did the growth hormone treatment have on Messi's life and career?**

Answer:The growth hormone treatment was pivotal in Messi's development, allowing him to grow from a height of

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1.27m to 1.69m, which was essential for his physical development and football career. As the doctor pointed out, this treatment was a medically necessary intervention that helped Messi achieve what he could not have reached genetically without it. It is important to note that while his condition was serious, it was Messi's innate football skills and determination that truly mattered in his rise to fame.

### 3.Question

**Why did Messi's family move to Spain, and how did it relate to his treatment?**

Answer: Messi's family moved to Spain primarily due to financial concerns surrounding his growth hormone treatment. Barcelona was the only club willing to take on the cost of his medical needs, which reached approximately 600,000 Argentine pesos per year. While there are differing accounts about whether they had to leave Argentina specifically for this reason, it is clear that securing adequate treatment was a significant factor in their decision to move away.

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#### 4.Question

**What lessons can we learn from Messi's early challenges with his health about perseverance?**

Answer: Messi's experience teaches us that perseverance in the face of adversity is crucial. His journey shows the importance of maintaining a positive attitude despite setbacks and challenges, whether they are related to health, personal struggles, or external circumstances. By leaning on family support and acknowledging the value of necessary medical interventions, Messi exemplifies resilience which is vital for overcoming obstacles and achieving one's goals.

#### 5.Question

**What impact did media coverage have on public perception of growth hormone treatment?**

Answer: The media coverage surrounding Messi's growth hormone treatment created a perception among parents that it could serve as a 'magic drug' for all children, leading to a surge in demand for such treatments regardless of medical need. This phenomenon underscored the dangers of

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sensationalizing medical treatments without appropriate context, highlighting the importance of understanding that such therapies are specific to diagnosed conditions like Messi's and can be ineffective and even harmful for others.

## **Chapter 8 | 8: International star in a small town| Q&A**

### **1.Question**

**What does Lionel Messi represent for Rosario?**

Answer: Messi is considered the best player Rosario has ever produced, embodying Argentine hope and being hailed as a footballing icon. People eagerly await the day he becomes the successor to Diego Maradona.

### **2.Question**

**How is Messi known in his hometown?**

Answer: In Rosario, Messi is not a widely recognized figure because he only played junior football there until the tenth league. His capabilities were largely unnoticed by local clubs, who didn't realize what they were missing. He's viewed as a product of Newell's and a source of unfinished

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business for the town.

### 3.Question

**How did Mariano Bereznicki describe his first encounter with Messi?**

Answer:He met Messi at the end of 2000 when Messi returned from Barcelona. At that time, Messi was just a little boy who was submissive and quiet, but once he stepped onto the pitch, he completely transformed. His true talent emerged when he had the ball at his feet.

### 4.Question

**What significant change occurred following the 2005 Under-20 World Cup for Messi?**

Answer:After that event, Messi exploded into fame, creating a phenomenon known as 'Messimania.' He was pursued by media for interviews and his popularity surged as people recognized he was the transformative player Argentina had long awaited.

### 5.Question

**How does Messi feel when he returns to Rosario today?**

Answer:When Messi visits Rosario, he is an international star

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in a small town. Despite his fame and the excitement surrounding his visits, he finds solace and refuge with his family and friends, using these moments to recharge before returning to his demanding life in Barcelona.

### 6.Question

**What insights does Bereznicki provide regarding Messi's character?**

Answer:According to Bereznicki, Messi's true self is known only to his close circle. Despite his stardom, he remains profoundly humble and grounded; fame has not changed him. He is described as solid as a rock, underscoring his authenticity amidst the chaos of celebrity.

### 7.Question

**How does Bereznicki assess Messi's footballing skills?**

Answer:Bereznicki characterizes Messi's skills as marked by solidarity with his team, loyalty, and exceptional attacking prowess. Messi possesses an impressive ability to accelerate and executes all these actions in a uniquely effective manner.

### 8.Question

**What does the future hold for Lionel Messi according to**

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## **Mariano Bereznicki?**

Answer: Bereznicki believes Messi's future has already arrived; he has proven himself in competitive football.

Although he has achieved extraordinary feats, he is still young and has not yet reached his peak explosive level, indicating that even more greatness may be ahead.

### **9.Question**

#### **How does Bereznicki compare Messi to Maradona?**

Answer: Instead of labeling Messi as the new Maradona, Bereznicki asserts that Lionel Messi is simply the true Messi, highlighting Messi's unique place in football history.

## **Chapter 9 | 9: Across the pond| Q&A**

### **1.Question**

#### **What challenges did Messi and his family face when leaving Argentina for Spain?**

Answer: They faced the challenge of leaving behind their childhood, hometown, school, friends, and family. Additionally, they were making a significant life change without guarantees for their future,

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which required a lot of willpower.

## 2.Question

**How did Messi's early recognition in football affect his family's decisions?**

Answer: Messi's early recognition in youth football, with double-page spreads in newspapers and positive evaluations from River Plate, led his family to believe his football talent could provide better opportunities for them in Spain, prompting their decision to move.

## 3.Question

**What role did determination and belief play in Messi's journey to Barcelona?**

Answer: Determination and belief were crucial; Messi's family took a risk, placing their faith in a thirteen-year-old boy to secure a better future. They believed in his talent and were willing to make sacrifices for his growth.

## 4.Question

**How did the coaches at FC Barcelona perceive Messi during his initial trial?**

Answer: The coaches, particularly Carles Rexach, recognized

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Messi's exceptional talent immediately due to his agility, technical skill, and confidence despite his small stature. They were convinced he was standout player, unlike any other.

### 5.Question

**What factors contributed to the decision to sign Messi despite the risks involved?**

Answer:Despite the risk of Messi being foreign, being a minor, and needing medical treatment for his growth issue, the coaches prioritized his talent and potential over the difficulties, believing he would be a valuable addition to the team.

### 6.Question

**What does Messi's story represent in the context of pursuing one's dreams?**

Answer:Messi's story represents perseverance, the importance of family support, and taking risks to pursue one's dreams. It emphasizes that with talent, determination, and the drive to succeed, one can overcome significant challenges.

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## 7.Question

**What was the significance of the paper napkin agreement in Messi's contract negotiations?**

Answer:The paper napkin agreement symbolized a commitment and acknowledgement of Messi's potential. It served as a decisive moment that indicated the club's level of interest and urgency in securing Messi, despite the informal nature of the agreement.

## 8.Question

**How did family discussions influence the Messi family's decision to move to Barcelona?**

Answer:The family engaged in discussions to ensure that everyone was on board with the move. They made it clear that if even one member was hesitant, they would remain in Rosario, highlighting the family's unity and careful consideration of such a life-changing decision.

## 9.Question

**What emotions did Messi experience during his first training at Barcelona?**

Answer:Messi experienced excitement and awe during his

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first training at Barcelona, as he was stunned by the advanced facilities and eager to impress. He wanted to make his father proud, which added pressure but also motivation to perform well.

### 10.Question

**What long-term impact did Messi's move to Barcelona have on his family?**

Answer: The move opened up numerous opportunities for the entire Messi family, leading to new jobs, living conditions, and a life centered around football, eventually establishing them in a prominent position due to Messi's future success.

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## Chapter 10 | 10: Latigazo| Q&A

### 1.Question

**What makes Messi a unique player according to Fernando Niembro?**

Answer: Messi is described as a 'latigazo', a player whose single action can destabilize and shake up an entire game. Unlike other good footballers who may not have that impact throughout a match, Messi has the ability to enthuse crowds and critics alike with just one skillful move.

### 2.Question

**What does Messi need to learn to improve his game?**

Answer: Messi needs to understand that he is part of a team. He must learn to share the ball, pass it more quickly, and make the final pass instead of trying to do everything himself. This collaboration will enhance his impact on the game.

### 3.Question

**What cautionary advice is given to Messi regarding marketing?**

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Answer: Messi should remain wary of the influence of marketing on his performance, ensuring his focus stays on the game rather than the commercial aspects of his image. His performance is not defined by his marketing success.

#### 4.Question

**How does the comparison between Messi and Maradona differ?**

Answer: While some similarities exist, such as speed and skill, the comparison is deemed unfair because Messi plays in a more intense and complex football environment with more physical and tactical challenges than Maradona did.

#### 5.Question

**What does Fernando Niembro hope for Messi's future in relation to Maradona?**

Answer: Niembro hopes Messi will surpass Maradona, as it would benefit Argentine football, but first emphasizes that Messi needs to achieve a world championship to solidify his legacy.

#### 6.Question

**Why is predicting Messi's future considered difficult?**

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Answer: The world of football is continually changing and evolving at a remarkable pace, making it hard to predict how Messi's career will unfold in the future.

## **Chapter 11 | 11: Provisional licence| Q&A**

### **1.Question**

**What challenges did Leo Messi face upon arriving in Barcelona, and how did he respond to them?**

Answer: Leo faced numerous challenges, including injuries, bureaucratic issues with his transfer, limitations on his ability to play in official competitions due to being a foreign player, and the struggle to adapt to a new environment. Despite these difficulties, Messi showed resilience by committing himself to training and focusing on his development. His determination led him to excel in training sessions, and through his hard work, he eventually gained recognition from coaches and teammates.

### **2.Question**

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## **How did Leo's experience in the Maestrelli Trophy influence his development as a player and as a person?**

Answer: Participating in the Maestrelli Trophy helped Messi gain confidence and social connections with his teammates. Before the tournament, he was perceived as shy and quiet, often sitting alone after matches. However, during this event, he became more vocal and engaged with his teammates, which significantly contributed to his growth both on and off the pitch, encouraging him to embrace his talents and assert his place within the team.

### **3.Question**

## **What was the significance of Messi's goal during his debut match at Barcelona?**

Answer: Messi's debut, where he scored a goal despite the challenges he faced, marked the beginning of his journey at Barcelona. It symbolized both a personal milestone and a hint of his potential to succeed in the world of football, despite the obstacles he encountered, including the struggle of being a newcomer and a foreigner in a new country.

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#### 4.Question

**How did Leo's early injuries affect his football journey and what steps did he take to overcome them?**

Answer:Leo's early injuries, including a fractured leg and torn ligaments, were significant setbacks that limited his playing time. He underwent rehabilitation and medical treatment, including a personalized exercise program to address his growth issues. These experiences taught him the importance of resilience and hard work, which became pivotal in his dedication to overcoming obstacles and ultimately excelling as a footballer.

#### 5.Question

**What motivated Leo Messi to stay in Barcelona despite his family's separation?**

Answer:Leo's motivation to succeed in Barcelona was rooted in his passion for football and desire to pursue his dreams. When faced with the choice of returning to Argentina or remaining in Barcelona, he unequivocally chose to stay, demonstrating his determination and commitment to

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becoming a successful player, regardless of the challenges that accompanied his decision.

## 6.Question

**How did Messi's early relationship with his coaches and teammates influence his growth?**

Answer: Messi's initial relationship with his coaches and teammates was characterized by shyness, but it developed into one of mutual respect as he showcased his talent.

Coaches noticed his dedication during training, which helped him earn praise and recognition. Furthermore, as he became more confident, he built friendships with teammates, fostering a supportive environment that contributed positively to his growth as both a player and a person.

## 7.Question

**What does Messi's story highlight about the importance of perseverance and passion in achieving one's goals?**

Answer: Messi's journey through adversity, from injuries to adapting to a new life, emphasizes how perseverance and passion can drive an individual towards their goals. His

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unwavering commitment to football, despite numerous setbacks and challenges, serves as a powerful reminder that success often requires resilience and determination.

## **Chapter 12 | 12: Puyol's mask| Q&A**

### **1.Question**

**What qualities made Messi stand out as a player during his early days according to Álex García?**

Answer: Messi was described as very receptive, always attentive, quiet, shy, and reserved, yet he displayed great class. He had a unique ability to be unstoppable with the ball, featuring a devastating sidestep that set him apart from his peers. His teammates treated him like a younger brother, providing support especially because he frequently faced tough opposition.

### **2.Question**

**How did Messi demonstrate his determination and understanding of sacrifice as a young player?**

Answer: At just 15 years old, Messi showed a deep

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understanding of the sacrifices he and his family made for his football career. He was aware of the opportunity presented to him at Barça and was determined to make the most of it, indicating that he didn't want to waste this chance. Even though he sometimes felt homesick, he kept his emotions in check, illustrating his focus and commitment to his goals.

### 3.Question

**What was the significance of 'street football style' in Messi's development as noted by his coach?**

Answer:Álex García emphasized how Messi brought the 'street football style' or 'playground football' to the training, which included unique dribbling techniques like dodges and feints, skills often utilized on the streets of Argentina. Simultaneously, García aimed to instill a more structured attacking style and teamwork approach characteristic of Barça, helping to merge those two philosophies.

### 4.Question

**How did Messi react during the final match despite wearing the protective mask, and what does this reveal about his character?**

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Answer: Despite the discomfort of the mask, Messi's desire to stay on the pitch and contribute to the team's success showed his competitive spirit and determination. Initially frustrated by the mask's fit, he still managed to score two quick goals, demonstrating not only his talent but also his relentless drive to perform and support his team at crucial moments.

### 5.Question

**Did Álex García foresee Messi's rapid rise to success in professional football?**

Answer: Álex García believed that Messi possessed exceptional talent and would eventually make it to the first team, but he did not anticipate the speed of Messi's ascent to stardom. García noted that everything happened very quickly for Messi and expressed confidence that, barring serious injury, Messi would leave a lasting legacy in football.

### 6.Question

**What can young athletes learn from Messi's early experiences as described in the chapter?**

Answer: Young athletes can learn the importance of

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dedication, resilience, and the willingness to face challenges head-on. Messi's journey highlights how a focused mindset, along with the support of teammates and coaches, can help overcome obstacles. Additionally, valuing one's unique playing style while also integrating teamwork and structure can lead to successful outcomes.

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## Chapter 13 | 13: Debut| Q&A

### 1.Question

**What does Messi's debut signify in the context of his career?**

Answer: Messi's debut on November 16, 2003, represents a pivotal moment that marks the beginning of his extraordinary journey in professional football. Stepping onto the pitch in the 74th minute at the newly inaugurated Dragão stadium, Messi not only becomes a part of Barcelona's history as one of their youngest players but also heralds the arrival of a player destined for greatness. His immediate impact, creating two scoring chances in a mere fifteen minutes, showcases his innate talent and foreshadows the remarkable career that follows.

### 2.Question

**How does Messi's performance after his debut reflect his character and potential?**

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Answer: Following his debut, Messi's dedication and drive are evident in his rise through Barcelona's ranks. He adapts quickly, excelling in the youth and reserve teams, displaying both talent and teamwork. His willingness to help the team, even returning to the youth B team when needed, highlights his humility and commitment to collective success—qualities that not only define his character but also contribute significantly to his long-term success.

### 3.Question

**What role did mentorship play in Messi's development during his early career?**

Answer: Mentorship was crucial for Messi's development, particularly through coaches like Ángel Guillermo Hoyos. Hoyos's support, guidance, and insistence on technical practice helped Messi refine his skills and develop his confidence. This relationship emphasizes the importance of having mentors who recognize and nurture talent, shaping athletes into champions.

### 4.Question

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**What were some challenges Messi faced after his debut, and how did he overcome them?**

Answer: After his debut, Messi faced challenges like adjusting to the faster pace and higher physicality of senior football, evidenced by his need for a specialized training program in the B team. Despite initially struggling, he demonstrated resilience and adaptability by improving through practice and learning from experiences, ultimately proving himself as one of the standout players in subsequent matches.

### **5.Question**

**In what ways did Messi's actions on the field during his early days suggest his future greatness?**

Answer: Messi's early gameplay, like his ability to create scoring chances, highlight his vision, skill, and composure under pressure. Instances where he assists teammates and scores crucial goals display not just his individual brilliance but also his understanding of teamwork. These qualities compounded with his record-breaking potential suggested

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that he was destined to shatter records and become a global icon in football.

## 6.Question

**How did the changes at FC Barcelona influence Messi's career trajectory?**

Answer:The structural changes at FC Barcelona, including the arrival of new management and emphasis on youth development, created an environment ripe for Messi's talent. With leaders who recognized his abilities and provided opportunities, Messi was able to flourish, transitioning from a debutant to a key player, all while the club aimed to reclaim its stature in European football.

## 7.Question

**What does Messi's story tell us about the importance of perseverance in achieving one's dreams?**

Answer:Messi's journey underscores the significance of perseverance. From overcoming the challenges of adapting to a new country and club to dealing with the pressures of professional expectations, his consistency and determination

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to succeed in the face of adversity serve as a powerful reminder that dedication and hard work are paramount in realizing dreams.

### 8.Question

**What can we learn from Messi's debut about seizing opportunities?**

Answer: Messi's debut teaches us the value of seizing opportunities when they arise. He made the most of a chance to be part of a significant moment for Barcelona, showcasing his skills and talent even in limited time. This highlights that readiness and willingness to take advantage of unexpected opportunities can lead to life-changing moments.

## Chapter 14 | 14: Home-grown| Q&A

### 1.Question

**What does Leo Messi represent for Barcelona and the world?**

Answer: Messi represents the long-awaited arrival of a player of legendary status, akin to Maradona, and stands alongside other football greats like Pelé and

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Cruyff. He embodies the values of Barcelona, which considers itself 'more than just a club'—he is a product of its youth system and cultural heritage.

## 2.Question

**How did Messi's signing reflect Barcelona's values?**

Answer:Barcelona made a significant commitment to sign Messi despite his growth issues, showcasing their belief in him beyond mere football talent. This act is a testament to the club's ethos of nurturing local talent and valuing technical skill.

## 3.Question

**How has Messi changed since he was sixteen?**

Answer:Over the years, Messi has transitioned from being a shy, young talent who simply loved to play football to a mature player who understands and embraces his role as a leader and an icon of the game. He became his own person, no longer living in the shadow of Maradona.

## 4.Question

**How does Messi's relationship with the fans and the community reflect his character?**

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Answer: Messi maintains a humble demeanor despite his fame. He interacts earnestly with fans, as seen when he stopped his car to take a photo with a young fan. His actions showcase that he values his roots and understands the impact he has on those who admire him.

### 5.Question

**What is Messi's impact in the dressing room?**

Answer: Even though Messi is not the captain, he acts as a sporting leader in the dressing room. His teammates recognize his invaluable contributions, and they know what to expect from him during games, emphasizing his reliability and status within the team.

### 6.Question

**How does Messi's style of play differ from Ronaldinho's?**

Answer: Ronaldinho was known for his flair and artistic trickery, while Messi represents a blend of speed and skill, encapsulating the essence of football itself. Messi's game is characterized by his precise execution and consistent performance, essential traits for modern football.

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## Chapter 15 | 15: Videotape| Q&A

### 1.Question

**How did Hugo Tocalli first come to recognize Messi's talent?**

Answer:Tocalli noticed Messi's potential through a videotape sent by Claudio Vivas, which showcased the young boy's remarkable football skills. Although initially skeptical due to Messi's age and the possibility of the tape being from an agent, Tocalli decided to investigate further after receiving positive feedback about Messi.

### 2.Question

**What was Messi's initial impression when he joined the Under 20s training session?**

Answer:Messi was very shy and reserved at first, staying in the corner of the dressing room and hardly speaking to anyone. However, once on the pitch, his demeanor changed, and he showcased his exceptional skills, impressing coaches and teammates alike.

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### 3.Question

**What were the immediate effects of Messi's debut in the friendly match against Paraguay?**

Answer: Messi entered the game in the second half and made an immediate impact by scoring a goal and demonstrating his remarkable skills. His performance led to significant praise from coaches and solidified his place in the team.

### 4.Question

**How did Leo Messi respond to the offer to play for Spain instead of Argentina?**

Answer: Leo Messi declined the offer to play for Spain, stating 'No, thank you,' as he felt a strong connection to his Argentine roots, despite living in Spain.

### 5.Question

**What was the significance of Messi's contributions during the Under 20 World Cup qualifiers?**

Answer: Messi performed exceptionally well during the qualifiers, scoring vital goals and providing assists. His contributions helped Argentina secure third place and qualify for the FIFA Under 20 World Cup, solidifying his status as a

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key player.

### 6.Question

**How did Messi's performance in the Under 20 tournament change perceptions about his potential?**

Answer: Messi was a standout player in the tournament, receiving the 'Golden Glove' for being the best player and the 'highest goal-scorer'. His performances, which included decisive goals in crucial matches, established him as one of the most promising talents in football.

### 7.Question

**What does Messi's humility reveal about his character, despite his growing fame?**

Answer: Despite his rising stardom and accolades, Messi consistently displayed humility by attributing his successes to teamwork and expressing respect for his fellow players, highlighting his grounded nature amid fame.

### 8.Question

**What lesson can we derive from Messi's initial struggles and eventual success on the field?**

Answer: Messi's journey underscores the importance of

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perseverance and showcasing talent despite early shyness or doubts. It illustrates the idea that hard work and passion can lead to success, regardless of initial circumstances.

### 9.Question

#### **How did Argentina fare in the final of the Under 20 World Cup?**

Answer:Argentina won the final against Nigeria, with Messi scoring two crucial goals, leading his team to their fifth Under 20 title. His performance in the final was magical and further established him as a top player.

### 10.Question

#### **What was Messi's reaction to winning the tournament and personal accolades?**

Answer:Messi was humble and surprised by the recognition, saying he was very happy and thanked those who acknowledged his performance, demonstrating his gratitude and character.

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## Chapter 16 | 16: The football is his toy| Q&A

### 1.Question

**What is the significance of the Under 20 World Cup for Messi?**

Answer:The Under 20 World Cup was Messi's explosive moment as a footballer. It marked his chance to make himself known internationally. Prior to the tournament, very few people in Argentina recognized his talent, but upon returning as the best player and top scorer, he became an idol and the footballer that an entire nation had been waiting for.

### 2.Question

**How did Pancho Ferraro perceive Messi when he first encountered him?**

Answer:Pancho Ferraro viewed Messi as a nice, polite, and shy boy who was the youngest in the group and still adjusting after coming from Europe. He noted that Messi lacked the physical stamina initially but recognized his potential after seeing his performance evolve during the

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tournament.

### 3.Question

**What qualities made Messi stand out during the Under 20 tournament according to Pancho?**

Answer: Messi's ability to control the ball and his enjoyment of playing were key qualities. Pancho highlighted Messi's happiness on the pitch, his exceptional ball control, awareness of the game, and ability to create risky plays, which distinguished him as a great player.

### 4.Question

**In what way does Pancho compare Messi to Diego Maradona?**

Answer: While both Messi and Maradona are seen as uniquely gifted, Pancho emphasizes that Messi does not need to be compared because he himself is already brilliant and unique. He can create surprises in every match, a quality that makes him beloved by fans.

### 5.Question

**What does Pancho suggest about Messi's ongoing development as a player?**

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Answer:Pancho believes that Messi continues to progress without limits, maintaining his humble demeanor. He is not keen on evaluations or fame; rather, he focuses on playing peacefully and is supported by his family, which aids in his development.

## **Chapter 17 | 17: A friend| Q&A**

### **1.Question**

**What qualities make Messi a good friend according to Pablo Zabaleta?**

Answer:Zabaleta emphasizes Messi's humility, his ability to stay grounded despite fame, and his loyalty as a friend. He notes that Messi loves his family and is someone who enjoys home life. These qualities highlight that, beyond his extraordinary talent as a footballer, Messi remains approachable and relatable.

### **2.Question**

**How did Messi adapt to the challenges of being different from other players when he first joined the Under 20 team?**

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Answer:Initially, Messi found it difficult to integrate because he had moved to Spain at a young age and had a different upbringing in football compared to his teammates. However, despite these challenges, he quickly adapted and showcased his talent during the tournament in Holland, where he gained recognition for his extraordinary playing style.

### 3.Question

**What insights does Zabaleta provide about Messi's talent on the field?**

Answer:Zabaleta describes Messi as exceptional, highlighting his extraordinary ball control, speed, and ability to maneuver around opponents. He mentions that Messi often elevates his team's performance and can decide the outcome of matches, showcasing not only skill but also an innate ability to lead.

### 4.Question

**Why does Zabaleta believe Messi is 'an even better person than he is a footballer'?**

Answer:Zabaleta asserts this out of admiration for Messi's

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character. He explains that fame has not changed Messi; he remains humble, true to himself, and values his friendships. This statement conveys how Messi's integrity and kindness are just as significant as his footballing prowess.

### 5.Question

**What was the importance of the Under 20 World Cup experience for Messi and his teammates?**

Answer:The Under 20 World Cup experience was pivotal for Messi and his teammates as it fostered strong friendships and team camaraderie. Winning the tournament not only marked a key achievement in their careers but also solidified their bonds, creating lasting connections that extend beyond football.

### 6.Question

**How do Zabaleta and Messi maintain their friendship despite living in different countries?**

Answer:Zabaleta mentions that they stay in touch frequently through phone calls and meet up during national team gatherings. Their shared experiences and cultural ties, like

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enjoying Argentine cuisine, keep their friendship alive, showing that true friendship can transcend distance.

## **Chapter 18 | 18: Soap opera| Q&A**

### **1.Question**

**What challenges did Lionel Messi face at the beginning of the 2005-06 Liga season, and how did they impact his career?**

Answer: Messi faced significant challenges regarding his eligibility to play due to legal issues surrounding his non-EU status. Despite having showcased his talent during the previous season, he was not allowed to participate in the first Liga match due to these regulations. This limitation initially stalled his progress in establishing himself fully in the first team of FC Barcelona, leading to concerns about his future at the club.

### **2.Question**

**How did Messi's experiences with legal and regulatory barriers shape his resilience as a player?**

Answer: The challenges he experienced, including not being

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allowed to play officially for several matches, taught Messi the importance of perseverance and adaptability. Rather than being discouraged, he focused on other competitions, such as the Champions League, where his performances helped him maintain visibility and value within the team, reinforcing his strength of character.

### 3.Question

**What was the significance of Messi securing Spanish citizenship, and how did that change his status in the team?**

Answer:Securing Spanish citizenship was a defining moment for Messi as it ended the complications of his eligibility due to non-EU player regulations. This change enabled him to play freely in La Liga, fully integrating him into the FC Barcelona first-team setup, enhancing his confidence and allowing him to contribute effectively to the team's performance.

### 4.Question

**What can we learn from Messi's journey regarding handling setbacks and seizing opportunities?**

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Answer: Messi's journey illustrates that setbacks are often stepping stones to success. His ability to remain focused, maintain his performance in other competitions, and ultimately secure his position in the team, underscores the importance of resilience, adaptability, and the willingness to navigate through obstacles to achieve one's goals.

### 5.Question

**In what ways did Messi's legal struggles elevate his status and recognition in football?**

Answer: The publicity surrounding Messi's struggles with eligibility brought increased media attention to him, turning him into a figure of fascination. His ability to rise above these challenges and secure a significant contract communicated his value to the club and the sport, transforming him into a prominent player and a marketable asset for major brands.

### 6.Question

**What role did external pressures and interests from other clubs play in Messi's early career?**

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Answer: The interest from clubs like Inter Milan highlighted Messi's immense potential, putting additional pressure on Barcelona's management to resolve his legal issues. This external pressure not only stressed the urgency of his situation but also made Messi realize his worth in the competitive landscape of football.

### 7.Question

**How did Messi's early experiences reflect the complexities athletes face in professional sports globally?**

Answer: Messi's early challenges showcased how regulatory complexities can hinder talent in professional sports. His situation reflects a broader narrative of athletes navigating bureaucratic hurdles while striving to achieve their dreams, indicating that success often requires not just talent, but also legal and administrative support.

### 8.Question

**What does Messi's resilience tell us about the importance of personal determination in pursuing excellence?**

Answer: Messi's resilience exemplifies that personal

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determination is crucial for success. Despite various obstacles, he maintained focus on improving his skills and contributing to his team's goals, ultimately leading to his ascension as one of football's greatest players.

## 9.Question

**How can young athletes learn from Messi's experience in managing career challenges?**

Answer: Young athletes can learn the importance of persistence; they should be prepared to face setbacks and understand the value of adapting to circumstances outside their control. Messi's journey emphasizes the need for mindset resilience and the ability to seize every opportunity, regardless of the external challenges.

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## Chapter 19 | 19: A breath of fresh air| Q&A

### 1.Question

**What can we learn about the importance of seizing opportunities from Messi's early career?**

Answer: Messi's journey illustrates the significance of recognizing and acting on opportunities when they arise. In 2003, Adidas sought to sign Messi when he was still a youth player at Barcelona. This move demonstrates that being proactive and engaged in the search for talent, as Adidas did, can lead to fruitful partnerships. Moreover, Messi's choice to remain true to his roots, despite the offers, while being grateful and loyal, shows that while opportunities come, maintaining personal values is equally vital.

### 2.Question

**How does Messi's humble personality contribute to his marketing power according to the interview?**

Answer: Messi's modesty and normalcy set him apart in the

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sports world, where many athletes often present themselves as larger-than-life figures. His preference for family time and simple pleasures, such as playing video games, resonates with fans, making him relatable. This relatability enhances his marketability, allowing brands like Adidas to effectively promote him as an 'authentic' figure. It indicates that authenticity in branding can foster deeper connections with consumers.

### 3.Question

**What lesson is conveyed through Messi's move to Adidas and the resulting rivalry with Nike?**

Answer: The conflict between Adidas and Nike over Messi underscores the impact of brand associations in sports marketing. It reflects the importance of aligning with high-potential talent to enhance a brand's image. The shift from Nike to Adidas not only marked a significant personal endorsement for Messi but also illustrated that loyalty in business can be forged through fair negotiation and recognizing talent's value.

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#### 4.Question

**How does Messi's story exemplify the theme 'Impossible is Nothing'?**

Answer: Messi's life story perfectly embodies the 'Impossible is Nothing' theme. Starting from a young boy with physical challenges, he overcame obstacles through perseverance and hard work, ultimately becoming a global football icon. His journey from a child who was deemed physically disadvantaged to one of the most successful footballers provides a motivational narrative that challenges the notion of limitations.

#### 5.Question

**Why is Messi particularly appealing in markets like Japan?**

Answer: Messi's smaller stature connects with the Japanese consumer, who often appreciates and identifies with players of similar physical qualities. His skillful play despite being smaller is seen as an inspiration, demonstrating that talent can transcend physical attributes. This highlights how

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cultural perceptions influence marketability and how athletes can become figures of hope and relatability around the world.

### 6.Question

**What would you say is the greatest advantage Messi has as a personality in sports?**

Answer: Messi's greatest advantage is his authenticity. Unlike many sports stars, he remains grounded and true to himself, coming off as a regular person who happened to achieve greatness. This authenticity builds a genuine connection with fans, making him a role model and increasing his appeal as a global brand ambassador.

## Chapter 20 | 20: Boy of the match| Q&A

### 1.Question

**What can we learn about dealing with pressure from Messi's experience in the Champions League match?**

Answer: Messi's performance in the intensely pressured atmosphere of the Champions League match demonstrates that pressure can be overcome with courage and determination. Rather than

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succumbing to the fear associated with facing an elite team, Messi stepped onto the pitch fearlessly, taking charge and creating opportunities for his team. This suggests that a positive mindset and confidence can help individuals perform at their best in high-stress situations.

## 2.Question

**What does Messi's ability to recover and continue to play despite physical challenges teach us?**

Answer: Messi's resilience in the face of adversity, especially when he continued to push through the pain of injury during the match, highlights the importance of perseverance. His refusal to back down, even when faced with tough tackles, shows that dedication and hard work are vital components of success, both on and off the field.

## 3.Question

**How did Messi's actions during the match influence the outcome for Barcelona?**

Answer: Messi's relentless pursuit of the ball and his

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creativity contributed significantly to Barcelona's eventual victory. By creating opportunities and energizing his teammates, Messi shifted the momentum of the game in Barcelona's favor. His ability to inspire those around him aligns with the notion that individuals can have a profound impact on their team's performance through leadership and tenacity.

#### 4.Question

**What lesson about teamwork and support can be derived from this match?**

Answer: Messi's isolated efforts in the match, where he often took initiative but lacked sufficient support initially, emphasize the importance of teamwork. Success in sports often requires a collective effort, where individual brilliance must be complemented by team cohesiveness. The eventual backing from his teammates during crucial moments reminds us that collaboration and support can turn individual talent into team success.

#### 5.Question

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## **How does this chapter illustrate the significance of overcoming past failures?**

Answer: The chapter highlights how the team learned from past humiliations against Chelsea and came back stronger. Messi and his teammates faced the ghosts of a painful defeat but transformed that experience into motivation. This illustrates that past failures can serve as powerful lessons, fueling determination to succeed in the future.

### **6.Question**

## **What can we glean about Messi's attitude towards the game's difficulties based on his response to physical challenges during this match?**

Answer: Messi's attitude was one of acceptance and resilience; he did not let injuries deter him from playing his best. His expression after hitting the goalpost shows a willingness to learn and improve, indicating that setbacks are part of the journey. This perspective can serve as inspiration for anyone facing challenges—seeing difficulties as opportunities for growth rather than insurmountable

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obstacles.

## **Chapter 21 | 21: Supersonic aesthetic| Q&A**

### **1.Question**

**What makes Lionel Messi's performance on the field so remarkable according to Santiago Segurola?**

Answer:Segurola highlights Messi's ability to combine speed, skill, intelligence, and courage, emphasizing that at such a young age, Messi performed in a way that was unexpected and fantastic, surprising spectators and showing the essence of football.

### **2.Question**

**How does Messi's speed distinguish him from other players?**

Answer:Messi's unique speed is not just about being fast; it's about his ability to make quick decisions under pressure without making mistakes, setting him apart in a sport where speed can often lead to errors or collisions.

### **3.Question**

**What does Segurola mean by Messi having a 'supersonic**

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**aesthetic'?**

Answer: The term 'supersonic aesthetic' refers to Messi's extraordinary ability to play the game beautifully and effectively at high speeds, showcasing both his talent and artistry in football, which captivates audiences.

#### **4.Question**

**In what way does Messi represent a blend of different cultural influences?**

Answer: Messi embodies both his Argentine roots and a 'Barcelonan' style of play, demonstrating the effective training from Barcelona's youth academy while maintaining the essence of his heritage.

#### **5.Question**

**How has Messi's role evolved since the time of his stunning performance at age eighteen?**

Answer: Since then, Messi has grown into a footballing leader, taking on significant responsibilities for both his club, Barcelona, and his national team, reflecting his increased importance in the sport.

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## 6.Question

**What concerns does Seguirola express about Messi's future in football?**

Answer:Seguirola is worried about the potential loss of Messi's speed over time and how this might affect his performance, questioning how he will adapt if he is no longer as fast as he once was.

## 7.Question

**What challenges do players like Messi face according to Seguirola?**

Answer:Players must handle immense pressure from the media, fame, and commercial demands, which can be distracting and challenging, potentially impacting their focus and performance in matches.

## 8.Question

**Why does Seguirola compare the pressures of fame to being 'hit by a truck'?**

Answer:He uses this metaphor to convey the overwhelming nature of the fame and expectations that come with being a top player, indicating that this mental and emotional strain is

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much tougher than physical challenges on the field.

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## Chapter 22 | 22: Difficult, very difficult| Q&A

### 1.Question

**What did Asier del Horno think about Messi's performance during the Chelsea-Barcelona match?**

Answer:He found Messi to be exceptionally difficult to deal with, noting his ability to drive the ball forward quickly and maintain control, which surprised him and required constant adjustment in defensive tactics.

### 2.Question

**How did del Horno describe the atmosphere leading up to the match?**

Answer:He mentioned that the atmosphere was tense, with a quiet confidence among the Chelsea players as they prepared for a rematch against Barcelona, highlighting the significance of the previous year's encounter.

### 3.Question

**What specific challenge did Messi present to del Horno during the game?**

Answer:Del Horno described Messi as elusive and skillful,

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recalling moments when he successfully maneuvered past him, making it clear that containing Messi's speed and technical ability was a monumental task.

#### 4.Question

**Did del Horno feel provoked by Messi's style of play?**

Answer:No, he explained that Messi does not provoke defenders verbally or through antics, contrasting him with other forwards who may engage in psychological games.

#### 5.Question

**What lesson can be drawn from Asier del Horno's experience with Messi regarding competitive sports?**

Answer:One key lesson is that unexpected challenges often arise from individuals who possess unique skills and talents, emphasizing the importance of preparation, respect for opponents, and adaptability in the face of competition.

#### 6.Question

**How did del Horno's comments reflect on the nature of football?**

Answer:His insights reveal that football is not just about physicality and tactics, but also about recognizing and

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adapting to the exceptional talents of opponents who can change the course of a game.

### 7.Question

**What advice did del Horno offer to fellow defenders facing skilled players like Messi?**

Answer:He advised defenders to stay tightly aligned, be aggressive, maintain speed, and hold their position well, underscoring the need for both strategic focus and physical readiness.

## Chapter 23 | 23: Not even a single minute| Q&A

### 1.Question

**What does Messi's introduction to the national team signify in terms of expectations?**

Answer:Messi's entry symbolizes a shift in expectations, as he was seen as the heir to Maradona's legacy. Fans pinned their hopes on him to bring magic and creativity to the field, especially given the weight of Argentina's historical context with superstars.

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## 2.Question

**How does the public perception of Messi evolve throughout his early career?**

Answer:Initially considered a promising young talent, Messi evolves into a media sensation as companies invest in his brand, particularly prior to the 2006 World Cup. His increasing visibility generates both excitement and jealousy among team members.

## 3.Question

**What challenges does Messi face during the 2006 World Cup?**

Answer:Messi faces challenges such as limited playtime, shyness, and pressure to perform while still being youthful. His lack of initial impact and the managerial decision to bench him during crucial moments lead to frustration.

## 4.Question

**What lessons can be learned from the decision to bench Messi in the Germany match?**

Answer:The decision highlights the complexities of sports management, where balancing player hierarchies, team

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dynamics, and critical match situations can override individual talent. It teaches that sometimes, even the most talented players may not get the opportunity to impact the game.

### 5.Question

**How does Messi respond to the pressure of being labeled the next Maradona?**

Answer: Messi remains humble and focused on team performance rather than seeking personal glory. He emphasizes team success over individual achievements, demonstrating maturity despite the high expectations placed upon him.

### 6.Question

**What were the implications of Messi's performance in his first World Cup match?**

Answer: Messi's debut performance, although brief, showcased his potential to change the game significantly. His lively entry injected energy into the team and hinted at his future prowess and influence on the pitch.

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## 7.Question

**How does Messi maintain his composure amidst the chaos of media attention and national expectations?**

Answer: Messi's innate shyness and focus on football help him navigate the media frenzy and external pressures, allowing him to prioritize his game and contribute positively whenever called upon.

## 8.Question

**What does the chapter reveal about Messi's relationships with his teammates?**

Answer: The chapter depicts a complex relationship where Messi's shy demeanor often isolates him from teammates, leading to misunderstandings, yet his talent ultimately earns their respect and camaraderie.

## 9.Question

**What does the narrative suggest about the importance of protecting young players like Messi?**

Answer: The text underscores the necessity of safeguarding emerging talents from overwhelming pressure and scrutiny, emphasizing that the burdens of defeat should not fall heavily

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on young shoulders.

### 10.Question

**What can we learn about the unpredictable nature of sports from Messi's experience in the World Cup?**

Answer: Messi's experience highlights that even the most skilled athletes can face unforeseen challenges and decisions beyond their control, reminding us of the unpredictability intrinsic to sports.

## Chapter 24 | 24: Positive discrimination| Q&A

### 1.Question

**What does Jorge Valdano mean when he refers to Messi's performance in the 2006 World Cup?**

Answer: Valdano implies that Messi's failure to play in the decisive moments was a missed opportunity for Argentina, suggesting that Messi had the talent to change the outcome, yet there were external circumstances and decisions by Coach Pekerman that prevented it. Valdano's statement highlights not just Messi's potential but also the weight of

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expectations placed upon young players.

## 2.Question

**How does Valdano compare Messi and Maradona?**

Answer: Valdano contrasts Messi's sheer intensity and explosive playing style with Maradona's more nuanced game, where Maradona could play a strategic role. Messi's game is characterized by constant aggression toward the goal, while Maradona had a broader understanding of play dynamics, akin to a strategist.

## 3.Question

**What does Valdano mean by 'positive discrimination' regarding Messi's early career?**

Answer: Valdano suggests a favorable bias toward Messi's talent, indicating that there was a belief and hope that he could change games for Argentina due to his unique abilities, especially given Messi's youth at the time of the 2006 World Cup.

## 4.Question

**What attributes does Valdano attribute to Messi's maturity and performance today?**

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Answer:Valdano notes that Messi has matured into a player who remains unfazed by high expectations and competition, displaying remarkable skill and decision-making under pressure. This maturity allows him to thrive even in challenging in-game situations, demonstrating his growth as a footballer.

### 5.Question

**What future does Valdano foresee for Messi?**

Answer:Valdano believes Messi has the potential to be the defining player of the twenty-first century, with all the physical and mental attributes needed for greatness. He emphasizes that it is now up to Messi to harness that talent, stating that he occupies a unique position compared to legends of the past.

### 6.Question

**How does Valdano describe the difference in public personas between Messi and Maradona?**

Answer:Valdano points out that Messi tends to remain out of the media spotlight off the pitch, gaining attention primarily

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through his performances, whereas Maradona was known for his tumultuous life and rebellious character, which made him a more complex public figure.

## 7.Question

**What does Valdano consider a significant challenge for Messi as he continues his career?**

Answer: Valdano mentions that Messi's explosive style requires him to maintain peak physical condition, hinting at the challenge of managing injuries that can arise from the demands of his playing style.

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## Chapter 25 | 25: The devil| Q&A

### 1.Question

**What can we learn from Messi's determination during tough matches?**

Answer: Messi's determination shines through in high-pressure situations, such as in the 90th minute of a crucial match. His ability to equalize the score demonstrates that persistence and courage can turn the tide, inspiring us to keep pushing forward against adversity.

### 2.Question

**How does Messi's performance against Real Madrid reflect his competitive spirit?**

Answer: Messi's motivation to perform well against Real Madrid not only highlights his competitive nature but also his respect for the game and its rivalries. His ability to rise to the occasion and succeed in critical matches illustrates that true greatness often shines when faced with significant challenges.

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### 3.Question

**What message does Messi communicate through his goal celebrations?**

Answer:When Messi scores, such as after his hat-trick, he dedicates his goals to personal matters, reflecting his heartfelt connection to family and gratitude towards the club. This shows that sportsmanship encompasses not just athletic ability, but also the values of love and remembrance.

### 4.Question

**Why is it significant that Messi scored a hat-trick after overcoming injuries?**

Answer:Messi's hat-trick after a difficult injury recovery illustrates resilience and the human spirit's ability to overcome setbacks. It serves as inspiration to embrace recovery and transformation, highlighting that those who endure hardships can emerge stronger and more capable.

### 5.Question

**How does Messi's journey through injuries resonate with the broader themes of perseverance?**

Answer:Messi's frequent injuries and his subsequent

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determination to return to form emphasize the importance of perseverance. It teaches us that challenges and setbacks are part of any journey, and the way one responds to those challenges defines their ultimate success.

### 6.Question

**What role do the fans and club support play in Messi's success story?**

Answer:Throughout Messi's journey, the unwavering support from Barcelona fans and the club has been integral. His acknowledgment of this support shows that success is often a collective effort, reinforcing the importance of community and encouragement in achieving one's goals.

### 7.Question

**What does Leo's humility in acknowledging his mentors and supporters teach us?**

Answer:Messi's humility in recognizing his mentors and the support he received from the club teaches us that greatness isn't solely about individual talent; it often involves gratitude and awareness of those who contributed to our journey. It

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reminds us to stay grounded despite success.

## 8.Question

**How does Messi's performance exemplify the art of football?**

Answer: Messi's ability to create plays and score dazzling goals reflects the artistry in football, where skill, vision, and creativity come together. It inspires us to appreciate not just the outcome of a game, but the beauty and passion that drive sports.

## Chapter 26 | 26: Jaw-dropping| Q&A

### 1.Question

**What qualities make Messi stand out as a player according to Gianluca Zambrotta?**

Answer: Zambrotta notes Messi's exceptional ball control, speed, ability to maneuver in tight spaces, and his maturity and sense of responsibility at such a young age. Messi's capacity to handle pressure and perform well in high-stakes matches, combined with his consistent high-level performances, sets him

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apart as a remarkable player.

## 2.Question

**How did Messi's performance in the 2007 match against Real Madrid impact his teammates, according to Zambrotta?**

Answer:Zambrotta describes Messi's performance as transformative, stating that a nineteen-year-old could shoulder the weight of a team during an intense match. Messi's capability to consistently deliver and equalize in tough moments showcased qualities of greatness that left a significant impression on everyone.

## 3.Question

**What does Zambrotta say about Messi's attitude towards the game?**

Answer:Zambrotta describes Messi's approach as childlike in nature; he finds joy in the game and exhibits an incredible passion for football. He notes that when Messi has the ball, he transforms into a kid excited by their favorite toy, making it difficult to take the ball away from him.

## 4.Question

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## **How does Zambrotta characterize Messi's training and personality?**

Answer: Messi is described as modest, hard-working, and someone who maintains a fun atmosphere in training.

Though they are not particularly close, Zambrotta recognizes Messi's maturity and solid character, indicating he is aware of his potential and continually strives for improvement.

### **5.Question**

## **What is Zambrotta's perspective on teamwork in Messi's gameplay?**

Answer: Zambrotta emphasizes that Messi is not an individualist despite his impressive dribbling skills. He understands the importance of playing as part of a team, showcasing his growth as a player who seeks to entertain while also contributing to team success.

### **6.Question**

## **What makes Messi's goal against Getafe memorable according to Zambrotta?**

Answer: Zambrotta describes Messi's goal against Getafe as

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"jaw-dropping" and comparable to Maradona's famous goal from 1986. He expresses astonishment at Messi's ability to perform such a skillful act, reflecting on how it captivated spectators and teammates alike.

### 7.Question

**What lesson can be learned from Messi's journey as described by Zambrotta?**

Answer: Messi's journey teaches that extraordinary talent should be accompanied by hard work, humility, and a sense of responsibility. Despite his fame, Messi remains committed to improving and values teamwork and camaraderie, demonstrating that personal success is often a product of collective effort.

## Chapter 27 | 27: Leo and Diego| Q&A

### 1.Question

**What can we learn from Messi's goal against Getafe that parallels Maradona's goal against England?**

Answer: The similarity between Messi's goal and Maradona's highlights the importance of skill,

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determination, and ingenuity in football. Both moments exemplify how drive and creativity can lead to unforgettable achievements, inspiring players to embrace their unique style while learning from the legends before them.

## 2.Question

**How does the reception of Messi's goal reflect the emotional connection fans have with football legends like Maradona?**

Answer:The collective awe and celebration by fans witnessed in the stadium after Messi's goal mirrors the emotional highs that Maradona brought to his supporters. This connection underscores football's ability to unite people across generations, creating a shared history while instilling pride in national icons.

## 3.Question

**What significance does Messi place on scoring goals in the context of his comparison to Maradona?**

Answer:Messi emphasizes joy and instinct over pressure and comparison. He acknowledges Maradona's legacy but seeks

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to carve his own path, which reflects a healthy respect for history while demonstrating the importance of individuality in personal success.

#### 4.Question

**Why is the comparison between Messi and Maradona considered both a tribute and a burden?**

Answer: While the comparison pays homage to Maradona's legendary status and the profound impact he had on the game, it creates immense pressure on Messi to meet expectations that can overshadow his personal achievements. This duality illustrates the challenge of living up to a predecessor's legacy while striving to define one's identity.

#### 5.Question

**How do fans and commentators contribute to the debate over who is greater between Messi and Maradona?**

Answer: Fans and commentators are driven by passion and nostalgia, leading to often heated debates that leverage statistics, emotional experiences, and cultural significance. This interaction emphasizes how deeply entrenched football

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traditions and memories are, showcasing how subjective opinions can influence perceptions of greatness.

### 6.Question

**What message does Messi convey about recognizing past legends while maintaining personal authenticity?**

Answer: Messi conveys that while it's important to acknowledge the achievements of past legends like Maradona, the focus should remain on playing genuinely and enjoying the sport. This message encourages aspiring players to appreciate their roots but prioritize self-expression and personal growth.

### 7.Question

**In what way does the chapter highlight the evolution of football talent over time?**

Answer: The chapter illustrates that while the game evolves with new talents like Messi, foundational skills exemplified by legends like Maradona remain relevant. This dynamic highlights the cyclical nature of football, where each generation learns from the previous while contributing to the

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sport's rich history.

### 8.Question

**What does Messi's humility in discussing his heorics suggest about his character?**

Answer: Messi's humility showcases a grounded personality, where despite extraordinary talent, he values teamwork and the contributions of others. This humility fosters a positive environment and sets a benchmark for aspiring athletes to remain modest despite success.

### 9.Question

**How does the media's role impact the perception of Messi in relation to Maradona?**

Answer: The media plays a crucial role by amplifying comparisons, creating narratives around achievements, and shaping public opinions. Their portrayal can elevate Messi's status while also enforcing the burden of living up to Maradona's legendary legacy.

### 10.Question

**Why is it significant that Messi dedicates his goals to Maradona, especially during critical moments?**

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Answer: Dedication signifies respect and connection to Argentine football history. By honoring Maradona, Messi not only acknowledges his influence but also strengthens the bond between generations of footballers, reminding everyone of the shared passion that football embodies.

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## Chapter 28 | 28: A long career ahead of him| Q&A

### 1.Question

**What does Rijkaard mean when he says Messi has a whole career ahead of him?**

Answer:Rijkaard emphasizes Messi's youth and potential for growth, suggesting that while Messi is already an exceptional player, his best years and vast opportunities for success and improvement lie ahead. This perspective encourages young athletes to focus on their development rather than comparing themselves prematurely to established legends like Maradona.

### 2.Question

**How does Rijkaard describe Messi's goal against Getafe?**

Answer:He describes it as one of the most spectacular goals he has ever seen, likening it to a 'genuine work of art.'

Rijkaard's appreciation signifies not just the goal's beauty but also Messi's artistry and skill, showcasing how talent can produce moments that transcend the sport.

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### 3.Question

**What advice did Rijkaard give to Messi regarding dribbling?**

Answer:Rijkaard advised Messi to finish his actions—meaning he should take a shot or pass instead of overly dribbling, which could lead to unnecessary risks. This guidance highlights the importance of making decisive plays, especially in crucial match situations.

### 4.Question

**How has Messi changed since his debut according to Rijkaard?**

Answer:Rijkaard notes that Messi has matured from a shy, respectful boy into a confident and essential team player. This evolution illustrates that personal growth and experience can enhance a player's performance while retaining core values like humility.

### 5.Question

**What emotional moment did Rijkaard recall regarding Messi's injury?**

Answer:Rijkaard recalls a poignant moment when he

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comforted Messi after his injury against Chelsea, recognizing the deep emotional struggle that comes with being unable to play. This signifies not only the challenges of a sports career but also the profound bond between coach and player.

## 6.Question

**What commonality does Rijkaard see between Messi and Maradona?**

Answer:Rijkaard believes both players share a unique joy for the game and a relentless desire for the ball, reflecting their passion for football. This insight connects the sporting legacy of both players, suggesting that true greatness in football involves not just skill, but a love for the game.

## Chapter 29 | 29: You have to prove it| Q&A

### 1.Question

**What does Carlos Bilardo believe is the key to being remembered in football?**

Answer:Carlos Bilardo believes that 'winning is all that matters' and emphasizes that 'no one remembers the runner-up.' He suggests that to be

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remembered as a great player, one must achieve victory, particularly on the world stage, like winning a World Cup.

## 2.Question

**How does Bilardo distinguish between Messi and Maradona?**

Answer:Bilardo acknowledges both Messi and Maradona as exceptional players who can change the course of a match.

However, he notes that Maradona had to face continuous challenges from defenders, while Messi found space to run without immediate pressure, highlighting the differences in their playing environments and the contexts of their iconic goals.

## 3.Question

**What does Bilardo suggest is required for Messi to reach the same legendary status as Maradona?**

Answer:Bilardo suggests that in order for Messi to be considered at Maradona's level, he needs to win a World Cup as the team leader. He emphasizes that many great footballers

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who haven't secured a World Cup title, even if they have skills similar to Messi's, cannot be placed in the same legendary category.

#### 4.Question

**What were Bilardo's thoughts on Messi's goal against Getafe compared to Maradona's goal against England?**

Answer:Bilardo found similarities in both goals, emphasizing that they occurred in critical matches, yet he preferred Maradona's goal due to the pressure and defense he faced. He noted that Messi had more space and time, altering the difficulty of their respective achievements.

#### 5.Question

**Why does Bilardo think comparisons in football are significant?**

Answer:Bilardo believes that comparisons are a staple in football culture, used to measure greatness among players across different eras. However, he acknowledges that the game's dynamics and the knowledge of the sport evolve, making direct comparisons sometimes challenging.

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## 6.Question

**How does Bilardo view the evolution of football and its players?**

Answer:Bilardo expresses that just as medicine and knowledge progress, so do players and the game itself. He recognizes that current athletes like Messi and Maradona play in contexts that differ greatly from those of past legends, suggesting that with time, standards and perceptions of greatness shift.

## Chapter 30 | 30: Disappointment| Q&A

### 1.Question

**How did Messi react to the disappointment of Barcelona's performance in 2007?**

Answer:Messi felt deeply saddened and angry due to Barcelona's failure to win multiple titles in the 2006-2007 season. He expressed that the lack of success after starting well was painful, especially after losing in critical moments of competitions like the Champions League and Copa del Rey.

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## 2.Question

**What does Messi's response reveal about his character and priorities as a player?**

Answer: Messi's response highlights his fierce desire to win and his focus on team success over individual accolades.

Despite achieving personal milestones, such as being named the best foreign Liga player, he found it hard to celebrate without team triumphs, showcasing his team-oriented mindset.

## 3.Question

**What challenges did Messi face heading into the Copa América after the disappointing season with Barcelona?**

Answer: Messi faced immense pressure as Argentina had not won the Copa América since 1993, and as he approached his twentieth birthday, expectations mounted for him to shine and lead the team to victory while shaking off the recent disappointments.

## 4.Question

**How did Messi handle the fame and attention from fans during the Copa América?**

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Answer: Despite being overwhelmed by the intense fanfare and loyalty, Messi remained humble. He stayed focused on the game and his responsibilities, often needing protection from the surreal situations that arose as fans flocked to him.

### 5.Question

**What significant moment occurred during Messi's match against Peru in July 2007?**

Answer: In the quarter-finals against Peru, Messi scored a long-awaited goal that lifted a weight off his shoulders, as it marked a significant contribution after a series of matches where he had not scored despite being pivotal in creating plays.

### 6.Question

**What was Messi's reaction to being celebrated after his brilliant goal against Mexico?**

Answer: When asked about whether it was his best goal yet, Messi remained modest, acknowledging the beauty of the goal but emphasizing that the important aspect was helping Argentina progress to the final.

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## 7.Question

**What insights can be drawn from Messi's attitude after the defeat in the Copa América final?**

Answer:After the defeat to Brazil, Messi's body language conveyed disappointment and frustration. Despite being named the best young player of the tournament, Messi felt anger and sadness, showing that accolades meant little against the backdrop of unfulfilled dreams and team failure.

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## Chapter 31 | 31: An electric kid| Q&A

### 1.Question

**Why is Messi considered humble despite his fame?**

Answer: Messi is seen as humble because he does not think highly of himself or act like a star. He remains grounded and focuses on being a good person, which is why people love him for his personality, not just his football skills.

### 2.Question

**What attributes does Messi inherit from his parents?**

Answer: Messi inherits incredible humanity and shyness from his parents, which contribute to his approachable and relatable nature.

### 3.Question

**How does Messi handle the pressure of being a football superstar?**

Answer: Messi does not get overwhelmed by pressure; when he is on the pitch, he solely focuses on the game and his love for football, rather than external expectations.

### 4.Question

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## **What does Alfio 'El Coco' Basile mean by describing Messi as an 'electric kid'?**

Answer: Describing Messi as an 'electric kid' highlights his speed, agility, and immense talent. He can create new opportunities in the game and is exciting to watch due to his dynamic playing style.

### **5.Question**

## **How does Basile feel Messi compares to Maradona?**

Answer: Basile believes it is premature to compare Messi to Maradona, stating that Messi has yet to forge his career path fully. He acknowledges Messi's talent but emphasizes the need for patience as his career develops.

### **6.Question**

## **What kind of freedom does Messi have on the pitch according to Basile?**

Answer: Messi has the freedom to move anywhere on the pitch, be inventive, and play in a way that suits his playing style, allowing him to dribble and challenge defenders effectively.

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## 7.Question

**What does the story shared about Norwegian fans reveal about Messi's impact?**

Answer:The story illustrates Messi's global appeal and the affection he inspires, demonstrated by fans in Norway passionately calling his name during a practice session. It emphasizes the deep connection people feel with him, not just as a player but as a person.

## 8.Question

**How does Basile reflect on his efforts to support Messi?**

Answer:Basile mentions his attempts to relieve pressure from Messi and to protect him, similar to how he was supported at Barcelona. His aim was to help ensure Messi could thrive without the burden of fame overwhelming him.

## 9.Question

**What lesson can be derived from Messi's approach to his career and fame?**

Answer:One key lesson is to stay true to oneself, maintain humility despite success, and focus on passion and enjoyment in one's work, rather than getting caught up in

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external pressures or expectations.

## **Chapter 32 | 32: Bronze and silver| Q&A**

### **1.Question**

**What does Messi's journey illustrate about persistence and dedication in the face of challenges?**

Answer: Messi's progression from scoring just one goal in his first season to becoming a key player for Barcelona and contender for the Ballon d'Or highlights the importance of perseverance. Despite facing injuries and stiff competition, he remained committed to improving his skills and overall game, demonstrating that hard work and determination can lead to success.

### **2.Question**

**How do accolades and recognition affect an athlete's development?**

Answer: The recognition Messi received, such as being named the 'best Under 21' by Guerin Sportivo and positioning himself among the top players in the FIFA

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awards, can serve both as motivation and pressure. While they can validate his hard work, they also come with heightened expectations to maintain performance, pushing him to continue striving for excellence.

### 3.Question

**What role do family and upbringing play in Messi's success?**

Answer: Messi's family, particularly his father and brother, instilled values of hard work and passion for football. His father's protective nature and willingness to support Messi's dreams, without forcing expectations, created a nurturing environment for Leo to thrive, showcasing the critical role family plays in developing talent.

### 4.Question

**What can we learn from the comparison between Messi and Kaká during the award ceremonies?**

Answer: The contrast between Messi, who prioritized individual skill and dedication, and Kaká, who attributes his success to team achievements, underscores different paths to

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recognition in sports. Both routes highlight how important titles and personal milestones contribute to an athlete's legacy and public perception.

### 5.Question

**How does Messi define success personally, and how does that differ from public expectations?**

Answer: Messi expresses happiness simply to be among the top three players in the world at such a young age, showing that his definition of success includes personal fulfillment over just titles. This contrasts with external expectations that emphasize championships and awards, revealing a mature perspective on personal achievement.

### 6.Question

**What insights can we gain about the impact of external opinions on an athlete's morale?**

Answer: The overwhelming support and high expectations from media and coaches can uplift an athlete like Messi, reinforcing his confidence. However, they can also create pressure, showing the double-edged nature of public opinion

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in sports. Balancing this can be crucial for maintaining mental wellness and focus.

### 7.Question

**How does Messi's physicality contribute to his playing style and recognition?**

Answer: Messi's low center of gravity allows him to maneuver with agility and control, key attributes that set him apart from his peers. This distinctive physicality, combined with his speed, empowers him to execute plays that leave an indelible impression on the game, garnering admiration and accolades.

### 8.Question

**What does the relationship between Messi and his family reveal about the athlete's character?**

Answer: The supportive and grounded relationship Messi maintains with his family highlights his humility and the importance he places on personal relationships over fame and wealth. It shows that despite immense talent and success, he remains connected to his roots, which has a positive

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influence on his character and decision-making.

### 9.Question

**How does the narrative of Messi's early years challenge common perceptions about success in sports?**

Answer: Messi's journey from a young boy with dreams to a world-class athlete emphasizes that success is not purely a result of resources or early achievement but rather a combination of passion, family support, and relentless effort. His background challenges the notion that only privileged or initially visible talent can achieve greatness in sports.

### 10.Question

**In what ways does Messi's story inspire young athletes today?**

Answer: Messi's story serves as a beacon of hope for young athletes, demonstrating that passion, dedication, and hard work are vital components of success. It encourages them to stay committed to their dreams regardless of obstacles, suggesting that perseverance can allow them to excel in their chosen fields.

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## Chapter 33 | 33: Physical thinking| Q&A

### 1.Question

**What is meant by 'physical thinking' in the context of Messi's playing style?**

Answer:Physical thinking refers to Messi's unique ability to synchronize his mind and body to react instinctively on the football field. This means that when he visualizes a play, his legs execute it almost simultaneously. Unlike many players who think before they act, Messi's reactions are so swift and intuitive that it creates an unstoppable momentum, allowing him to make unprecedented passes and decisions.

### 2.Question

**How does Messi's creativity impact the game?**

Answer:Messi's creativity transforms the game into a captivating experience for spectators and teammates alike. Every time he gets the ball or faces an opponent, there's an anticipation—something magical might happen. This

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creative spark often leads to unexpected moments of brilliance that can change the outcome of a match.

### 3.Question

**Why does Roberto Perfumo think Messi has the potential to be an iconic player like Maradona or Pelé?**

Answer:Perfumo believes Messi possesses the same extraordinary gifts that made legends like Maradona and Pelé remarkable. His exceptional skill set and physical thinking allow him to dominate the game. However, he also emphasizes that Messi must continue to develop and mature in his decision-making on the field to embrace the full potential of becoming a success similar to those icons.

### 4.Question

**What weaknesses does Messi have, according to Perfumo?**

Answer:Perfumo notes that Messi, despite his immense talent, sometimes struggles with decision-making during crucial moments of play. He might not always choose the optimal option—whether to run or pass—resulting in missed

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opportunities. These are lessons Messi will learn with experience as he matures as a player.

### 5.Question

**What qualities make Messi an admirable player among children, according to Perfumo?**

Answer:Perfumo attributes Messi's appeal to his humility and simplicity. He presents a relatable image to young fans, combined with natural charisma when he plays, enchanting both children and adults. His grounded nature and genuine passion for the game resonate deeply, making him an idol for aspiring athletes.

### 6.Question

**What concerns does Perfumo express regarding Messi's future and the impact of fame and fortune?**

Answer:Perfumo fears that the accumulation of wealth and status might dilute Messi's passion for football. He emphasizes the importance of Messi maintaining his amateur spirit and love for the game despite potential pressures to become an advertising icon. He warns that losing that

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passion could hinder Messi's performance as he climbs the peaks of his career.

## 7.Question

**What is the lesson Perfumo believes Messi should learn from the experiences of legends like Ronaldinho?**

Answer:Perfumo stresses that Messi should be aware of the pitfalls that come with fame and success, such as complacency and a lack of self-care. He cites Ronaldinho's decline as a cautionary tale, highlighting the importance of focus and dedication to continuously improve, even when one achieves greatness.

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## **Chapter 34 | 34: The long journey towards gold| Q&A**

### **1.Question**

**What drives Messi's desire to participate in the Olympics despite club conflicts?**

Answer: Messi's desire to represent his country is a profound drive. He sees the Olympics as a singular opportunity in a player's career, highlighting his commitment to his national team and his passion for football, which transcends club obligations.

### **2.Question**

**How did Messi approach the pressure from journalists and expectations surrounding the Olympic selection?**

Answer: Messi maintained a calm demeanor, openly expressed his ambition to participate in the Olympics, and believed that both Barcelona and the fans would understand his decision, despite the intense scrutiny surrounding him.

### **3.Question**

**What can we learn from Messi's handling of the tug-of-war between club and country?**

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Answer: Messi's experiences teach us about the importance of prioritizing personal dreams and convictions while navigating external pressures. His integrity in facing the dilemma illustrates a commitment to one's roots and responsibilities.

#### 4.Question

**What role did Guardiola play in Messi's decision to stay for the Olympics?**

Answer: Guardiola acted as a supportive figure during a tumultuous time, emphasizing Messi's emotional well-being. He facilitated communication and encouraged Messi to pursue his Olympic dreams while reassuring him of his valued place at Barcelona.

#### 5.Question

**How did Messi's encounter with the Chinese crowd at the Olympics reflect his global impact?**

Answer: The enthusiasm of the Chinese crowd chanting Messi's name illustrated his status as a beloved global sports figure. His ability to inspire passion across borders is a

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testament to his talent and the joy he brings to football.

### 6.Question

**What was the significance of Messi's performance in the Olympic final?**

Answer: In the Olympic final, Messi's skillful play, culminating in a brilliant assist for the winning goal, not only secured Argentina's gold but also showcased his ability to shine on the biggest stage when it mattered most, fulfilling his deep desire for national glory.

### 7.Question

**How did Messi's family react to the conflict of interest regarding his commitment to the national team?**

Answer: Messi's family expressed concern over the pressures placed on him, feeling that the situation was unfair for such a young athlete. They emphasized that the decision should not rest solely on Messi, but rather that the football authorities should find a compromise.

### 8.Question

**What did the Olympic gold mean for Messi personally?**

Answer: Winning the Olympic gold was a pivotal

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achievement for Messi, symbolizing not only personal triumph after overcoming significant obstacles but also fulfilling a dream and regaining confidence in his career at an international level.

### 9.Question

**What is the takeaway from Messi's journey towards Olympic gold in terms of dealing with pressure and expectations?**

Answer: Messi's journey teaches the value of resilience, determination, and clarity in one's goals. He faced immense pressures but remained focused on his values and aspirations, ultimately leading to success.

## Chapter 35 | 35: Happiness| Q&A

### 1.Question

**What is the main philosophy of happiness according to the Pakistani cab driver in New York?**

Answer: To make others happy, you must be happy yourself.

### 2.Question

**How did Leo Messi's happiness change after getting to**

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## **participate in the Olympic Games?**

Answer:Leo felt a surge of motivation and happiness, marking the happiest year of his life, signified by the gold medal he earned.

### **3.Question**

## **Why is Messi's relationship with Pep Guardiola significant for his happiness and performance?**

Answer:Guardiola focused on ensuring Messi's happiness, which resulted in Leo being able to contribute positively to the team, leading to Barcelona's success.

### **4.Question**

## **How did Xavi and Puyol describe Messi's performance and emotional state during the 2008-09 season?**

Answer:They remarked that Messi can only play his best football when he's happy; his humor and positive demeanor were evident throughout the season.

### **5.Question**

## **What achievements did Messi accomplish during the 2008-09 season?**

Answer:He scored more goals than ever before, helping

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Barcelona win La Liga, the Copa del Rey, and the Champions League, marking the first Spanish team to win the treble.

### 6.Question

**What emotional response did Messi have after scoring in the Champions League final?**

Answer: Messi felt like the happiest man in the world, describing the victory as the most important of his life and dedicating it to his family and Argentina.

### 7.Question

**What does Messi's quote about being the happiest man in the world during the victory celebrations signify?**

Answer: It highlights the connection between personal fulfillment and professional success, as Messi felt the culmination of hard work and achievement.

### 8.Question

**How does Messi view rivalries, particularly with Cristiano Ronaldo, in the context of team success?**

Answer: Messi believes that personal duels are less important than the success of the team, underscoring the importance of

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collective achievement over individual accolades.

### 9.Question

**What does the chapter reveal about Messi's perspective on individual awards versus team success?**

Answer: Messi views individual accolades, like the Ballon d'Or, as a culmination of team efforts, indicating that his personal success stems from collective accomplishments.

### 10.Question

**What family aspects contributed to Messi's happiness during the 2008-09 season?**

Answer: Messi cherished time with family and navigated the challenges posed by a family member's health, reflecting his deep commitment to familial relationships alongside his career.

## Chapter 36 | 36: Third time lucky| Q&A

### 1.Question

**What does Messi's Ballon d'Or win signify about persistence and hard work?**

Answer: Messi's journey to winning the Ballon d'Or for the first time, after coming in third and second in

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previous years, highlights the importance of perseverance and the dedication to improvement. His ultimate success demonstrates that consistent effort and resilience in the face of challenges can lead to extraordinary achievements.

## 2.Question

**How did Messi's accomplishments in 2009 reflect his impact on football?**

Answer: Messi's remarkable achievements in 2009, including becoming the champion of Europe and La Liga, illustrated his transformative effect on football. His performances and records not only captivated fans worldwide but also set new standards for excellence, proving that teamwork and talent can come together to create a legacy.

## 3.Question

**What lesson can be learned from Messi's attitude towards the Ballon d'Or?**

Answer: Messi's humble approach to receiving the Ballon d'Or—emphasizing gratitude towards his teammates and

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acknowledging his coach—teaches us the importance of humility and collaboration. It shows that individual accolades are often built on a foundation of collective effort and support.

#### 4.Question

**How did Messi's interaction with his family during the award celebration reflect his values?**

Answer: Messi celebrated his Ballon d'Or win with family, highlighting his deep-rooted values of loyalty and love. This not only accentuates the importance of personal relationships in achieving success but also reminds us that achievements are often shared experiences that contribute to our overall happiness.

#### 5.Question

**What does Messi's performance during the World Club Cup say about pressure and expectation?**

Answer: In the World Club Cup, Messi faced immense pressure to perform, especially after not being initially impactful in the match. However, his ability to step up and

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change the game's outcome underlines the significance of composure and determination when expectations are high.

### 6.Question

**What can we understand about Messi's mentality towards challenges based on this chapter?**

Answer: Messi's mentality is characterized by an unyielding competitive spirit. Even when faced with setbacks, such as injuries or challenging opponents, he consistently demonstrates an eagerness to rise to the occasion, revealing a mindset that embraces challenges as opportunities to prove oneself.

### 7.Question

**How does Messi's acknowledgment of the contributions of his teammates reflect leadership qualities?**

Answer: Messi's consistent recognition of his teammates' roles in his success showcases his leadership qualities. Understanding that success is not solely individual, he strengthens team dynamics by fostering an environment of appreciation and respect, essential components for any

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effective leader.

### 8.Question

**What insights can be drawn from Messi's reflections on Argentina compared to Barcelona?**

Answer: Messi's reflections reveal complexities regarding national identity and expectations. Despite being a global icon in club football, he struggles to elicit the same affection from his home country, indicating that success at the national level can often carry different pressures and emotional stakes.

### 9.Question

**What does the phrase 'third time lucky' indicate about Messi's journey and future?**

Answer: The phrase 'third time lucky' underscores not only Messi's current triumph but signals the notion that repeated attempts can lead to success. It emphasizes the potential for future achievements, suggesting that with determination and hard work, more accolades and breakthroughs may follow.

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## **Chapter 37 | 37: Floods of tears| Q&A**

### **1.Question**

**What emotions does Messi experience after Argentina's defeat in the World Cup?**

Answer: Messi feels a deep sense of frustration, pain, and powerlessness, leading him to tears. He is visibly shattered, as he drops his head and leans on his knees, overwhelmed by the pressure to perform for his country.

### **2.Question**

**How does Messi's performance in the 2009-10 season contrast with his World Cup experience?**

Answer: In the 2009-10 season, Messi shines as Barcelona's star, breaking numerous records and scoring 47 goals, earning the Golden Boot. Conversely, at the World Cup, he fails to score at all and does not meet the high expectations placed upon him by Argentine fans.

### **3.Question**

**What does Diego Maradona say about Messi's tears?**

Answer: Maradona emphasizes that Messi's tears reflect his

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pride and commitment to the national team, stating that anyone who thinks otherwise is naive. He expresses how difficult it is to see Messi in such a vulnerable state.

#### 4.Question

**What does Messi reveal about his feelings towards playing for the national team?**

Answer:He expresses a strong desire to win the World Cup, stating that there is nothing more beautiful than lifting that trophy. Messi hopes to experience tears of joy, contrasting his past experiences of sorrow during World Cup exits.

#### 5.Question

**What transformation occurs in Messi's relationship with Maradona leading up to the World Cup?**

Answer:Initially strained, their relationship improves significantly after a candid conversation where Maradona reassures Messi of his importance to the team. Maradona later expresses his belief in Messi, mentoring him to become a strong leader.

#### 6.Question

**What does Messi say about the differences between**

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## **playing for Argentina versus Barcelona?**

Answer: Messi notes that playing for the national team is challenging due to limited training time, which makes it harder to mesh with teammates compared to the familiarity he has developed at Barcelona.

## **7.Question**

### **How does Messi respond to the immense pressure he faces as a football star?**

Answer: Messi admits to feeling hurt by criticisms and pressure but acknowledges his teammates' support. He strives to overcome past struggles and show his true potential at the World Cup.

## **8.Question**

### **What key message does Messi want to convey about team dynamics and success?**

Answer: He emphasizes that while he plays a crucial role, the team's success depends on everyone working together, and he is only one piece of the puzzle.

## **9.Question**

### **In what way is Messi expected to lead his team, according**

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**to Maradona?**

Answer: Maradona instructs Messi to play as a leader, much like he did in 1986; he encourages Messi to take control of the game with confidence and trust his teammates.

### **10.Question**

**What happens to Messi's individual success during the World Cup despite his previous achievements?**

Answer: Despite his impressive season where he earned accolades and broke records, Messi's individual brilliance is overshadowed at the World Cup, culminating in a disappointing performance against Germany.

## **Chapter 38 | 38: Surprise| Q&A**

### **1.Question**

**What can we learn from Lionel Messi's unexpected victory at the 2010 FIFA Ballon d'Or?**

Answer: Messi's victory teaches us that true talent can shine through even amidst strong competition.

Despite expectations that his teammates Iniesta and Xavi would win due to their contributions to Spain's

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World Cup victory, Messi's individual brilliance over the year secured him the award. This highlights the idea that success is often a combination of individual excellence, teamwork, and sometimes, the element of surprise.

## 2.Question

**How did Messi express gratitude after winning the award?**

Answer: Messi humbly acknowledged the support of his teammates during his acceptance speech, stating, 'I want to share it with my teammates and thank them, because without them, I would not be here.' His words reflect a sense of teamwork and appreciation for those who supported him along the way.

## 3.Question

**What does Messi's reaction to winning the Ballon d'Or reveal about his character?**

Answer: Messi's reaction—being dazed and confused, and almost apologetic for receiving the award—reveals his

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humility and the importance he places on his teammates.

Even in his moment of personal triumph, he emphasized that his teammates deserved recognition as well, signifying his team-oriented mindset.

#### 4.Question

**What significance do accolades like the Ballon d'Or carry in the context of team sports?**

Answer:Accolades like the Ballon d'Or often spark debates on individual versus team achievement. While they can recognize outstanding performance, they also underscore the idea that football is a team sport where individual feats are often supported by collective effort. Messi's win illustrates that even standout players depend on their teammates for success.

#### 5.Question

**What can players learn from Messi's journey regarding competition and humility?**

Answer:Players can learn the importance of maintaining humility in the face of success and being gracious

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competitors. Messi's story shows that even when individuals achieve great heights, they should recognize and acknowledge the contributions of others around them, fostering a spirit of camaraderie in competitive environments.

## 6.Question

**How did different parties react to Messi winning the Ballon d'Or?**

Answer: Reactions varied widely; while Messi's fans celebrated his achievement, many in Spain felt a sense of disappointment as they believed one of their World Cup champions should have won. Influential figures like Guardiola defended Messi's win by emphasizing his unparalleled impact on football, suggesting that recognition should be granted based on skill and performance, not merely accolades received by teammates.

## 7.Question

**How does this chapter highlight the challenges of recognition in sports?**

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Answer: The chapter illustrates the complex dynamics of recognition in sports, where individual awards can create controversy and dissatisfaction among fans and players alike. Messi's win amidst rivalry with teammates and other contenders highlights that in sports, even exceptional performances can be viewed through the lens of collective achievements, leading to debates over fairness and merit.

### 8.Question

**What does Guardiola's support for Messi indicate about the relationship between a coach and his player?**

Answer: Guardiola's unwavering support for Messi illustrates a strong, mutual respect and belief in each other's capabilities. This relationship is crucial in sports, where a coach's confidence in a player can boost their morale and performance, creating an environment where players can excel.

### 9.Question

**What role does national pride play in the perception of sports awards, as seen in this chapter?**

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Answer: National pride significantly influences the perception of sports awards, as seen with Spain's disappointment over Messi winning despite their World Cup victory. This underscores how awards can become a symbol of national achievement or failure, affecting public sentiment and media narratives.

### 10.Question

**What overarching message can we derive from Messi's 2010 Ballon d'Or win?**

Answer: The overarching message from Messi's win is that while sports are inherently competitive, they are also interconnected through teamwork and shared success.

Individual brilliance can stand out, but enduring recognition often comes as part of a collective effort, interwoven with respect and acknowledgment of fellow players.

## Chapter 39 | 39: Simply the best| Q&A

### 1.Question

**What does it mean to be the 'best' in football according to Messi's performance in the Champions League final?**

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Answer: To be the best, as demonstrated by Messi in the Champions League final against Manchester United, means to transcend individual excellence and elevate the entire team's performance. His ability to find spaces, support teammates, and create scoring opportunities showcases a holistic understanding of the game that goes beyond mere goals.

## 2.Question

**How does Messi's teamwork and playstyle contribute to his status as an exceptional player?**

Answer: Messi's playstyle is a beautiful blend of individual flair and incredible teamwork. He creates plays by moving fluidly between defense and midfield, showcasing a diverse range of skills from quick runs to precise passes. His chemistry with teammates like Xavi and Iniesta allows Barcelona to dominate and control the game, which is essential for achieving collective success.

## 3.Question

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**Why is the goal Messi scored during the final particularly significant, and how did it affect the game's outcome?**

Answer: The significance of Messi's goal lies in its timing and impact; it came at a crucial moment when Barcelona needed to regain momentum. This goal not only put them ahead but also demoralized Manchester United fans, effectively sealing Barcelona's dominance in the match. His celebration reflected the emotional release and joy of his contributions, solidifying his match-winning status.

#### **4.Question**

**What can we learn from Messi's attitude toward personal achievements versus team success?**

Answer: Messi's focus on team success over individual accolades demonstrates a profound understanding of true greatness in sports. While he consistently scores and breaks records, his emphasis on winning titles like the Champions League illustrates the importance of contributing to the collective goal over personal recognition. This attitude inspires young athletes to prioritize teamwork.

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## 5.Question

**How did Messi handle pressure in high-stakes matches against Real Madrid, and what does this reveal about his character?**

Answer: In high-pressure matches against Real Madrid, Messi has shown resilience and mental fortitude. Even when facing daunting challenges, such as not scoring in multiple games against Mourinho's teams, he remained focused and adjusted his play to assist teammates, proving his dedication to win. This reveals a character built on perseverance and an unwavering commitment to his team's success.

## 6.Question

**What does Guardiola's quote about Messi highlight about his uniqueness in football?**

Answer: Guardiola's admiration for Messi as "the best player I have ever seen" emphasizes Messi's irreplaceability and his transformative impact on the team. It highlights not just his technical skills but also his influence on the team's morale and play style, showcasing him as a footballer who elevates everyone around him.

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## 7.Question

**How does Messi's victory celebration reflect his personal values and relationships with his teammates?**

Answer: Messi's ecstatic celebration after lifting the Champions League trophy embodies camaraderie, gratitude, and a shared journey with his teammates. His joy in lifting the trophy with the collective effort displayed a deep respect for his colleagues, especially recognizing Abidal's battle with cancer, revealing that he values the emotional connections forged through shared struggles and triumphs.

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## Chapter 40 | 40: Barcelona| Q&A

### 1.Question

**What were some of the most difficult moments Messi faced in his life?**

Answer:Moving from Argentina to Spain was incredibly hard for Messi. He left behind his hometown, friends, and family, and the early years in Barcelona were marked by loneliness and homesickness. He recalled times of crying alone at home so his father wouldn't see his sadness.

### 2.Question

**What does Messi consider his happiest moments?**

Answer:The titles he won with Barcelona and the Argentine national team stand out as the happiest moments of his life. He emphasizes that while individual awards, like the Ballon d'Or, make his loved ones happy, titles that bring joy to an entire country or community are worth much more.

### 3.Question

**How did family influence Messi's love for football?**

Answer:Messi's grandmother, Celia, played a pivotal role in

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shaping his passion for football by taking him to games. He mentions that his brother and cousin were role models who inspired him, and his father's support was crucial throughout his journey.

#### 4.Question

**What challenges did Messi face regarding his growth problems?**

Answer: Messi underwent treatment for growth issues as a child, which included nightly injections. He learned to adapt by improving his ball control and agility so that he could still compete effectively against larger players.

#### 5.Question

**What does Messi strive for in his career?**

Answer: Messi mentions that he continuously tries to grow as a player and improve his skills. His dedication reflects a belief in lifelong learning, as he emphasizes that he still needs to learn and develop.

#### 6.Question

**How does Messi feel about his fame?**

Answer: He does not let fame alter his life. Messi claims he is

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grounded and focused on playing football rather than the celebrity status that comes with it. While he acknowledges the attention he receives, he aims to prioritize the joy of playing.

### 7.Question

**What legacy does Messi aspire to create?**

Answer: Messi dreams of winning a World Cup with Argentina, reflecting his desire to bring happiness to his country and solidify his legacy as a player who has made a significant impact on football.

### 8.Question

**What personal values does Messi hold dear?**

Answer: Family is extremely important to Messi. He expresses gratitude towards his parents and siblings for their support throughout his career and intends to remain close to them as he reflects on his future.

### 9.Question

**How does Messi define success?**

Answer: For Messi, success is about winning titles and being

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happy with his performance on the pitch. He emphasizes that the emotional highs of winning outweigh any material rewards.

### 10.Question

**How does Messi view his relationship with his father?**

Answer: Messi describes a very close relationship with his father, who has always been supportive yet open in discussing Messi's performance. They act as friends and share significant moments together.

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# Messi Quiz and Test

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## Chapter 1 | 1: Rosario| Quiz and Test

- 1.Celia Cuccittini believes that preparing schnitzel a la napolitana is key to Lionel Messi's success on the football field.
- 2.Lionel Messi prefers elaborate dishes over simple foods like schnitzel.
- 3.Celia's mother encouraged Lionel to play football despite his small stature, playing a pivotal role in nurturing his football passion.

## Chapter 2 | 2: Garibaldi Hospital| Quiz and Test

- 1.Garibaldi Hospital was inaugurated on October 2, 1892, primarily for the Italian immigrant community.
- 2.Lionel Messi was born at Garibaldi Hospital on June 24, 1985.
- 3.Lionel Messi's family background was influenced by Argentina's military dictatorship and the Falklands War.

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## Chapter 3 | 3: The smallest of them all| Quiz and Test

1. Lionel Messi was the smallest player on his football team when he started playing.
2. Messi joined the team independently, without any encouragement from his family.
3. Señor Salvador Ricardo Aparicio was a significant influence in Messi's early football career as his first coach.

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## **Chapter 4 | 4: The same as always| Quiz and Test**

- 1.Cintia Arellano and Lionel Messi were inseparable during their childhood.
- 2.Lionel Messi excelled in academic subjects throughout his school years.
- 3.Cintia Arellano organized a neighborhood celebration for Messi after he won the FIFA U-20 World Cup in 2005.

## **Chapter 5 | 5: Red and black| Quiz and Test**

- 1.Messi began trials at Newell's in March 1994 when he was almost seven years old.
- 2.The fans of Newell's Old Boys are called 'lepers' because of their connection to a recent health campaign about leprosy.
- 3.Messi's father, Jorge, has no connection to Newell's Old Boys.

## **Chapter 6 | 6: He was a Gardel| Quiz and Test**

- 1.Adrián Coria confidently stated that Lionel Messi would outshine Leandro Depetris.
- 2.Messi focused heavily on training exercises and followed instructions without any issues.

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3. Coria believes that Messi has reached his full potential after moving to Europe.

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## **Chapter 7 | 7: Size: small| Quiz and Test**

- 1.Messi was diagnosed with a growth hormone deficiency when he was a nine-and-a-half-year-old.
- 2.Messi's growth hormone deficiency is a hereditary condition that affected him and his siblings.
- 3.The treatment Messi received for his growth hormone deficiency included daily injections for up to six years.

## **Chapter 8 | 8: International star in a small town| Quiz and Test**

- 1.Lionel Messi is described as the best player to come from Rosario, according to journalist Mariano Bereznicki.
- 2.Messi was widely recognized in Rosario during his early playing days.
- 3.Bereznicki believes that Messi is celebrated as more than just a successor to Maradona.

## **Chapter 9 | 9: Across the pond| Quiz and Test**

- 1.Lionel Messi and his father traveled from Rosario, Argentina to Barcelona, Spain on September 16,

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2000.

2. Lionel Messi was signed by FC Barcelona immediately after his training trial and did not face any barriers due to his foreign status.

3. The formal contract for Messi's signing was established on January 8, 2001.

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## **Chapter 10 | 10: Latigazo| Quiz and Test**

- 1.Lionel Messi left for Europe at a young age with significant recognition.
- 2.Niembro describes Messi as a 'latigazo' because of his ability to change a game with a single move.
- 3.Niembro believes that it is unfair to compare Messi directly with Diego Maradona until Messi's career concludes.

## **Chapter 11 | 11: Provisional licence| Quiz and Test**

- 1.Lionel Messi received his provisional players' licence in March 2001, which allowed him to debut for Barcelona's B team.
- 2.Messi was able to join the main A team of Barcelona immediately after receiving his provisional licence.
- 3.In February 2002, Messi was finally allowed to join official competitions and quickly proved himself by scoring multiple goals.

## **Chapter 12 | 12: Puyol's mask| Quiz and Test**

- 1.At 15 years old, Messi was known for his talent, connection with teammates, and reserved nature.

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2.Álex García coached Messi during his senior career at Barça.

3.Messi wore a protective mask during a crucial league match where he scored two goals.

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## **Chapter 13 | 13: Debut| Quiz and Test**

- 1.Lionel Messi made his debut for FC Barcelona at the age of 16 during a match at the Dragão stadium.
- 2.Messi played the entire match during his debut on November 16, 2003.
- 3.The Dragão stadium was built to host major events like Euro 2004 and has a capacity of 52,000.

## **Chapter 14 | 14: Home-grown| Quiz and Test**

- 1.Cristina Cubero compares Messi's presence at Barcelona to the wait for a player of Maradona's caliber.
- 2.Messi was not nurtured by Barcelona and had no connection to local youth teams.
- 3.Cubero believes Messi has transformed from a Maradona clone into a unique player over the years.

## **Chapter 15 | 15: Videotape| Quiz and Test**

- 1.Messi scored a goal in his debut match against Paraguay after starting on the bench.

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2.Hugo Tocalli was initially fully confident in Messi's abilities based on the videotape.

3.Messi helped Argentina win their fifth Under-20 title against Nigeria at the World Cup.

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## **Chapter 16 | 16: The football is his toy| Quiz and Test**

1. Pancho Ferraro felt pride in coaching players like Messi, Agüero, and Gago during the 2005 World Cup.
2. Messi was known for his stamina and was able to play full matches from the very beginning of his career.
3. Pancho Ferraro believes that Messi's talent is comparable to that of Diego Maradona.

## **Chapter 17 | 17: A friend| Quiz and Test**

1. Pablo Zabaleta describes Lionel Messi as an arrogant person who does not value his friendships.
2. Pablo Zabaleta and Lionel Messi met in the Under-20 team during their triumph at the Holland World Cup.
3. Zabaleta believes Messi is a better footballer than a person, emphasizing his professional achievements over personal qualities.

## **Chapter 18 | 18: Soap opera| Quiz and Test**

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1. Messi was absent in the first match of the 2005-06 Liga season due to injuries.
2. Messi officially obtained Spanish nationality on September 26, allowing him to play as a local player.
3. Despite being eligible to play in the league, Messi was fielded immediately by FC Barcelona at the start of the season.

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## **Chapter 19 | 19: A breath of fresh air| Quiz and Test**

- 1.Lionel Messi initially had a sponsorship contract with Adidas before he signed with Nike.
- 2.Adidas made a competitive offer to Messi's father, which was accepted in early 2006 after Messi's performance in the Under 20 World Cup.
- 3.Solanas describes Messi as a humble and relatable figure in the sports marketing world, similar to Diego Maradona.

## **Chapter 20 | 20: Boy of the match| Quiz and Test**

- 1.The match between Chelsea and Barcelona on February 22, 2006, was played at Stamford Bridge, London, during a cold and muddy condition.
- 2.Messi entered the match as a starter and was pivotal in Barcelona's performance.
- 3.Eto'o scored the winning goal for Barcelona in the late stages of the match against Chelsea.

## **Chapter 21 | 21: Supersonic aesthetic| Quiz and Test**

- 1.Lionel Messi's speed is considered unparalleled

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according to Santiago Segurola.

2.Segurola believes that Messi's courage does not significantly contribute to his performance in matches.

3.Messi's cultural representation reflects only his Barcelonan style, ignoring his Argentine heritage.

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## **Chapter 22 | 22: Difficult, very difficult| Quiz and Test**

- 1.Asier del Horno was born on January 19, 1981 in Barakaldo (Vizcaya).
- 2.Messi is known for provoking opponents verbally during matches according to Del Horno.
- 3.Del Horno suggests that defenders should remain aligned, aggressive, and swift when facing players like Messi.

## **Chapter 23 | 23: Not even a single minute| Quiz and Test**

- 1.Messi debuted in the World Cup at the age of 18 and was considered a promising young talent.
- 2.During the quarter-finals against Germany, Messi was a key player on the field who helped Argentina win the match.
- 3.Messi's first appearance in the World Cup was marked by scoring a goal and earning praise from the media.

## **Chapter 24 | 24: Positive discrimination| Quiz and Test**

- 1.Jorge Valdano prefers to be introduced as a

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'former footballer'.

2.Messi and Maradona have identical playing styles, being both versatile playmakers.

3.Valdano believes that Messi can potentially dominate the football landscape of the 21st century.

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## **Chapter 25 | 25: The devil| Quiz and Test**

1. On March 10, 2007, Leo Messi scored a hat-trick against Real Madrid during a crucial match.
2. Fabio Capello was able to successfully defend against Messi during the match, leading to a Real Madrid victory.
3. Messi entered the game after Barcelona was already leading 1-0 to equalize the score for his team.

## **Chapter 26 | 26: Jaw-dropping| Quiz and Test**

1. Gianluca Zambrotta had a disappointing two seasons at FC Barcelona.
2. Zambrotta believes that Messi is a selfish player who focuses only on individual success.
3. Messi showcased remarkable talent and maturity during the influential match against Real Madrid on March 10, 2007, at just 19 years old.

## **Chapter 27 | 27: Leo and Diego| Quiz and Test**

1. Lionel Messi's goal against Getafe on April 18, 2007, was compared to Diego Maradona's 1986 World Cup goal against England.

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2. Maradona believed that Messi's goal equaled his own in significance.

3. The media reaction to Messi's goal was largely negative, with fans criticizing it.

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## **Chapter 28 | 28: A long career ahead of him| Quiz and Test**

1. Frank Rijkaard believes that comparisons between Messi and Diego Maradona should only be made after Messi's career ends.
2. Messi is known for his tall stature which contributes to his exceptional skills on the football field.
3. Rijkaard advised Messi to improve his decision-making by avoiding over-dribbling, which he has successfully implemented in his playing style.

## **Chapter 29 | 29: You have to prove it| Quiz and Test**

1. Carlos Salvador Bilardo is known for his phrase, 'Winning is all that matters.'
2. Bilardo believes that Messi needs to win a World Cup to be compared on the same level as Maradona.
3. Bilardo prefers Messi's goal over Maradona's because it was scored in a more significant match.

## **Chapter 30 | 30: Disappointment| Quiz and Test**

1. Barcelona won all eight titles they aimed for in the

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2006-2007 season.

2.Lionel Messi scored a hat-trick against Real Madrid during the 2006-2007 season.

3.Messi felt satisfied with his performance despite the disappointments faced by the team in the Copa América.

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## **Chapter 31 | 31: An electric kid| Quiz and Test**

1. Alfio Basile describes Lionel Messi as a humble and likable person who is unaffected by fame.
2. Coco believes that Messi should burden himself with comparisons to Diego Maradona.
3. Coco's first meeting with Messi occurred when Messi was eighteen years old.

## **Chapter 32 | 32: Bronze and silver| Quiz and Test**

1. In the 2007-08 season, Messi scored 21 goals in 22 matches after his hat-trick against Real Madrid in March 2007.
2. Messi won the Ballon d'Or in 2008, finishing ahead of Kaká.
3. Messi's family believes that his success is solely due to his talent without any influence from his willpower.

## **Chapter 33 | 33: Physical thinking| Quiz and Test**

1. Roberto Perfumo believes that Messi's unique ability allows him to anticipate moves without focusing on the ball constantly.

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2.Perfumo states that Messi's decision-making is always flawless during games.

3.Perfumo is optimistic that Messi can maintain his passion for football despite his fame and wealth.

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## **Chapter 34 | 34: The long journey towards gold| Quiz and Test**

1. Messi expressed his excitement for the Olympic Games in May 2008.
2. Barcelona allowed Messi to join the Olympic Games without any conflict.
3. Messi played a pivotal role in helping Argentina win the Olympic gold against Nigeria.

## **Chapter 35 | 35: Happiness| Quiz and Test**

1. Lionel Messi contributed to Barcelona's historic treble win in the 2008-09 season.
2. Messi won the Ballon d'Or for the first time after the 2008-09 season.
3. Messi scored 6 goals against Real Madrid in their match at the Bernabéu on May 2, 2009.

## **Chapter 36 | 36: Third time lucky| Quiz and Test**

1. Lionel Messi won the Ballon d'Or in 2009 with a score of 473 points, significantly higher than Cristiano Ronaldo's 233 points.

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2.Messi's victory in the 2009 Ballon d'Or was largely due to his contributions to the Argentine national team, which overshadowed his club performances.

3.On December 21, 2009, Messi was named FIFA World Player of the Year, confirming his status as the best player in the world.

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## **Chapter 37 | 37: Floods of tears| Quiz and Test**

- 1.Lionel Messi's Argentina lost 4-0 to Germany in the World Cup quarter-finals on July 3, 2010.
- 2.Messi was the bottom scorer in La Liga during the 2009-2010 season.
- 3.Diego Maradona believed that Messi's distress after the World Cup signified his pride in playing for Argentina.

## **Chapter 38 | 38: Surprise| Quiz and Test**

- 1.Pep Guardiola announced Messi as the winner of the FIFA Ballon d'Or on January 10, 2011.
- 2.Lionel Messi was the first player to win the FIFA Ballon d'Or while his team had recently won the World Cup.
- 3.Messi celebrated his Ballon d'Or win by scoring a hat-trick against Real Betis at the Nou Camp.

## **Chapter 39 | 39: Simply the best| Quiz and Test**

- 1.Lionel Messi was unanimously hailed as the best football player after the Champions League Final at Wembley in 2011.
- 2.Messi did not score in England prior to his pivotal goal





from 35 yards against Manchester United.

3. Messi finished the season as the top scorer in La Liga, outperforming Cristiano Ronaldo.

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## Chapter 40 | 40: Barcelona| Quiz and Test

1. Lionel Messi believes that winning titles with Barcelona and Argentina is more fulfilling than receiving individual awards.
2. Messi's grandmother did not influence his passion for football; instead, he learned the sport solely through self-practice.
3. Messi aspires to play in Argentina one day and values time spent with family and friends outside of football.

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