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PAY PAL INTERVIEW
ANTE BUDIMIR

RESERVED FOR LEGENDS
ÁNGEL LIZOAIN

RECONNECTING HOME AND AWAY
**VALJENT, STOICHKOV
Y BUENACASA**

DANI RODRÍGUEZ

An interview which gets the tiger from Betanzos by the tail



RCD MALLORCA



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Pay Pal Interview: Ante Budimir

“I want to thank all the workers who are on the front line”

It's an old footballing cliché to say forwards are remembered for the goals they score, yet in particular cases, such sentiment naturally progresses to the extent a strike itself becomes an embodiment of the scorer. There are perhaps few better examples of this manifestation than Ante Budimir's brace against Valencia CF in an eventual 4-1 victory at Son Moix, just two months prior to Spain entering a state of emergency in response to the Covid-19 outbreak.

Although the first of his double on the afternoon is rightly overshadowed by the quality of goals which then followed, it does allude to a man who makes the most out of the little he has – an outstretched leg deflected Dani Rodriguez's low cross wayward past Jaime Doménech. It was his second, however, which truly depicts a player who places the collective above the individual. The clever exchange between Salva Sevilla and Lago Junior is what ultimately earns the effort a place among our contenders for goal of the season, yet the Croatian's patience, movement and reliance on his team-mates gave him the time and space to register the eighth



“You miss your people and team-mates. I like to spend time with them”

“This is a global situation and it's much bigger than football”

of his nine strikes so far this term. There's a brief moment, often missed by the naked eye, before Lago Junior tees Salva Sevilla's defence-splitting pass, where Budimir shapes up to

step in front of the Ivorian, yet suppressing individualistic desires, drags his marker away to receive the later through ball. It comes as little surprise the 28-year-old is level for most assists in the side with Salva Sevilla, Take Kubo, Aleix Febas and Dani Rodriguez all having created three goals each.

In an exclusive interview with Play Red, it's clear the frontman's approach on the pitch mirrors his outlook off it.

“We got into this sport because it's a team sport,” he told Play Red. “You miss the people and you miss your colleagues. I'm doing a lot of individual work, so I'm enjoying things right now, but I miss my guys. I miss spending time with them - this is probably why I didn't choose to play tennis! I like being in a group and this interaction we have. Now we have that interaction through group training sessions via an online app. We feel closer to our goal and being together. I miss football, but I'm aware this is a global situation and it's much bigger than football. This is our life, and when we come out onto the pitch in front of a full stadium with our support from the fans, I think it will be hugely emotional and I'm



looking forward to that.”

With training and fixtures suspended for the foreseeable future due to government regulations in place to help combat the spread of Covid-19, that hasn't stopped Budimir from finding innovative ways to improve: “You have to work and you have to be sharp,” he added. “You have to work and it's easier when you're healthy and everything is normal on the pitch. Now you can do

other things such as mental preparation, visualisation and other things. You can watch and analyse your past games, and see what was good, what wasn't and what can be better. This can supplement what you don't have. We can't work on the pitch on certain things, but you can work on other aspects and try to keep it as high as possible. This is something I'm doing and I try to work on that too.

Much like the togetherness in

“You can do other things like mental preparation and review games played so far”

dressing room, Budimir has been impressed with how society has united in the face of



a global pandemic: "The people who are the most responsible in this situation and the people who are on the frontline, I want to give them a big hug and huge thanks because it's a time when they're not thinking about themselves but of others. It's a disease which is killing people, so they're putting their lives at risk for us and for the health of the community. This is something I really appreciate

"We're doing everything we can to keep fit and ready when La Liga returns"

and everyone appreciates. I'm calling on every body to follow

the instructions and remain disciplined. For our fans, I would like to say: up until the break, they've been our 12th man. Now here in Spain, they can rest assured we're doing the best to keep ourselves in good shape so we're ready for when the season starts again."





AN UNFORGETTABLE NIGHT RELIVED

Many fans would have had last weekend's fixture circled in red on the calendar: a visit to the Santiago Bernabéu to take on Real Madrid for the first time in seven years. Although suspension to La Liga fixtures for the foreseeable future due to the Covid-19 crisis means fans will have to wait a little longer for a trip to the capital, our new video-streaming platform Mallorca+ and official YouTube channel are broadcasting a replay of our 1-0 win over Los Blancos from the home fixture earlier this season. Relive an unforgettable night at Son Moix as a side containing six players who had been playing in Segunda B just two years prior held off the most successful team in Spanish football following Lago Junior's goal in the sixth minute. Head to our website for more information on how you can watch the historic clash.



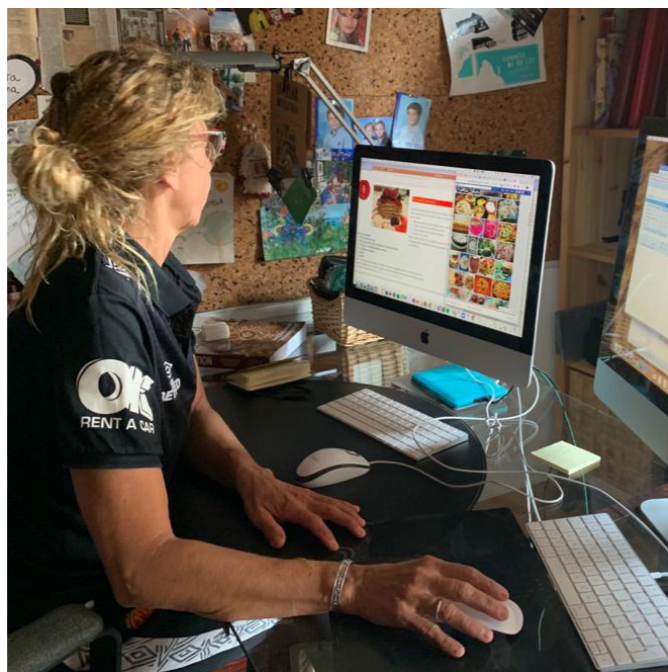
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EATING HEALTHY WITH NURIA GRANADOS

“Players already know how to eat healthy but I want them to have fun with the food they’re making”

Many weeks have passed since the state of emergency in Spain introduced a nationwide lockdown confining staff and players alike to their homes, although that has not stopped those responsible for the team from sourcing alternative methods to keep the squad in peak physical condition. Remote workouts implemented via video calls between players and coaching staff have seen living rooms, balconies and gardens become the venues for exercise sessions, yet as club nutritionist Nuria Granados explains in conversation with Play Red, it's the kitchen where a difference can truly be made: "This is something that has to come from within us," she explained. "At the beginning we calculated each of their needs and quantities, and now we've gone even further with that. The players share what they eat for breakfast, what they eat for lunch, what they eat for dinner, their recipes, where they buy ingredients and comment on whether it has been a good experience or not. It's really a matter of sharing. As a team, working together on what we're eating is something we're excited about. It's important players don't lose that discipline and become lazy when we cook, therefore we maintain contact online."



“An athlete’s nutrition is based on the quality of the raw material and it’s not processed food either”

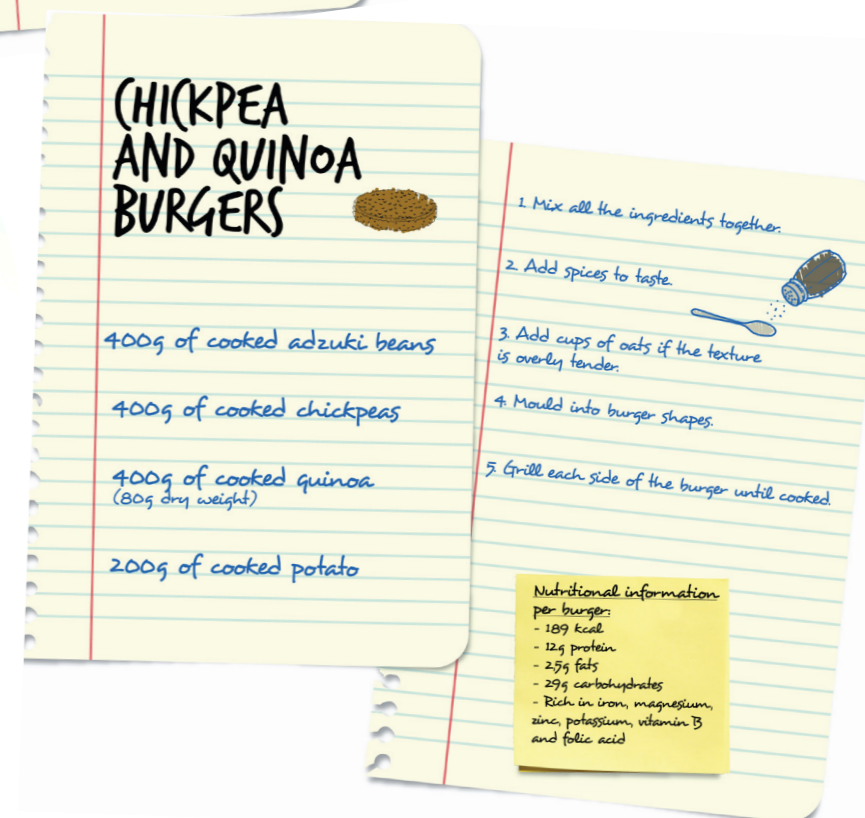
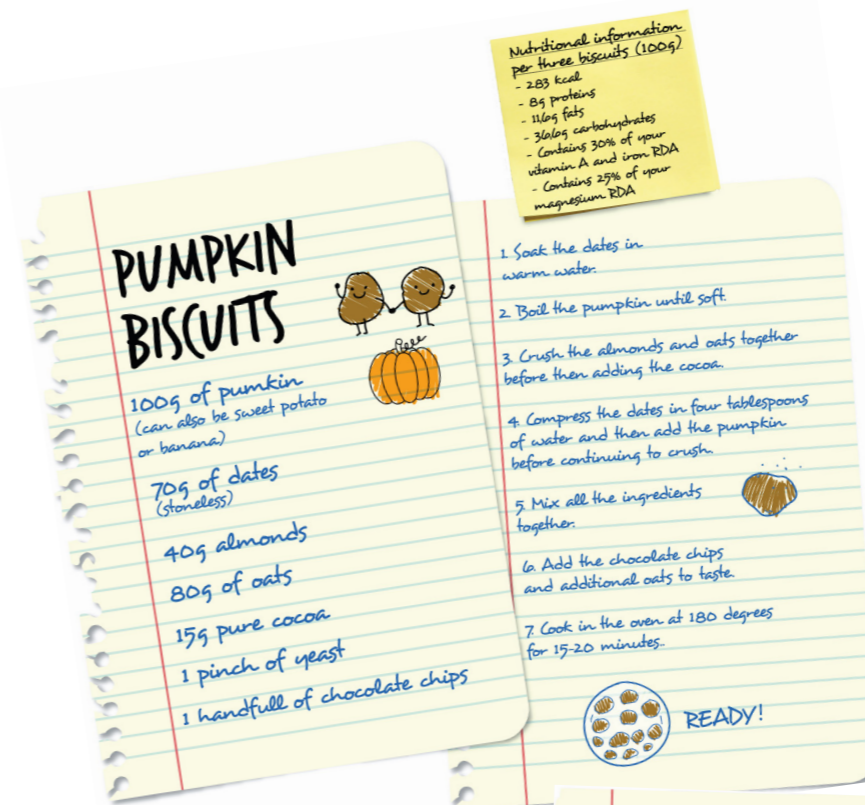
Nuria's work consists of compiling data, documenting recipes and maintaining regular dialogue with players in order to tailor diets to individual needs while keeping meal plans fresh: "A big part of it is about losing the fear of being more elaborate with our meals because it's not complicated. An athlete's nutrition is based on the quality of the raw material. It's not processed food either, quite the contrary. I send them videos of myself cooking at home so they can see it's easy while we call players individually."

Fulfilling such duties while working remotely during a global pandemic certainly provides its challenges, but our nutritionist believes encouraging players to try new recipes and enjoy their food is at the foundation of her approach to work: "The idea behind it all is that they are excited, have fun and take ideas from each other," she continued. "They

already know what to eat more or less and the amount of protein or carbohydrates necessary - now it's about making it fun. By sharing their recipes with me I can calibrate them, and then with the software I have, I can enter the ingredients and quantities so they know exactly how much protein and carbohydrates they're eating. In addition to that, if a serving exceeds 50% of the recommended minerals or vitamins per day, I then add if it's rich in magnesium, vitamin A, vitamin E and so on. I think

“We cook with them through video calls”

we can get a lot of this time spent in lockdown and really learn about what we're eating."



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THE INTERVIEW: Dani Rodríguez

“It has been an incredible year in every aspect”

He was having the season of his dreams: scorer of our first goal back in La Liga on the opening day's 2-1 win over SD Eibar, registering not only 26 starts in 27 appearances as a key member of Vicente Moreno's side but also the second-highest amount of minutes played, while also providing Ante Budimir competition for the title of top scorer with five goals – seven had VAR not had its way. Such statistics depict a player who puts his all into every challenge, makes the most of his abilities and plays every game as if it was

“We're a physical team and very intense”

his last. Perhaps there is no greater case and point made given he is also the seventh-highest player to have covered the furthest distance this season across the division. The accumulated mileage isn't quite enough to get him back to his beloved home town Betanzos in the northwest of Spain, but don't count against him just yet. While his boundless energy for the time being has been limited to no further than his home due to quarantine restrictions, Dani Rodríguez is at his most candid in this interview. From making the most of life in lockdown to a mother on the frontline of the fight against Covid-19 as a worker at the Hospital de Ferrol, our midfielder covers every talking point as he would blades of grass at Son Moix.

Hi, Dani. How are you getting on in quarantine?

Well, we're all living in a complicated situation, but so far, we're more or less getting through it. We're adjusting to things while hoping this will all pass quickly so life will get back to normal as soon as possible.

You've recently started a second phase of home training as sessions are now held by video call with the coach, physical trainer and the rest of your team-mates. How has that been?

That's right. We had been monitoring our work since the first week, but we wanted it to be a bit more personal, see each other's faces and be in contact with one another. We're not going to see each other for a while and we didn't want to have that feeling of leaving it all behind – like when you go on holiday in the summer, disconnect and when you come back it's almost as if you don't know yourself. We're now trying to make it more personal, being face-to-face every day, talking and having more contact; that way it becomes a little bit more enjoyable.

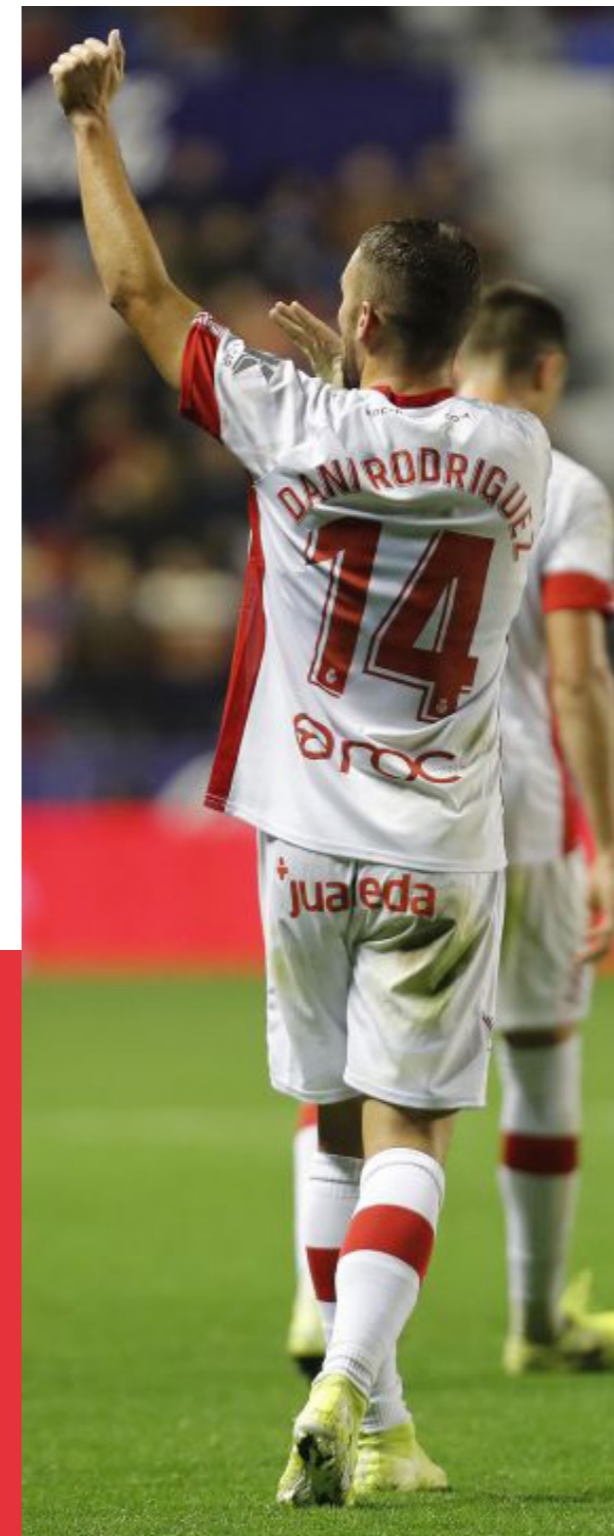
Can you still make jokes with one another on your videocalls?

Yes! It's harder to make jokes electronically but it's important to keep that good humour with your children, your partner and of course, with your team-mates. You have to try and make jokes even if it's not in person.

There are footballers who play the sport because they're good at it and there are others who, on top of being talented, love the game to a point

where they're practising and watching football all the time - you certainly fall into that second category of players. How have you remained positive without football over the last few weeks?

It has been difficult. It's the first time in our history where something of this magnitude has happened to the point it prevents you from doing your job. That can be hard for an athlete or footballer, because in our case - well, speaking for myself – since I was little I was always with a ball, at training, with my



team-mates or on the pitch. I can't do that now. Sometimes I take the ball to get a few touches in, just so I don't lose that relationship with it. I miss it very much, especially the day-to-day stuff with my team-mates.

Have things got so bad yet that you've started to talk to the ball?

It sounds like I'm lying but it's honestly true. This quarantine, this living nightmare we're going through, makes us think of many things we surely didn't think of before. Sometimes what seems silly to you, like a video call with family or a friend, now seems important to you and you do it more often. Imagine talking to a ball before all this...you do that too.

“This living nightmare we're going through, makes us think of many things we didn't think of before”

Covid-19 has halted what has been a spectacular season on a personal level. In terms of minutes, goals, confidence, games in the top division – it has been a dream campaign, right?

That's true. It has been an incredible year in every aspect. Not only in terms of minutes, but also the level of performances I've been able to put in and the fact I've felt important in the team and a division which is new to me. There was this uncertainty regarding the level I could reach and if I could adapt, but honestly, I feel very good and it has been a great season – not only at an individual level, but collectively too. We finally got our first win away from Son Moix [against SD Eibar] and we were really looking forward to that final stretch in the league. However, we're still working, albeit from home. We're at 100% and we're trying to take it all in the best possible way.

Earlier this week La Liga released data revealing the top 10 players to have covered the most distance up until the break. You're ranked seventh with 271.9 kilometres travelled behind names such as Saul Ñíguez, Sergio Canales,



Mikel Merino and Jesús Navas, while you're also ahead of Dani Parejo...

It's an incredible feat to be alongside such 'monsters' in La Liga. Over the last couple of days, I've joked about it saying: 'what must these players be thinking of me being in there? Surely they must be wondering who this Dani Rodríguez is?' I'm very proud to be on that list. It's something which characterises me as a footballer. It's my way of playing and working. I will never lose that style of play.

Although you've ran the most kilometres in the team, it's also a characteristic which defines the rest of the players in the squad. You can't win without giving it your all...

Without a doubt. We are a physical team and very intense. Last year in the Segunda Division we were among those who ran the most distance and this year it's the same. It's something that Vicente Moreno wants as a coach. It's non-negotiable. From there it depends on each of us to put that effort in and it's my way of being to do so. I can live with having a so-so game, but putting in that work cannot be absent. I can't go home not feeling tired. I've got to go home satisfied with my work and if I can accompany that with a good game, some added quality or goals, then even better.

Dani, what are three things that you miss the most while in lockdown?

Look, I could tell you a million things: taking the children to the park, accompanying them to games, going out with that normality we had before and took for granted, going with your wife and kids to the city centre for a drink or visiting places in Mallorca. I would love to see my family and friends in person, have a beer with them or go to dinner. These are things I really want to do. It will soon pass though and we'll be able to lead normal lives again.

Speaking of family, how are your parents and the rest of your family in Betanzos?

They're well, but I'm a little worried about my mother. She works in the maternity section at the Ferrol Hospital, and when something like this happens, obviously she's more likely to be exposed. I'm worried about her and my father because they're

"I am worried about my mother. She works at the Ferrol Hospital"



the oldest and are on their own. Although it's true she works on a floor which doesn't have a great deal of risk, they still don't have many resources in terms of protective equipment. They're all fine and healthy though, and thankfully my mother has tested negative for Covid-19.

It's an unfortunate truth we only remember doctors when we need them. With that mind, there's even more of a reason right now to be proud of all the people who work in the Spanish healthcare system, right?

Absolutely. They've had to work 50 or 100 times harder without any qualms throughout this difficult period and that's appreciated. As citizens, we can only say a massive 'THANK YOU' in capital letters from our homes. The truth is, what they're doing is worth admiring and being grateful for. I believe that all of these workers truly love the society they're a part of.

We've got to continue helping from home and hoping that all this will be over soon so life can return to normal. That has to be the first step before football can also return...

Personally, I live - or at least try to live - a little on the fringes of speaking on such things, but I think the league should only be resumed when the health authorities allow it. Footballers are also people; we have families and we don't want anyone to catch it. The priority has to be health. All the players in our league want to play again and we're still training. We're committed to our work

Reserved For Legends



Data Sheet



ÁNGEL LIZOAIN VIDONDO

- **Born:** 10.02.1943 - Zubiri (Navarra)
- **Position:** Winger
- **Seasons:** 2 (1979-1981)
- **Debut:** 02.09.1979 - Poblense 2 - RCD Mallorca 0
- **Goals:** 24



No hi ha temps que no torni. It's often said history repeats itself, but the Mallorquin interpretation of such sentiment is an aphorism used with far more regularity. For the many who were lost for words following our back-to-back promotions from Segunda B to La Liga, there were a select few which the expression aptly applied to. Rewinding to the late '70s, RCD Mallorca were in dire straits given the serious financial difficulties and threat of administration the team faced. The arrival of Miquel Contestí as club president sparked an unforeseen resurgence which ultimately saw Los Bermellones achieve consecutive promotions from the Tercera División to the Primera. Leading the forward line for part of a milestone chapter in club history was Ángel Lizoain, a Navarrese striker who had previously graduated from Osasuna's youth ranks before signing for Mallorca via a spell with Jerez: "I honestly had two wonderful years in Mallorca," he told Play Red. "When I arrived, the club was in the Tercera División and that was a completely different style of football. We played on dirt fields in poor conditions without much protection. Thanks to our efforts during those difficult years, Mallorca is where it is now. To reach the Primera you must first go through the lower divisions - that was our job. In the 1979-80 campaign, my debut season, the team was in Tercera División and nobody made it easy for us. We were the team to beat. I remember fighting for first place with Poblense and matches against Constancia, Atlético Baleares, Mahón. I remember

how tough those matches were in Sóller – back then there was still no tunnel through the mountain!"

For those unlucky enough not to have seen Lizoain in his playing days, the striker – also capable of playing on the left – hit the target 19 times in 44 games during his first season at the club. Although the Spaniard can certainly be proud of his individual feats, manager Antonio Oviedo's collective put together 17 consecutive victories – a club record for successive wins which still stands today: "Honestly, I must confess: I'm not very good with statistics!", he said. "I don't know exactly how many goals there were but I did get quite a few - especially from that first year. I have very good memories about that season. I can remember almost everyone: Reus, Gabaldón, the great captain Rafa Gallardo, Sahuquillo, Iriarte, Braulio, Bauzá, Mir, Riado, 'Cuqui' Nadal, Orellana or the legendary Paco Bonet, who had enormous quality but was unlucky to get injured."



Lizoain's second year finished in a similar manner, achieving promotion to the Segunda División just four days before the end of the season. While he was unable to match last year's productivity in the box with just five goals in 25 games, the forward has fond memories of Wednesday training sessions held by Oviedo: "Oviedo was tough," he recalled. "I remember that day of the week in particular because you had to run from the pitch of the Sitjar to Bellver Castle, but once you got there, it wasn't like training was over – there was a circuit waiting for us! That's not something I will forget; my legs are still tired! On Thursdays we would play a game and that's when you realised that the weekend's fixture was close. Sunday was without a doubt the best day of the week, especially if we won."

Graduating from the youth ranks at Osasuna before going onto play several seasons with the senior side in the Tercera, Segunda B and Segunda

"I honestly had two wonderful years in Mallorca"

Divisións in the '70s, Lizoain can see similarities between RCD Mallorca and his hometown team: "Osasuna's situation was like Mallorca's during those years," he said. "I had to play with them in the Tercera División on fields which are very different to those of today. After playing at the Sadar you would say: 'what a nice little pitch with grass', but then you had to later go and fight on dirt fields. I remember playing in the old pitches of Atocha, of the Royal Society, or at Eibar - those

were real mud fields. I can't even begin to calculate the number of trips and kilometres that I had to make by bus playing with Osasuna in the Tercera División. It was the same at Mallorca too, but when we were in Segunda B, we had to start leaving the island and we did that by boat or plane. At Osasuna, we had to go to play in Pontevedra, Vigo, Asturias, Salamanca,



Barcelona. All of that was by bus and certainly not with the comforts of today. To give you an idea of how things were, when I was playing at Jerez, for a game on a Sunday in Barcelona you had leave on the Thursday or Friday. It's funny, and I'm not sure why, but the longer the trip, the better result we got. It must have been the same for everyone because we thought since we've come so far, we're going to give it our all."

Lizoain would leave RCD Mallorca for Segunda B side Zamora in the summer of 1981, but relegation and financial problems at the club saw him quickly fall out of love with the game and retire at the age of 29. Later working in the private sector after leaving football, it's outside the sport where perhaps the name 'Lizoain' is best known. The second oldest of six brothers – four of whom were born blind - Ángel's younger sibling Serafín is a household name in Spanish music having represented his country at the Eurovision Song Contest in 1992 and later in 2000. However, that could soon change given Lizoain's nephew Raul is a goalkeeper at CD Mirandes, and despite his kin's prior spells with Alcorcón and Las Palmas, Mallorca still holds a special place in Ángel's heart: "Playing for teams like Osasuna and Mallorca was not the same as playing for Zamora, and I say this with all the respect in the world. They would stop paying you, and when you see all the travel and effort, the motivation begins to fade. I was far away from home at Zamora and I still had bills to pay even though I wasn't making any income. There comes a point where you just throw in the towel and leave it. I'm very happy that the fans of RCD Mallorca continue to remember me with affection. Like I said before, those two years there were wonderful. I hope the club remains in the top flight for many years to come."

RECONNECTING HOME AND AWAY



The novelty of videocalls may have worn off for much of the public prior to the Covid-19 crisis, yet an uptake in new applications, multi-person chatrooms and virtual face-to-face interaction has not only paved way for connection among friends and family, but also reconnection. For Martin Valjent, who lives alone in Palma and away from his nearest and dearest, it has been an indispensable part of maintaining social contact with those back in his native Slovakia, his girlfriend on the peninsula and his team-mates – both here at Mallorca and away on loan. With that in mind, the club's Communication Department decided to organise a little surprise for the 24-year-old: a seemingly innocent chat with First-Team Delegate Biel Gelebart regarding the defender's issue with room allocations at hotels on away trips.

Little did Martin know, the two were not to be left alone as on-loan forward Juan Diego Molina 'Stoichkov' gate crashed the call to surprise his former roommate. Spending the season at AD Alcorcón where he has scored 13 goals in 29 games, Stoichkov caught up with the defender, discussed the season so far and revealed a secret love for flamenco music.

The surprises didn't stop there however, as on-loan striker Sergio Buenacasa later joined the video call to get the latest on life back here on the island, reminisce about last year's promotion and look back on life together in the dressing room. Stoichkov and Buenacasa ended the call with a message to fans here at Mallorca thanking them for their support and encouragement as they gain further experience away from the club.





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